

MAGAZINE OF THE MARINES

# Leatherneck

APRIL 2021

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**1stMarDiv—**  
**The Early Days of the**  
**Blue Diamond Division**

**Zac Brown's Mission**  
**To Support Marines**

**Korean War:**  
**What Was it Like**  
**To Fire the Big Guns?**







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LIES THE ELITE FIGHTING SPIRIT  
OF A MARINE.



**MARINE  
RAIDERS**



# Contents

LEATHERNECK—MAGAZINE OF THE MARINES

APRIL 2021  
VOL. 104, No. 4

## Features

**8 Marine Corps Association: Adapting to Meet the Needs of Marines** *By MCA Staff*  
In addition to publishing the *Marine Corps Gazette* and *Leatherneck*—Magazine of the Marines, the professional association of the Corps offers a variety of resources to its members including battle studies, podcasts, tactical decision games and oral histories.

**20 Contact!** *By GySgt Ed Evans, USMC*  
This article from the *Leatherneck* archives tells the story of how two recon teams, inserted in the Que Son Mountains South of Da Nang, were compromised on a mission to gather intelligence and observe the enemy. Their near simultaneous rescues made the missions successful.

**28 Recollections of a Korean War Cannoncocker** *By Jerry Keenan*  
When Jerry Keenan arrived in Korea in 1952, the U.S. and China faced off across the Korean peninsula. The no man's land between the two forces offered points of observation but eventually turned into a fire mission with Marines.

**36 Camp Southern Ground: Award-Winning Musician's Nonprofit Brings Purpose, Growth to Veterans** *By Sara W. Bock*  
Zac Brown has long been known as a staunch supporter of military servicemembers, recognizing them during each and every Zac Brown Band concert. In 2018, his longtime dream became a reality: opening a camp that provides programs for veterans seeking transition support and post-traumatic growth.

**52 The History of the 1st Division Through World War II** *By Joel D. Thacker, USMC*  
This article from the *Leatherneck* archives begins on Feb. 1, 1941, when the 1st Marine Brigade became the 1st Division, and carries on through the Okinawa campaign, the last ground battle before the occupation of Japan itself.



## Departments

- |                                    |                             |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>2</b> Sound Off                 | <b>51</b> Crazy Caption     |
| <b>14</b> Corps Connections        | <b>62</b> Passing the Word  |
| <b>16</b> In Every Clime and Place | <b>64</b> In Memoriam       |
| <b>34</b> Leatherneck Laffs        | <b>70</b> Reader Assistance |
| <b>44</b> Sea Stories              | <b>72</b> Saved Round       |
| <b>46</b> We—the Marines           |                             |

**COVER:** SgtMaj Terrence C. Whitcomb, USMC, the sergeant major of 1st Marine Division, helps support the colors during the Division's 80th Anniversary Ceremony at MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif., Feb. 5. Veterans and active-duty Marines and Sailors who served in the Division attended the ceremony celebrating the oldest, largest and most decorated division in the Marine Corps. Photo by Cpl Jailine L. AliceaSantiago. 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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## Letter of the Month

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

I am Chris Debow, retired master gunnery sergeant. I spent 26-plus years on active duty in the Marine music program. Since retirement, I have become involved with the Marine Corps Musicians Association (MCMA) as their historian.

Recently the music world lost an icon, Sammy Nestico, who served for 15 years in the U.S. Air Force Band and then five years in the U.S. Marine Band as an arranger and composer. Sammy was also a member of the MCMA. I wanted to explain all this before you read the following letters. The original letter was written to MSgt Frank Gagliardi, also a retired Marine musician, who had a special bond with Sammy and Shirley Nestico. The second letter is self-explanatory.

I certainly enjoy every issue and thanks for what you do to keep us old Marines informed about today's Marine Corps.

"My Dear Frank,

One of my granddaughters is dating a Marine from Camp Pendleton. They came over on Friday evening before Sammy passed away. Sammy was in his recliner and needed to be moved to the hospital bed I had set up in the living room. I didn't

know how we could move Sammy as he could not help us. This young Marine looked at me and said, 'Please, may I move him?' Of course I said, 'Yes, if you can.' He, Jack Scott, gently picked up Sammy in his arms and carried him to the bed. I was so touched by this young Marine being here and laying my sweetheart to where he could rest better. I'm sharing the e-mail I sent to his commanding officer.

Dear Mr. Berger,

MGySgt Samuel Louis Nestico who once conducted and arranged for the Marine Band under President John F. Kennedy/President Lyndon B. Johnson was laid to rest on Jan. 17. I am thankful for one of your Marines, Staff Sergeant John R. Scott Jr., who was there to assist in laying him to rest. Staff Sergeant Scott carried an old Marine, MGySgt Samuel Louis Nestico, from the battlefield of life to Rest in Peace. Thank you, Staff Sergeant John R. Scott Jr., (Jack) and God Bless the Marines!

Love,  
Shirley Nestico."

MGySgt Chris Debow, USMC (Ret)  
Leesburg, Fla.

## Get Involved With Marine Organizations

Yesterday I attended the monthly meeting at the Marine Corps League, First State Detachment 689, (see page 34 of "Leatherneck—Magazine of the Marines," February issue). During the business proceedings two new members were sworn in. One Marine served actively in Vietnam while the other did his tour elsewhere a few years later. During their introductions and hearing each tell their story for joining the League, both stated they missed being around fellow Marines and in the company of brothers with a common interest. As a long-time life member and past Detachment Commandant how proud it felt to witness the enthusiasm from those in the room during the welcoming into our organization. During these trying times when we cope with restrictions relating to group gatherings, when so many are unemployed, when businesses are closed, and when staying home is common, all due to COVID-19, how refreshing to be with a group of Marines. This is an example of not being afraid of socializing, carrying on with the business of the MCL and not being held captive by a virus.

I offer this suggestion to those Marines

and others eligible for membership into the MCL who might fall into one or more of the above categories to consider joining our ranks. If not the League, think about other veteran groups, i.e., VFW, VVA, American Legion, DAV, one of the many Corps associations, i.e., 1st, 2nd, 3rd Marine Division Associations. There exists an association for just about any MOS or duty within our Corps. I can assure you, each and every veteran/military group and association needs new members and are always recruiting. Rather than stay on the outside, possibly sitting idly home, wondering what to do next, here is a solution. Besides helping yourself, you will be contributing to good causes and be back among those with a common bond. This not only applies to those who served in our U.S. Marine Corps, it can be useful to those who served in our other branches of Armed Forces.

Food for thought! Nothing ventured, nothing gained. Semper Fidelis.

Lt John "Jack" Rine, USMC (Ret)  
Ocean View, Del.

## Together They Stood the Test of Time & the Marine Corps

The article, "Together They Stood the Test of Time," is a superb and uplifting article. A very nice article for the times we are in. Of course, we can't forget Sea Stories, another great section I look forward to. A belated thank you for a great magazine.

Steve Lalor  
Rosedale, N.Y.

I am a Marine mom and avid reader of *Leatherneck*. I very much enjoyed your feature, "Together They Stood the Test of Time & the Marine Corps," published in the February issue. On page 61, Capt Vincent A. Sordello, USMC (Ret), wrote about his wife baking a cake for the Marine Corps Birthday from the recipe published in the November 1957 issue of *Leatherneck*. Is this recipe still available? I have not been able to find it by searching online. If you could share it with me or publish it, I would be very grateful.

Thank you for all you do sharing current information and history through your publication. I appreciate it.

Celia Anderson Davis  
Parkton, Md.

• We will be publishing the recipe for Marine Corps Birthday cake in the November issue.—Editor

## WAYS TO SOUND OFF



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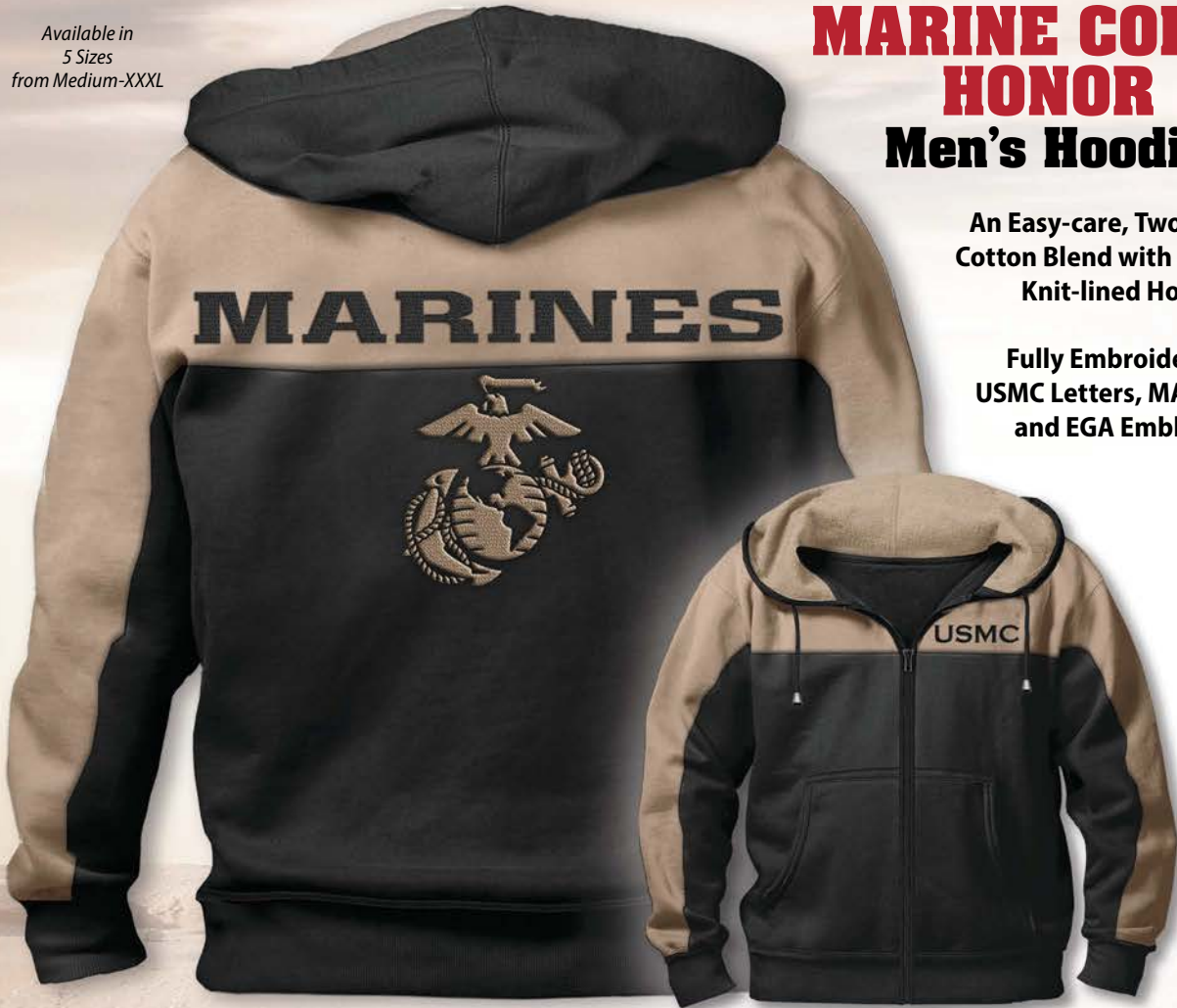
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James G. Elliott Co. Inc.  
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Los Angeles: (213) 624-0900

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*Leatherneck* (ISSN 0023-981X) is published monthly by the Marine Corps Association & Foundation, Bldg. #715, MCB, Quantico, VA 22134. Copyright 2021 by MCA&F.

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COURTESY OF LCPL MIKE KING

**LCpl Mike King stands in front of a Marine One helicopter at Aviation Heritage Park in Bowling Green, Ky. The helicopter was dedicated to the park on Sept. 12, 2020. Col Arthur "Mac" Reynolds, USMC (Ret), (inset) former commander of HMX-1, and a Bowling Green native, was honored at the dedication ceremony.**

### Col Arthur "Mac" Reynolds Honored With an Aviation Display

A few weeks ago, my wife and I took a road trip to Bowling Green, Ky. One of the places we like to visit is the Aviation Heritage Park. While visiting the park I noticed a new addition since my last visit. They have added a Marine One helicopter. The helicopter was moved from the National Naval Aviation Museum at NAS Pensacola, Fla., to Aviation Heritage Park where it has been restored by a crew of volunteers. Marine One now rests on its display pad, joining six other artifacts in the park.

Col Arthur "Mac" Reynolds, USMC (Ret), a Marine pilot and former commander with HMX-1 and Bowling Green native, was honored at the dedication ceremony that was held on Sept. 12, 2020. Col Reynolds flew three Presidents on the Marine One helicopter.

LCpl Mike King  
USMC, 1977-1981  
Paducah, Ky.

### Parris Island, 1968

Corporal William K. Bauer's letter in the February issue makes reference to the fact that "Full Metal Jacket" was "a movie truly grounded in reality." However, I take issue with the "reality" of GySgt Hartman's death. While at Parris Island during June and July of 1968, our M14s were issued without firing pins which were installed before departing for the rifle range. Our weapons were always hung on the ends of our racks during training except for

the two weeks at the range when they were put into locked rifle racks inside a locked room in the barracks at night. The range was the first place in my life I had ever encountered a metal detector, which evidently was to ensure that no live rounds could be carried off the range. As I recall, the firing pins were removed before reverting to the regular training schedule. With no live rounds and no firing pin it was virtually impossible for "Pvt Pyle" to have shot the drill instructor. That part of the movie had no basis in reality.

Sgt Daniel C. Hodge  
USMC, 1968-1971  
Union, N.J.

I am writing today in reference to Corporal William K. Bauer's comments about "Full Metal Jacket" in the February issue of *Leatherneck*. Like Cpl Bauer, my "Parris Island experience [had] coincided roughly with the eight-week time span reflected in the film's version of Marine Corps recruit training." Unlike Cpl Bauer's experience, however, and the experience of those depicted in the movie, my recruit training was nothing like his or theirs. Indeed—and I will probably catch hell from a lot of R. Lee Ermey fans for saying this—I have watched "Full Metal Jacket" many times and every time I watch it, I can't help but feel that in his portrayal of Gunnery Sergeant Hartman, R. Lee Ermey did the Marine Corps and Marine DIs a serious disservice.

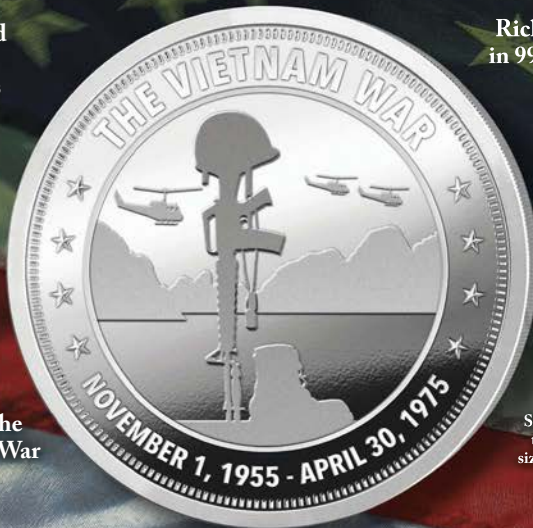
I graduated from Parris Island in July 1966 in an honor platoon. My senior



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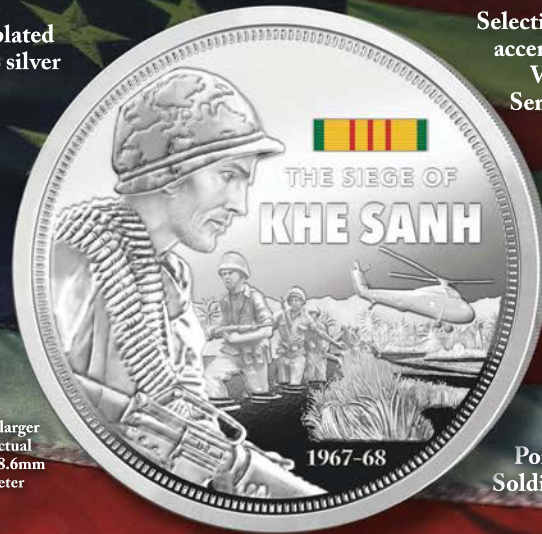
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## BEHIND THE LINES



Patty Everett's calm and friendly voice is the one you hear when you call the *Leatherneck* office to ask a question or voice your opinion. She has a knack for making all callers feel as if they are general officers and gives her utmost attention to every request for information. Recently, Patty marked her 40th year with the Marine Corps Association, so we thought it would be a good opportunity to celebrate that with our readers, many of whom have been keeping in regular contact with her for much of that time.

Patty first came to work at the MCA in 1981 as a typesetter for programs, newsletters and cruise books. In 1987, she moved over to *Leatherneck* as the editorial assistant, and has been here ever since. Currently she is the magazine's production manager and is also responsible for editing *Sea Stories* and *Sound Off*. Additionally, she has compiled several reader-generated photo layouts.

During her four decades she has seen many changes at the MCA, but through it all, Patty has remained focused on the mission of supporting *Leatherneck* readers. She embodies the Marine Corps' *Semper Fidelis* spirit with everything that she does.

Nancy S. Lichtman

drill instructor (DI) was Staff Sergeant J.D. Perkins. My junior drill instructors were SSgt D.J. Werner and Sergeant R.J. Beatty. I do not recall a single time any of my DIs ever laid a hand on any of us during the time I spent at Parris Island. In fact, I don't believe any of them would

have hurt us physically, even if they had a gun at their heads. To be honest, they called us a lot of very unflattering names (to put it mildly), and they PT'd the living hell out of us constantly, but we always knew that everything they said to us and made us do was for our own good.

The Ribbon Creek debacle was bad enough although it was definitely an extreme exception to the rule. But, in depicting a Marine Corps DI as a ruthless sadist, R. Lee Ermey clearly sent a false message to the American public in "Full Metal Jacket." Maybe there were a few DIs like him at Parris Island, and I might add that it was rare to have a gunnery sergeant as a DI at Parris Island, but from my experience there I have to say I believe they were the exception and not the rule. Based on my experience I have to believe that most Marine Corps DIs were dedicated, responsible, experienced, highly trained men with the utmost integrity and loyalty to their country, their Corps, and the recruits they were charged with turning into Marines. I can honestly say that this is what my DIs were like, and I am thankful to them for their skill and dedication every day of my life.

Cpl Carl R. Withey  
USMC, 1966-1968  
Elbridge, N.Y.

### Puzzling Question

I received my February edition of *Leatherneck* yesterday and set about reading it cover to cover. In the *Sound Off* section, I came upon the letter, "Puzzling Questions" by Sgt Howard W. Evers,

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USMC. I do not know if this might help or not. I was given the privilege of attending Marine Security Guard (MSG) School at Henderson Hall in 1976. At the time there was a program called PPSU, Personnel Protective Security Unit. Basically, we were trained bodyguards. We were trained by the U.S. State Department and Secret Service at Quantico. This was an additional duty next to being a watchstander. We attended this school after graduation from MSG school. My first post was Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. I don't know if that program still exists. I think the Marines that fly with Marine One are from that unit and are not Marine Security Guards. Someone please let me know if I'm wrong.

SSgt Robert D. Minton  
USMC, 1973-1990  
Concho, Ariz.

### Thank You *Leatherneck*

Thank you for featuring my letter as the Sound Off Letter of the Month in the December 2020 issue. I am humbled by the fact that your staff chose my letter and I'm overjoyed. I will place this magazine in a safe place and keep it for the rest of my life.

LCpl Gregory Eddins  
Hamilton, Ala.

### Operation Desert Storm

Coleen and I enjoyed reading, "The Storm is Over" by R.R. Keene, in the February *Leatherneck*, first published in April 1991. I had not seen the original April 1991 article because I was still in the Kuwait Theater of Operation in April. And I mention my wife Coleen because the families we left at home lived the battles of this war through 24/7 TV news reports and they suffered its effects every day. Now, 30 years later, Coleen and I can read the article and share how the Gulf War affected us both and our family. I went off to war and my Marine wife remained at home rearing our two sons—who grew up to be career Marine officers—while still teaching school. Coleen and I have been married 52 years. In addition to me, Coleen later watched our sons go off to wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. At one time in 2005, our sons were together at Camp Fallujah.

I know this is a story that has played out for Marine families since the founding of our Corps of Marines. To those wives and husbands of Marines who served in Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm and to all those friends, family members, and so many others who prayed for us, wrote to us, and sent us care packages, I remember what you did, and I say thank

you. I thank you for your love and your sacrifices for the family and for America and your support for the freedoms our flag represents around the world. God bless every one of you. Together, we are a family of Marines.

Looking back 30 years to Feb. 24, 1991, and the start of the ground war for Operation Desert Storm, I remember the gung-ho Marines of Task Force (Breach) Alpha (TFA). Major Gary Wines was our commanding officer and I served as the sergeant major. TFA was attached to the 6th Marines and comprised a combined force of 500 Marine combat engineers and Marine tankers tasked to breach the Iraqi mine belts. Author Rick Atkinson tells the story of TFA in his 1993 book, "Crusade: The Untold Story of the Persian Gulf War."

Reading the *Leatherneck* article, "The Storm is Over," reminded me of those glory days of serving with this band of brothers as we picked up our packs and went off to liberate Kuwait. The article testifies to the value of our Corps of Marines and provides an excellent report of the 100-hour ground war. God bless all of you Gulf War Marines.

The cover on the February *Leatherneck* announces the story inside about Oper-  
[continued on page 66]

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RESIDENT & ONLINE

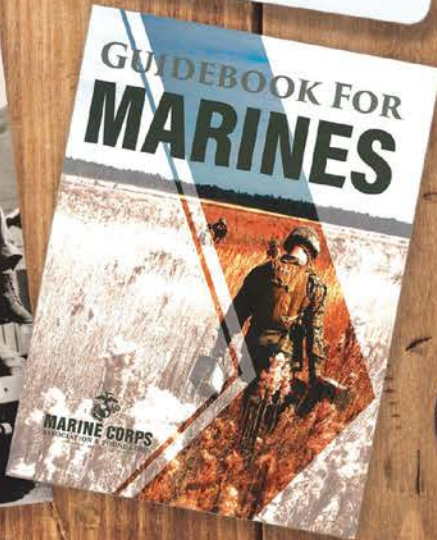
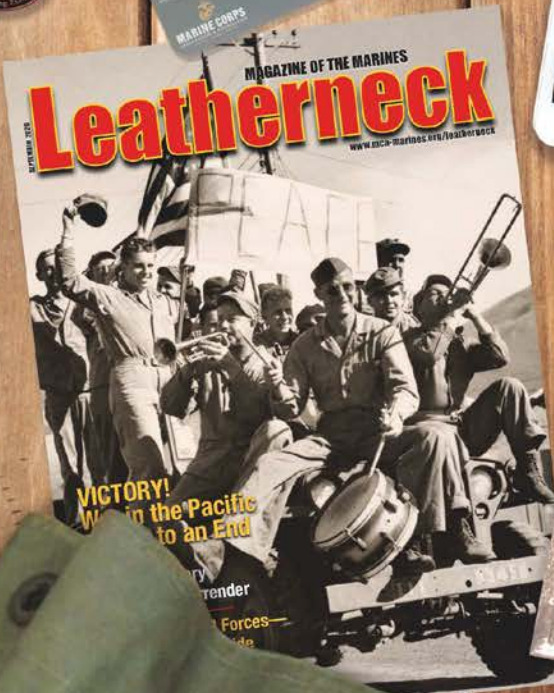
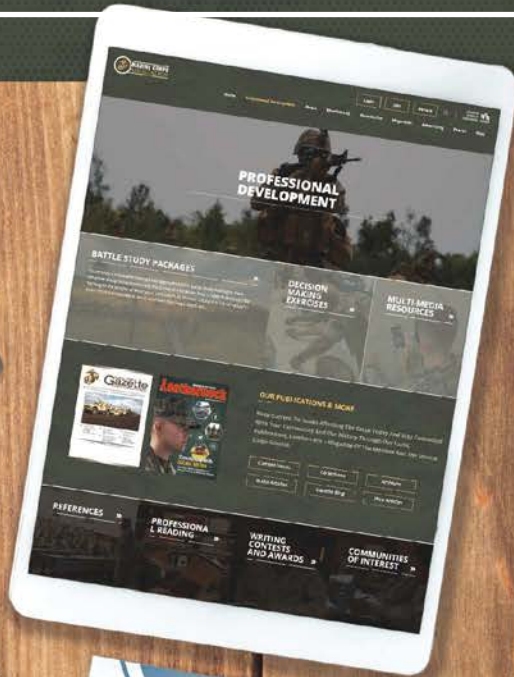
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# MARINE CORPS ASSOCIATION

ADAPTING TO MEET THE NEEDS OF MARINES

By MCA Staff







Just like the Marine Corps, the Marine Corps Association & Foundation (MCA&F) has evolved throughout its history to meet the needs of an ever-changing Marine Corps and individual Marines. Our latest change is a return to our original name: the Marine Corps Association (MCA). Known as the Marine Corps Association & Foundation since 2009 when we established our charitable arm, the Marine Corps Association Foundation (MCAF), the decision to simplify the official name of the professional association of the Marine Corps was made in part to reduce confusion both internally—MCA&F versus MCAF—and to differentiate the MCA from numerous other Marine Corps affiliated organizations that have Marine Corps and foundation in their names (Marine Corps Scholarship Foundation and the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation to name a few). The name change also aligns us more closely with the organizations of our sister services, the Association of the U.S. Army and the Air Force Association, and will assist us as we work toward a formal designation as a National Military Association. As importantly, returning the official name to the Marine Corps Association honors our history as an organization. An executive committee, which included then-Lieutenant Colonel John A. Lejeune, formed the professional association of the Corps in 1913 and chose the name Marine Corps Association. In some ways, we're simply returning to our illustrious roots.

### Strategy 2025

The evolution of the MCA doesn't stop with the name change. With a dedicated, comprehensive focus on all aspects of the Association—our iconic magazines, our retail arm, The Marine Shop, professional and awards events and, of course, membership—we have updated our strategy to assist in focusing our efforts over the next several years.

The MCA's Strategy 2025 details our mission, vision and values and includes a series of goals and objectives (see page 13) which details our way ahead and plan of action to support Today's Marines in garrison and in the operating forces. Specific actions include embarking on a dedicated membership campaign, assisting in enhancing the Marine Military Exposition series, and increasing programs and products to support the professional development of Marines of all grades and military occupational specialties. Of course, the strategy also addresses the resources required to fund the professional association in order to continue the broad spectrum of support we provide.

### New Benefits

While many of *Leatherneck's* tens of thousands of readers join the MCA in order to receive the Magazine of the Marines, membership in the Corps' professional association offers much more for both our active-duty members and those who have joined the ranks of veteran and retired Marines. In the earlier days of the MCA, we had a number of commercial benefits which provided discounted insurance and reduced prices on everything from rental cars to jewelry. While we still provide exceptional insurance options ([insuremcaf.com](http://insuremcaf.com)), our current benefits relate directly to military history and professional development. Our newly established Professional Development Resources page on the MCA's website, [www.mca-marines.org/professional-development](http://www.mca-marines.org/professional-development), provides a variety of resources in numerous formats designed to enhance the education of today's Marines. Veteran Marines will also find the resources interesting and entertaining. The following is a brief description of the professional development resources—we encourage all members to check them out.

### Battle Study Packages

From the first day at recruit training and Officer Candidates School, Marines embrace their heritage and learn to appreciate the study of military history. Each year thousands of Marines are able to enhance their understanding of the history of the Corps by touring battlefields

**In keeping with LtGen Lejeune's 1913 goal in establishing the Marine Corps Association, the MCA has evolved to meet the professional development needs of Marines for more than 100 years. (USMC photo)**

WE'RE  
SIMPLY  
RETURNING  
TO OUR  
ILLUSTRIOUS  
ROOTS



throughout the world thanks to MCA's Commanders' Forum Program, but now all of our members can study the Corps' iconic battles from wherever they are. All that is required is access to our website.

Our battle study packages encompass a variety of conflicts ranging from the Battle of Marathon between Athenians and Persians in 490 B.C. to American soldiers in the mid-19th century Midwest to Marines in the island hopping campaign of the Pacific in World War II. The studies are organized by region in case commanders or even individuals are looking for local options within traveling distance. Each battlefield study has historical significance, and both tactical and strategic impacts are discussed. We have collected a variety of articles, maps, book reviews, videos and recommended readings on each battle and have also included study guides and testimonials of those who have visited the sites to assist those who are just beginning their studies.

## OUR MEMBERS CAN NOW STUDY THE CORPS' ICONIC BATTLES FROM WHEREVER THEY ARE

### Decision Making Exercises

The *Marine Corps Gazette* has published a treasure trove of Decision Making Exercises over the years designed to test tactical acumen and ethical problem solving. We've captured the majority of the *Gazette's* tactical decision games and ethical decision games and previously published solutions on our professional development page. In addition, electronic toolkits, decision forcing exercises, and other case studies are available for use by our members. Our hope is that users, active-duty and veteran Marines alike, will critique the solutions, highlight rel-

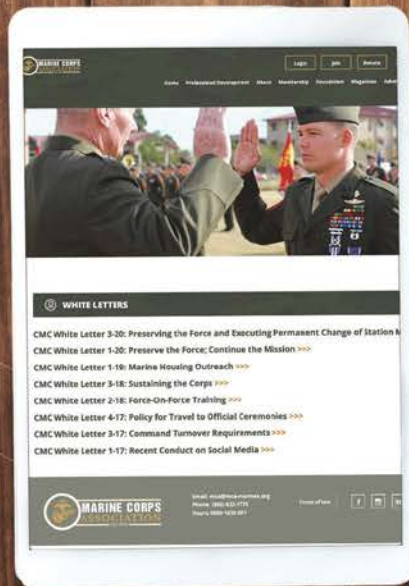
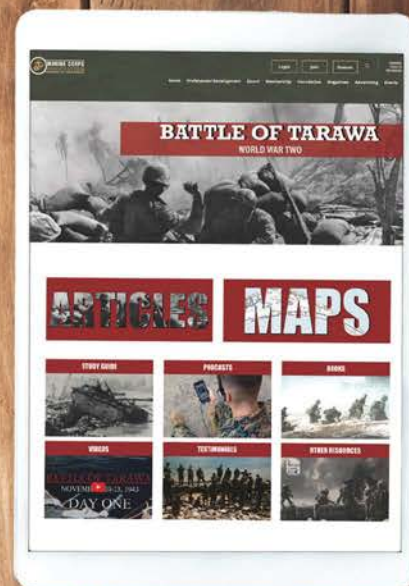
evant tactical concepts, evaluate any differences between what was acceptable then and now, and identify the effects of new weapons or technology on the course of action. Our goal is to have users develop their own solutions because, according to Field Marshall Erwin Rommel, "Normally, there is no ideal solution to military problems; every course of action has its advantages and disadvantages. One must select that which seems best from the most varied aspects and then pursue it resolutely and accept the consequences."

### Multimedia Resources

The Marine Corps Association recognizes that books, while still important, are not the only means by which Marines in the 21st century learn so we've included a variety of multimedia designed to be used in every clime and place. Our members can download podcasts, listen to audio articles or watch videos—the only limitation is access to the internet. Our "Corps Voices" podcasts are taken from oral histories of iconic Marines and include Lieutenant General Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller discussing patrolling in Nicaragua and General Alexander Vandegrift talking about the challenges he faced on Guadalcanal. Other podcasts feature the 32nd Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen James L. Jones, describing the toughest job he ever had (no, it wasn't as CMC or National Security Advisor) and Gen Alfred M. Gray, 29th Commandant, providing his perspectives on the media. Each "Corps Voices" also includes a video component and recommended additional reading.

We also provide videos from our professional and awards events which feature speakers ranging from senior Marine leaders to other key Department of Defense decision makers. Recent speakers include the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen David H. Berger, discussing the future of the Marine Corps and retired Marine general and former Secretary of Defense James N. Mattis speaking on a variety of topics including his service at the senior levels of government. Interviews with authors of military history and current events are also available on our site.

**While the MCA's new Professional Development Resources page was principally designed for Today's Marines, all MCA members will find a variety of options to increase their understanding of military history, test their tactical acumen, and enhance their leadership skills.**





Our audio article library provides oral versions of articles from the pages of the *Marine Corps Gazette* and *Leatherneck*. Organized by common themes, the articles cover a variety of topics from profiles of leaders to the flag raisings on Iwo Jima to firsthand accounts of historical events. Each is easily downloadable on a variety of platforms.

### Publications

Our two iconic magazines, the *Marine Corps Gazette* and *Leatherneck Magazine* of the Marines, have captured the rich history of our Corps and the stories of individual Marines for more than 100 years. Each magazine's archives are available to members on our website, but the MCA has taken a step further to help Marines find pertinent topics to assist in their own education. We have created numerous collections of articles on topics including profiles of Commandants, maneuver warfare, days that changed the Corps and Cold War escalation.

In addition, each month the *Marine Corps Gazette* publishes articles that are only available on our website. These additional articles continue the professional debate on numerous topics beyond the hard-copy version of the magazine ensuring that the voices of Marines throughout the Corps are not limited by page count. A minimum of two articles and sometimes as many as 15 extra articles are posted each month.

The *Gazette* also maintains a blog as a venue by which the challenges facing the Corps are discussed in a professional and constructive manner. Posed as "Calls to Action," recent topics have included Race in the Marine Corps, Force Design 2030, and Operations in the Information Environment. This forum provides a means by which the free exchange of ideas is encouraged among professionals in a moderated forum.

### References

Looking for the latest promotion list or White Letter from the Commandant? Our professional development page has made the search for orders, directives and messages much easier by collating a variety of official references on one page. From national strategy documents to Joint Doctrine and releases from throughout the Department of Defense, our References page provides quick and easy access to the most up to date word from throughout the DOD. In addition, we also provide links to ALMARs and MARADMINs so Marines can stay up to date on news and



Many articles from the MCA's two iconic magazines, the *Marine Corps Gazette* and *Leatherneck*, are available in audio formats and are organized by specific topics as part of the MCA's Professional Development Resources.

information from their own senior leaders.

Another new resource from the MCA designed to assist Marines are our new Reference Cards. These easy to use and easy to carry cards were designed to assist Marines in the classroom, in the field, and in garrison and include cards on the Marine Corps Planning Process, the Troop Leading Steps and individual weapons.

### Professional Reading

The core of professional military education is reading. To that end, the MCA's Professional Development Resources include the complete Commandant's Professional Reading List, links to where those books can be purchased, and how commanders can request unit libraries directly from the MCA. We also have several recommended reading lists from senior Marines including Gen James N. Mattis and Major General William Mullen whose personal spreadsheet of the thousands of books he's read is organized by topic and includes a rating system. An article by Capt T.X. Hammes on how to set up a training library is also included in this section. Written in 1985, its message still resonates today. Our professional reading section also includes numerous book reviews of military classics as well as new books on more recent events.

### Communities of Interest

The MCA is also hosting new communities of interest including the TECOM Warfighting Society as part of our professional development efforts. Established in November 2018, the Society is a modern version of the "Chowder Society" and projects have included "testing hypotheses" through wargaming. With chapters throughout the Corps, the Society maintains a blog and has established a reference library for its members. Other communities include Enders Galley and the Military Learning Gallery.





**MAGAZINE OF THE MARINES**  
**Leatherneck**  
**WRITING CONTEST**  
 OPEN TO ALL ACTIVE-DUTY AND RESERVE ENLISTED MARINES

**PRIZES:**  
 1st Place: \$1,000 + an engraved plaque  
 2nd Place: \$750 + an engraved plaque  
 3rd Place: \$500 + an engraved plaque

**SUBJECTS:**  
**Leadership:** Describe an outstanding Marine Corps leader and what makes him or her so successful.  
**Current Events:** Describe a recent event and the impact it had on the Marines involved.  
**History:** Describe a little-known aspect of a battle or an individual Marine that others may not know about i.e. "the rest of the story".

**DETAILS:**  
 -Maximum 2000 words  
 -Must include contact information: grade, name, unit, SNOIC/OIC, e-mail and phone number  
 -Submit electronically to leatherneck@mca-marines.org in Microsoft Word Format

**DEADLINE: 31 March 2021**  
 Sponsored By Major Rick Stewart, USMC (RET)




A variety of other information is available on the Professional Development Resources page including MCA event information, specific details on writing contests, and references ranging from National Strategy documents to Marine Administrative messages.

**MARINE CORPS ASSOCIATION**  
**GEN ROBERT E. HOGABOOM LEADERSHIP WRITING CONTEST**

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

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

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

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

E-mail entries to: gazette@mca-marines.org  
 Mail entries to: Marine Corps Gazette, Hogaboom Writing Contest, Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134

**DEADLINE: 31 January**



## Writing Contests

Among the MCA's many "core competencies" are its writing contests. From the *Leatherneck* Writing Contest, designed to encourage enlisted Marines to write as part of their professional development, to numerous *Gazette* contests on topics ranging from challenging conventional wisdom to proposing innovative solutions to warfighting challenges. The Professional Development Resources page lists all contests and provides specific information on each for those interested. The MCA is also eager to support commanders who would like to create their own internal writing contests; information on how to request support is also provided in this section.

## Events

Our professional and awards dinners are yet another MCA core competency; information on all scheduled events is captured on our Professional Development Resources page. Dates, speakers, locations and how to register are provided for attendees. In addition, information about how to "attend" events via live streaming is also provided.

## Additional Resources

A key element of our Professional Development Resources is linking to other sites which our members may need as part of their regular duties or their own professional development. Organized by subject, the resources include links to governmental and defense media sites, professional associations, podcasts, and educational research sites. This one stop shop is designed to quickly assist our members in finding the information they need in a clear and accessible manner.

## The Future

The vision of the 13th Commandant of the Marine Corps for the professional association of the Marine Corps was to provide a forum for professional debate and the exchange of ideas, the preservation of our heritage as Marines and to assist Marines in their own professional development. While we are proud to help bring Gen Lejeune's vision to life, the MCA continues to evolve to meet the needs of all our members and we welcome suggestions and feedback from our members to help inform our strategy and way ahead for the next hundred years. 🌐

**WHILE WE  
 ARE PROUD  
 TO HELP  
 BRING GEN  
 LEJEUNE'S  
 VISION  
 TO LIFE,  
 THE MCA  
 CONTINUES  
 TO EVOLVE...**





## MCA&F VISION STATEMENT

To be universally recognized as The Professional Association of the United States Marine Corps.

## MCA&F MISSION STATEMENT

To be the preeminent association for all Marines and Friends of the Corps dedicated to leader development, recognition of professional excellence and expanding awareness of the rich traditions, history, and spirit of the United States Marine Corps.

## GOALS FOR MCA&F 2025: A STRATEGY FOR THE FUTURE

1. *Support* the Commandant and other senior leaders across the Marine Corps by providing platforms to message key audiences, inform required future warfighting capabilities and develop Marines.
2. *Strengthen* current partnerships and relationships and establish new ones to ensure continued growth and influence.
3. *Advance* professional development programs to increase our value to today's Marines and leaders.
4. *Recognize* the superior performance of individual Marines and units who have excelled in their respective technical specialty areas and broader professional accomplishments through our awards and events.
5. *Grow* resources to ensure organizational stability and continued support of the professional development of Marines.
6. *Provide* relevant resources to all Marines and friends of the Corps to inspire continued participation in their professional association.
7. *Succeed* in establishing the Marine Military Exposition series as the Marine Corps' service-level showcase events.
8. *Implement* improvements in governance and business operations to increase organizational and employee effectiveness.
9. *Identify* other transformational initiatives to advance the MCA&F mission and support of all Marines.



## Jacksonville, N.C.

### Not Your Average Reunion Group: 2nd Force Recon Assists Veterans Year-Round

Members of the 2nd Force Reconnaissance Company Association, pictured here during a 2019 reunion in Jacksonville, N.C., do a lot more throughout the year than just plan their annual gathering. The association, which exists for the benefit of Marines who served in the company from its founding in June 1958 until it was absorbed into Marine Forces Special Operations Command in 2006, considers all members of the company during those periods to be members of the association.

The association's mission is to assist and support the Marines and Sailors of 2nd Force Recon by providing information regarding VA benefits, disability benefits and other assistance, advice on the process of applying for services, and financial and other support in times of need or during emergencies.

A number of veterans who served in the company have benefited from the assistance the association provides. Jon Snyder served in the company from 1976-1980 and was seriously injured during

a helicopter rappelling exercise. After leaving the Corps, Jon had difficulty convincing the VA that his medical conditions were service connected, primarily because his medical records were missing. The 2nd Force Recon Co Association intervened with the attorney who represented Jon to the VA and assisted in obtaining the necessary witness testimony that verified Jon's service and the events associated with his medical problems. Within a short time, Jon received 100 percent disability.

Barry Douglas Forrest served with 2nd Force Recon from 1979-1982. The association provided financial assistance to his family during Doug's illness and again when he passed away in 2018. Donated funds allowed the family to bridge costs as well as plan a suitable memorial.

The association's 2021 reunion is planned for May 20-22 in the Jacksonville/North Topsail, N.C., area. The guest of honor for the reunion is Duncan Christie-Miller, a British Royal Marine who served as the company XO in the 1970s. For more information about the association, contact Joe Jennings, [joej@2ndforcerecon.org](mailto:joej@2ndforcerecon.org), or Rich Stickle, [richs@2ndforcerecon.org](mailto:richs@2ndforcerecon.org).

Phil Smith

## Philadelphia



### Unbreakable Bond: One Marine Donates Kidney to Another

When police officer and Marine veteran Bill Welsh needed a kidney transplant, a fellow Marine he served with in 2nd Tank Battalion in 2001 answered the call.

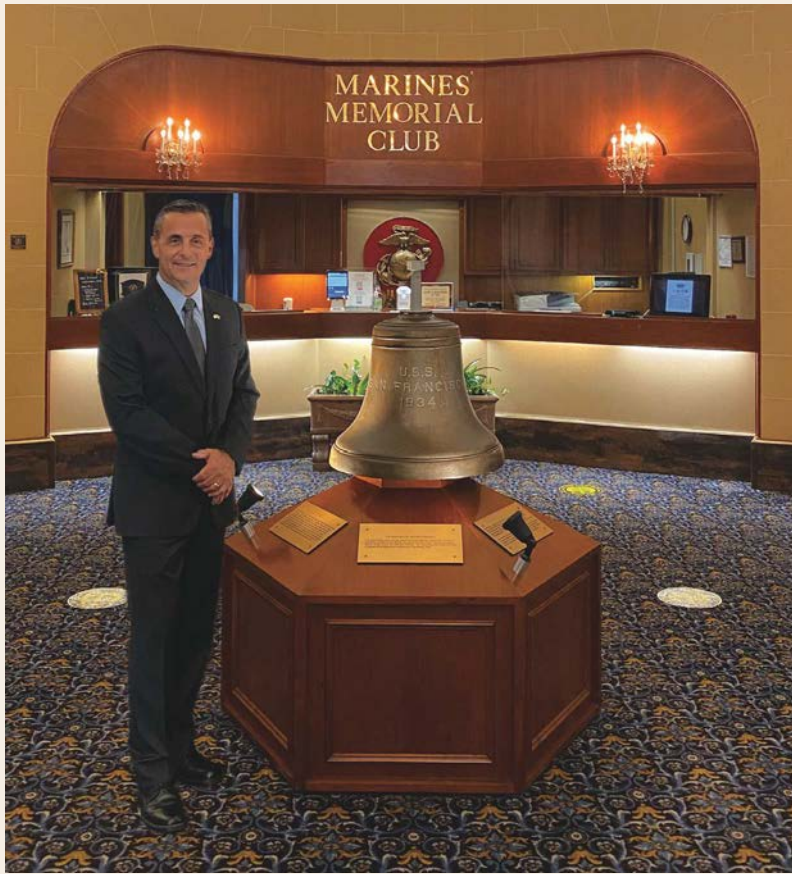
Welsh, who was born with polycystic kidney disease that went undetected until 2015, posted jokingly on his Facebook page: "Anyone got a spare kidney lying around?" But it wasn't a joke: Welsh would soon need to start dialysis if he couldn't find a donor in time. John Gladwell, who lives in Kansas, went through the necessary tests and was notified that he was a match.

The two weren't close during their time in the Marine Corps as their paths had crossed only briefly. Their reconnection on Facebook and Gladwell's selfless donation led to a new lease on life for Welsh and is a testament to the unbreakable bond that all Marines share. On Oct. 13, 2020, at Jefferson Hospital in Philadelphia, Pa., Welsh, pictured on the right, and Gladwell, left, underwent transplant surgery.

"It reaffirms that Marines stick together until the end of time," said Welsh, who is doing well following the transplant. "There are plenty of other Marines I served with that if the shoe was on the other foot, I'd do it in a heartbeat."

Submitted by Joe Welsh





COURTESY OF MARINES' MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

## San Francisco

### Marines' Memorial Club, Hotel Welcomes LtGen Rocco as CEO

Marines' Memorial Association, which operates the iconic Marines' Memorial Club & Hotel in San Francisco, Calif., welcomed Lieutenant General Michael A. Rocco, USMC (Ret), pictured, as its new president and chief executive officer on Nov. 1, 2020, following his retirement as Deputy Commandant for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. For more than 70 years, Marines' Memorial Club has honored the memory of the men and women who served in defense of their nation.

"I am humbled and honored to have been selected as Marines' Memorial's next CEO," said LtGen Rocco, who succeeds LtGen Jan C. Huly, USMC (Ret), who served in the position for three years. "After 37 years in the Marine Corps, it is a privilege to continue serving, to carry on the legacy and the traditions here that were first started by the folks who came before me."

The Marines' Memorial Club, established in 1946, provides a sanctuary for those wishing to honor the valor of veterans who gave their lives. It is a "living memorial" designed to preserve memories and share the stories of American military history, and its programs are supported by membership dues through the association and its foundation.

Submitted by Mackenzie Jakoubek

## Rosamond, Calif.

### Cadets Honor Fallen Marines, Families

Students with the Rosamond High School chapter of the California Cadet Corps (CACC), a youth leadership development program run by the California National Guard, have found a number of ways to honor the memory of two local Marines who died in 2010. Although the cadets had to make adjustments to their activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic, they have continued to live out their motto of "Essayons," which in French means, "Let us try."

On Sept. 11, 2020, the anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Cadet Ashley Prudencio, left, presented Ms. Pilar Salazar, right, whose son, Lance Corporal Omar Salazar, was killed in an accident following a combat deployment, with flowers and a card in memory of his life and service.

In 2019, cadets participated in an annual 5K run up "Joey's Hill," nicknamed for LCpl Joseph C. Lopez-Pratti, who was killed in Afghanistan while serving with 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment—



COURTESY OF CHARLES WALLIS

the "Darkhorse" battalion—which suffered more casualties during its seven-month deployment than any other Marine Corps unit during Operation Enduring Freedom.

During the 2019 holiday season, the cadets would arise early in the morning on their winter break to stand in the cold and rain to honor the fallen at the nearby Bakersfield National Cemetery, where they paid tribute to Lopez-Pratti and Salazar.

"Many of our cadets would give all they had to get up on that hill or stand watch over those veterans," said Charles Wallis, who leads the CACC at Rosamond High School. "Now that we are doing virtual distance learning, we have not been able to do some of these events. But we still talk about the great Marines and their stories."

The school's CACC program filled the space left by the school's Air Force JROTC program, which was disbanded due to budgetary constraints.

Submitted by Charles Wallis

**"Corps Connections" highlights the places and events through which active-duty and veteran Marines connect with one another, honor the traditions of the Corps and recognize the achievements of their fellow leathernecks. We welcome submissions of photos from events like the ones featured here. Send them to: Sara W. Bock, *Leatherneck Magazine*, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134, or email them to [s.bock@mca-marines.org](mailto:s.bock@mca-marines.org). Submission does not guarantee publication, and we cannot guarantee the return of photos.** 🇺🇸

# In Every Clime and Place

Compiled by Sara W. Bock

## UNITED ARAB EMIRATES Marines, UAE Armed Forces Conduct Bilateral Training For Crisis Response

Combined forces from the United Arab Emirates and the U.S. completed a week-long defense-focused training engagement in the UAE in January.

Marines with Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force–Crisis Response-Central Command and servicemembers with the UAE Presidential Guard gathered to strengthen partnerships and enhance collective crisis response capability in the region.

“The relationship between the United Arab Emirates and United States Armed Forces has an essential role to stability and security in the region,” said Brigadier General Farrell Sullivan, the commanding general of Naval Amphibious Force, Task Force 51/5th Marine Expeditionary Brigade. “This training opportunity between the UAE Presidential Guard and U.S. forces reinforces our commitment to bilateral engagements and highlights the continued efforts between both nations

to enhance interoperability and crisis response capabilities.”

The two crisis response forces participated in live-fire training which included 60 mm mortar systems, snipers and small unit tactics.

The Marine Corps and UAE Presidential Guard maintain a close relationship through recurring bilateral training engagements and programs such as the U.S. Marine Corps Training Mission-UAE, in which Marines advise and enhance the Presidential Guard’s ability to conduct counterterrorism operations, protect critical infrastructure and support national defense.

SPMAGTF–CR-CC serves as the Marine Corps’ crisis response force to the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility, providing support for Operation Inherent Resolve, regional partner nations and other U.S. interests.

This training marked the third iteration of bilateral live-fire training in six months, demonstrating the strength and mutual respect between the two partner forces.

Capt Joshua Hays, USMC

## OKINAWA, JAPAN EOD Techs Master Long-Distance Detonation

Explosive Ordnance Disposal technicians with Marine Corps Installations Pacific–Marine Corps Base Camp Smedley D. Butler conducted a standoff munitions disruption (SMUD) range at Camp Hansen, Okinawa, Japan, Jan. 8.

SMUD is a technique used by EOD technicians in which a service weapon is used to disrupt and neutralize munition from a standoff distance in order to achieve a low-order detonation. The training ensured the Marines were proficient in the safe long-distance detonation of explosives using the M110 semi-automatic sniper system.

“We utilize this technique to save time on the rapid clearance of unexploded explosive ordnance,” said Sergeant Julian Mora, an EOD technician with Headquarters and Support Battalion, MCIPAC–MCB Butler. “If an area is very saturated, and we want to reduce the explosive hazards as quickly as possible, we need to be proficient in this procedure to conduct in operational settings.”

Mora explained that SMUD is a highly effective technique because by shooting the munition, it breaks up and a high-order detonation is avoided.

EOD technicians placed M67 hand grenades on the hillside of the range to serve as targets. They then made their way back up range and began familiarizing themselves with the weapon system.

The EOD technicians brought out Marines with H&S Bn to give them an insight as to how EOD conducts training and stays ready.

“We learned a lot about the difference between high- and low-order detonations, which was really interesting to see the science behind it,” said Lance Corporal Matthew Juneau, a transmissions systems operator with H&S Bn. “I am very thankful that I was able to be out here. It is not something I get to do on a daily basis. I really appreciate the EOD guys for letting us join.”

The MCIPAC–MCB Butler EOD team frequently invites Marines from other military occupational specialties out so they can catch a glimpse of how EOD trains and what kind of ranges they conduct.

“It gives them an opportunity to leave their duties for a day, learn about what



LCPL ROBERT KUEHN, USMC

Marines with 3/1, assigned to SPMAGTF–CR-CC, establish security on a rooftop during a crisis response exercise in the United Arab Emirates, Jan. 13. The exercise was designed to sustain proficiency and enhance MAGTF integration in a realistic training environment.



**Right: Sgt Tim Allen, an EOD technician with H&S Bn, MCIPAC-MCB Butler, yells, “Fire in the hole!” during a SMUD range on Camp Hansen, Okinawa, Japan, Jan. 8. (Photo by Cpl Brennan Beauton, USMC)**



CPL BRENNAN BEAUTON, USMC

**Above: Sgt Coy M. Moody, an EOD technician with 9th Engineer Support Bn, 3rd Marine Logistics Group, prepares the SMUD range on Camp Hansen, Okinawa, Japan, on Jan. 8. SMUD is a technique used by EOD technicians where they utilize a service weapon to disrupt and neutralize munition from a standoff distance.**



**Above: LCpl Zachary Larsen, a combat graphics specialist with H&S Bn, MCIPAC-MCB Butler, sights in during a SMUD range on Camp Hansen, Okinawa, Japan, Jan. 8. (Photo by Cpl Brennan Beauton, USMC)**



CPL BRENNAN BEAUTON, USMC

**EOD technician Sgt Coy M. Moody prepares the SMUD range on Camp Hansen, Okinawa, Japan, Jan. 8. During the training, EOD technicians invited Marines from H&S Bn to participate allowing them to learn about how the community trains and maintains readiness.**

we do and have fun,” said Mora. “A lot of people do not know the full spectrum of what EOD is capable of doing and our daily duties.”

The Marines Corps’ EOD mission is to support the Marine air-ground task force, supporting establishment, homeland defense, special operations forces and other government agencies by detecting, locating, accessing, diagnosing, rendering safe neutralizing, recovering, exploiting and disposing of hazards from foreign and domestic unexploded ordnance, improvised explosive devices and weapons of mass destruction that present a threat to operations, installations, personnel or materiel.

Cpl Brennan Beauton, USMC



## ARABIAN GULF

### Marine Aviation Provides Long-Range Strike Capability

The *Makin Island* Amphibious Ready Group and the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit began air operations from the Arabian Gulf in support of Operation Inherent Resolve, Feb. 13.

Close air support operations and defense counter-air support operations were carried out by Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron (VMM) 164 (Reinforced), the aviation combat element of the 15th MEU, as part of broader U.S. Central Command counterterrorism operations in the region.

Marine Corps F-35B Lightning II aircraft departed from the amphibious assault ship USS *Makin Island* (LHD-8), flagship of the *Makin Island* ARG, to execute the long-range strike.

“Long range F-35B Lightning II strike operations demonstrate the ARG/MEU’s ability to project air power well beyond the shore,” said Colonel Christopher Bronzi, the 15th MEU commanding officer. “We look forward to exercising the capabilities in our arsenal while in theater and remain ready to deliver those capabilities at any time if called upon.”

The *Makin Island* ARG transited through the Strait of Hormuz and into the Arabian Gulf on Feb. 8. The *Makin Island* ARG and 15th MEU presence

in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations demonstrate the commitment the U.S. and its regional partners have to the free flow of commerce, regional maritime security and freedom of navigation.

“This mission is a strong example of the value a deployed naval expeditionary force brings to combatant commanders and joint partners in the region,” said Navy Captain Stewart Bateshansky, *Makin Island* ARG commodore. “The MEU’s ability to source combat sorties from the *Makin Island* while simultaneously supporting training and operations is a testament to the flexibility and responsiveness of our Navy and Marine Corps team.”

The *Makin Island* ARG and embarked 15th MEU provide the combatant commander with a responsive, flexible and forward-deployed asset capable of maritime power projection, contingency operations and crisis response, shaping the operational environment to protect the U.S. and allied interests in any threat environment.

“We are proud and excited to be able to support missions in areas of the world where we are most needed,” said Lieutenant Colonel Christopher Kelly, the executive officer of VMM-164 (Rein). “Conducting a long-range strike mission with fifth generation F-35B fighters from amphibious assault ships demonstrates

the versatility this platform brings to the joint force.”

The U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations encompasses about 2.5 million square miles of water and includes the Arabian Gulf, Gulf of Oman, Red Sea and parts of the Indian Ocean. The expanse is comprised of 20 countries and includes three critical choke points at the Strait of Hormuz, the Suez Canal and the Strait of Bab al Mandeb at the southern tip of Yemen.

15th MEU

## CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C.

### Anywhere, Anytime: 2nd MEU Conducts IRT Exercise

Marines with 2nd Marine Expeditionary Brigade completed an Initial Response Team Exercise held at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., and Marine Auxiliary Landing Field Bogue, N.C., Jan. 14.

The IRT exercise simulated a forward theater deployment to establish a command-and-control communication node for 2nd MEB with support from Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron (VMM) 263.

“We conducted an Initial Response Team flyaway drill that consisted of Marines from core functional areas within the MEB,” said Major Jay Montgomery, G-3 future operations planner with 2nd



A Marine Corps F-35B Lightning II assigned to VMM-164 (Rein), 15th MEU, launches from the flight deck of USS *Makin Island* (LHD-8) in the Arabian Gulf during flight operations in support of Operation Inherent Resolve, Feb. 13.

SGT SARAH STEGALL, USMC





SGT JESUS SEPULVEDA TORRES, USMC

MEB. “The team was given 24 to 96 hours to prepare for a simulated forward deployment and establish a command-and-control center.”

As the Marines of 2nd MEB executed the exercise, they were airlifted to Marine Corps Auxiliary Landing Field Bogue and immediately began setting up their control center. This quick execution not only demonstrates the mobility and flexibility of the MEB, but also ensures the proficiency of the Marines involved.

“From the moment we had boots on the ground we were able to set up communications for our staff within 20 minutes,” said Gunnery Sergeant Scott Brown, a network chief with 2nd MEB. “Being that fast to establish communications is essential to being able to enable and control units, anywhere at any given time.”

Being able to establish a command-and-control station on short notice is one of the requirements for 2nd MEB’s goal of staying a force in readiness preparing for an eventual II Marine Expeditionary Force deployment.

“One of the missions for MEB is to be rapidly deployable; deployments and drills like this help us rehearse the establishment of command and control,” said Colonel Garrett Benson, the assistant chief of staff, G-3 operations, 2nd MEB. “The Initial Response Team was a way of maintaining 2nd MEB’s proficiency in rapid deployment and getting out

**Above: Marines with 2nd MEB board an MV-22 Osprey assigned to VMM-263 during an IRT flyaway drill at MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C., Jan. 14. The IRT departed Camp Lejeune and headed to MCALF Bogue to simulate a forward theater deployment.**



SGT JESUS SEPULVEDA TORRES, USMC

**During an IRT flyaway drill, Marines with 2nd MEB set up a communications area at MCALF Bogue, Jan. 14.**

the door completely ready to go both administratively and medically.”

Benson said the drill showcased the MEB’s ability to be anywhere, anytime.

“The purpose of the exercise was to ensure we are ready at a moment’s notice in Europe, Africa or anywhere else in the world,” said Benson. “This training event was a success and it validated our ability

to deploy on a short notice, furthered our capacity to incorporate aviation assets into our movement and reinforce our relationship with II Marine Expeditionary Force staff as we look to execute these exercises like these in the future.”

Sgt Jesus Sepulveda Torres, USMC



# Contact!

Story and photos  
by GySgt Ed Evans, USMC

**F**irst Reconnaissance Battalion's Combat Operations Center (COC) is a camouflaged, fortified bunker nestled into a hillside near the 1st Marine Division headquarters. The inside is like a squared-away cave. It's an orderly maze of wall maps, telephones, radios, code name charts, progress update sheets, and a bank of clipboards with the latest information on each Recon team.

Major Ronald L. Bub, the battalion operations officer, sits at his paper-piled desk in the center of the COC. His lanky, 6-foot-plus frame doesn't quite fit the desk. At this particular moment, he had just turned to check the wall map behind him when a bare light bulb directly over his desk snapped on. A red light outside the COC entrance lit up simultaneously. A recon team was in contact. The COC sprang to life.

When a recon team is inserted into an area, their mission is one of stealth. They go in to gather information, to observe the enemy. They aren't there to fight. If spotted and engaged, their mission has been compromised.

Maj Bub and First Lieutenant Francis W. Valentine, the COC air officer, moved quickly to a partitioned corner marked "RESTRICTED AREA." Behind the blue partition, Corporal Jory W. Deloach and Cpl John F. Keady rapidly filled out their situation report forms. Information was being received through five radio sets banked in front of them.

The team in contact was "Achilles" from A Company. They had run into the enemy on a hillside in the 1st Marine Regiment's Leech Valley. Their radio transmissions were being passed to the COC by Recon Marines in a Platoon Patrol Base, set up on a hilltop as a radio relay unit.

As soon as the COC contact light snapped on, Sergeant Jeffrey Balliet, the

watch noncommissioned officer (NCO), swung into action on a set of six field phones.

"As soon as we get the word," Balliet explained, "we notify the whole world."

In a matter of seconds Balliet had informed A Company that their team, Achilles, was in contact. The 11th Marine Regiment's artillerymen were given the team's position for a stand-by fire mission.

**As soon as the COC contact light snapped on, Sergeant Jeffrey Balliet, the watch noncommissioned officer (NCO), swung into action on a set of six field phones.**



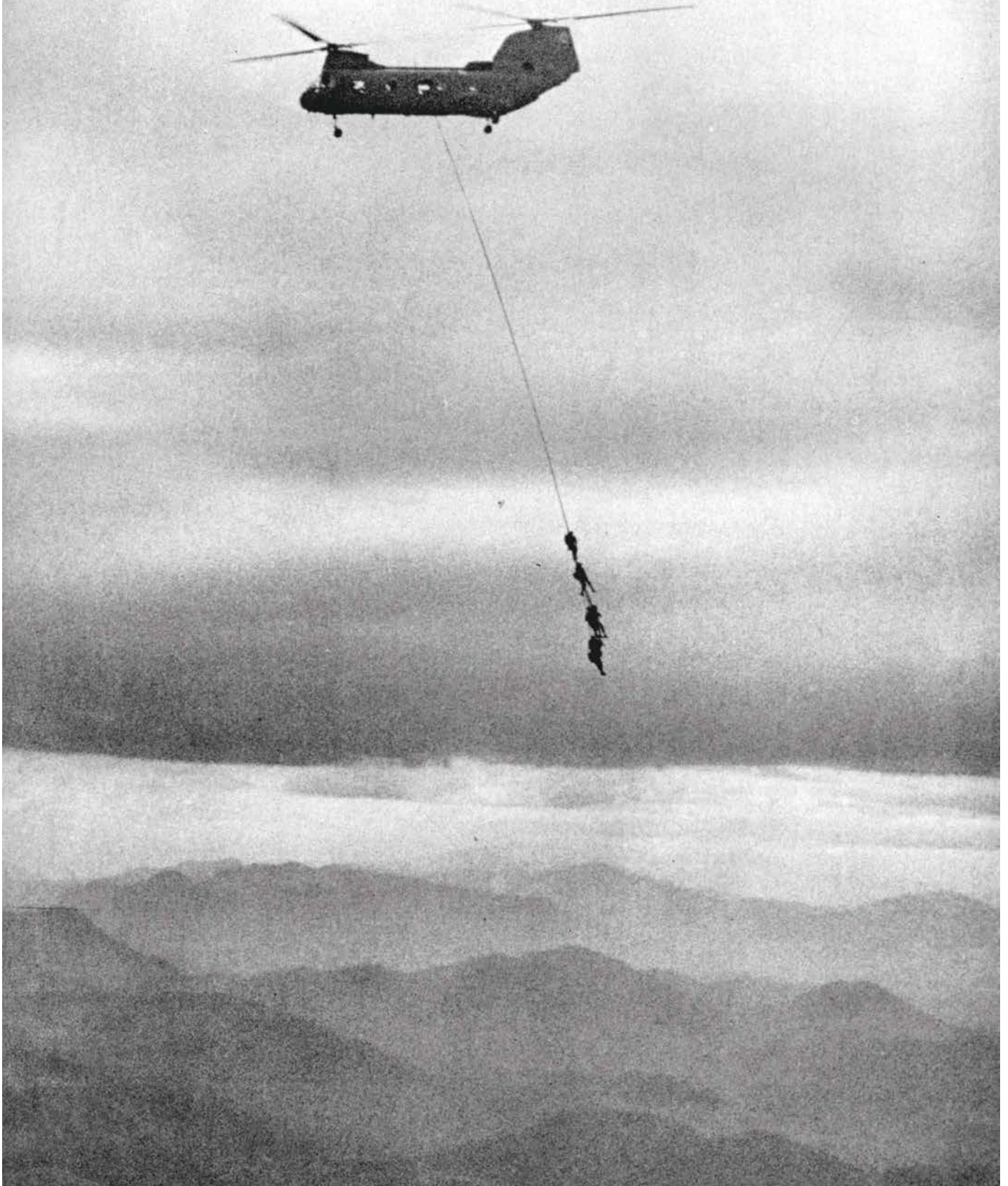
"Achilles," the team from Co A, marked its position with smoke to signal the extraction helicopter.



Its mission compromised, Rudder had to be extracted. LtCol Bernard E. Trainor, left, the battalion CO, watched as the team was lifted out by a SPIE device.



**When a helicopter was unable to set down on the hillside of Leech Valley, a SPIE device was used to extract the Achilles team from enemy fire.**







**Above: Once they reached a relatively safe area, the Marines unhooked from the SPIE rig and boarded the helicopter for a more conventional ride.**

**Right: SSgts R.H. Pupuhi and Gene Giles made a post-extraction inspection of the SPIE rig that had lifted the Rudder team to safety.**

An OV-1 Bronco aircraft from VMO-2 was on its way to the team as an armed aerial observer (AO). Two Cobra gunships of HML-367 were radioed to provide fire support for the team. The 1st Marine Division COC was notified of the situation, and the 1st Marine Regiment was told of the team's engagement in their area.

At 11th Marines, artillerymen trained their 105s, 155s and 8-inch guns on the team's map coordinates. If Achilles was to be extracted, the gunners would lay about 100 rounds on those coordinates to clear the area once the team was out.



As soon as the 1st Marine Regiment was notified, their Quick Reaction Force (QRF) was put on alert. If it turned out Achilles had engaged a large enemy force, the QRF could land in the middle of them minutes after they got the word to go.

Captain Martin C. Higgins, the Company A CO, arrived at the COC. He had flown with Achilles that morning when they had been inserted into the area. Now he strapped a .45-caliber pistol over his field jacket and prepared to get them out.

A recon team had last been in that area more than four months ago. They had also run into enemy elements. Since then, AOs had spotted caves and trails. Before Achilles went into the area, Sgt Larry White of the battalion intelligence section had briefed them on what was suspected to be out there. Achilles' mission had been strictly to recon the valley and gather as much intelligence as possible. Now they had been compromised. Unless the team



could slip away, they would have to be extracted. If the contact got too heavy, the QRF was standing by.

Cpl Keady's radio crackled as the AO in the Bronco came on the air to contact the team. He had reached them only 13 minutes after they had come under fire. After a few passes over them, he located Achilles' exact position. From there the team gave him the direction of the enemy. He went after them with his mounted machine guns and rockets.

"All right, it looks like they're pretty close," the AO radioed. "I'm going to lay a rocket in there. Keep your heads down and if anything happens, let me know immediately."

The radios went silent and in the COC you could hear the light bulbs burning. Then the team's primary radioman, Lance Corporal Clyde Brewer, came up to report movement around them on their west, southwest and then to the north. It seemed possible that the enemy was trying to force them to move down a nearby trail. They had probably set Claymore mines along the trail, hoping the team would trip them. Achilles radioed that they were staying put.

Maj Bub now asked the team if they believed the situation warranted extracting them. The patrol answered, "That's definitely affirmative." At that moment, two Cobra gunships arrived on the scene with their machine guns, 40 mm grenade launchers and rockets. They began laying

their ordnance around Achilles' position.

Two CH-46 helicopters from HMM-364 landed in the Division landing zone (LZ) just down the hill from the Recon COC. Capt Higgins left to supervise the rigging of one helicopter with a Special Patrol Insert and Extract (SPIE) device in case the choppers couldn't set down to pick them up. The SPIE is a 120-foot, four-ply strap with D-rings sewn in near the bottom. Each man wears a parachute-type harness which will clip onto the SPIE. The rig is used only for emergencies.

Movement had increased to the team's southeast and northwest. Perhaps the enemy was completing the encirclement. It had been an hour since the contact light had gone on. Achilles was now beginning to move toward their original insertion LZ. They had received fire shortly after being inserted and had only moved about 300 meters from the LZ.

On the Division LZ, the two CH-46s shut down their engines. One was still being rigged with the SPIE. Since the decision whether to extract Achilles had not yet been made, there was time to give the pilots a firsthand briefing in the COC. 1stLt Valentine brought them up to date on the tactical situation. Capt Higgins described the area where they had dropped Achilles that morning.

The Achilles team by now had sneaked away from the enemy and had reached their insert LZ. The patrol leader, Cpl Jack Balliet (no relation to the watch NCO),

**"All right, it looks like they're pretty close," the AO radioed. "I'm going to lay a rocket in there. Keep your heads down and if anything happens, let me know immediately."**

moved out to check the LZ. As he did so, an enemy soldier stood up and aimed in on him. Balliet's point man, LCpl Jim Howard, and the M-79 man, LCpl Dan Kumle, sprayed the area with a base of fire as Balliet ducked for cover. Brewer reported their position to the COC, and the fact that they were again under fire. The gunship pilots came on the air and reported they had only 45 minutes flying time left. Then they would have to refuel.

Until now, Lieutenant Colonel Bernard E. Trainor, the battalion CO, had been in his office, keeping abreast of the situation by a hotline phone on Maj Bub's desk. Now the colonel arrived at the COC to watch the operation personally. Still wearing his "desk work" glasses, and chewing an unlit cigar stub, the colonel checked the maps and listened to the radio messages.

After talking with the team, Maj Bub and LtCol Trainor agreed that it sounded

**Smiles helped ease the tension as a team from Co B, 1st Recon Bn, waited at their Da Nang LZ. They would soon be fighting for their lives in the Que Son Mountains.**



as though they were indeed surrounded. LtCol Trainor directed that the 1st Marines be requested to send in the QRF. Maj Bub called the 1st Marines and they also thought it sounded like a good target.

LtCol Trainor relit the remnants of his cigar, then sat down by Maj Bub's desk. The major told Sgt Balliet to turn off the contact light. Balliet did so and reported that the QRF was aboard choppers and 20 minutes away from target. Everyone sat easier.

"Say, Lieutenant Valentine, what's this I hear about you getting orders for Pensacola?" the colonel asked.

"Yes, Sir," said Valentine, "but it's something I never asked for. Somebody up there must like Recon."

Capt Higgins had stripped off his pistol and field jacket. He wouldn't be going after Achilles. He leaned his chair back on two legs and wondered out loud how the Company B team, Rudder, was doing out in the Que Son Mountains.

The contact light snapped on.

"Rudder's in contact!" yelled Cpl Keady.

Capt Higgins sat his chair down hard. "That's it," he said, "that's the last time I talk about any teams!"

LtCol Trainor moved back to the radios. Now, two of his teams were in contact. The 11th Marines were advised of the

team's position. An AO and gunships were directed to the area. Sgt Balliet went through his procedure on the field phones again. In a few minutes, 1stLt James Anderson, Rudder's company commander, came striding into the COC with an M16 and two bandoliers of ammunition. Rudder might have to be extracted.

**S**outh of Da Nang, in the Que Son Mountains, the team had been moving quietly away from their insert LZ. An enemy aid station was known to be somewhere in the area. Another team had made contact with the enemy two days earlier. Cpl Kawelo Makaneole, the team leader, was looking forward to capturing a prisoner. He felt sure they could because they could hear someone coughing out there somewhere. Only the enemy would be in this area. If they could do it, a prisoner would mean an R&R for his whole team.

"As soon as we were inserted," Makaneole said later, "I noticed a fresh trail parallel to the rice paddy. We followed it, then moved off the trail, then found another trail. On this one we found a 250-pound bomb. The enemy had marked it, so they knew it was there and what it was."

When they started down the trail again, they ran into an enemy patrol. LCpl Bob Ast, the point man, saw them first.

**"They didn't even expect us. Their point man had his rifle slung over his shoulder. He was goofing off when he saw us. I shot him three times, turned around to move back and I fell."—LCpl Bob Ast**

"They didn't even expect us," Ast said. "Their point man had his rifle slung over his shoulder. He was goofing off when he saw us. I shot him three times, turned around to move back and I fell. They threw a frag (grenade) at us and I got a scratch across my forehead. Makaneole covered me so I could move back."

As Rudder moved into their 360-degree defensive position, the enemy peppered them with automatic weapons fire and grenades. Private First Class Dean Achman, the radioman, dodged a grenade that landed a few yards from him. They had maneuvered to a rocky area, which deflected most of the grenade shrapnel.

"I could hear them moving from the

**After another emergency extraction, team members of Achilles were questioned about enemy movements and strength by Capt Martin C. Higgins, Co A's commander.**





northwest and northeast,” Makaneole said. “They were breaking bushes all around us. When they began to surround us, I knew we had to be extracted. We couldn’t evade them through the thick brush.”

The enemy was so close that in the COC the radio could barely pick up Achman’s whispered transmissions. They were carrying two radios, but Cpl Scott Matson’s set was out and Achman had the only one that was working. The radio relay team was continuing to pass Rudder’s messages to the COC for clarification.

Cpl Keady, working the COC radios and entering data in his situation log, announced without looking up, “Rudder has two friendly WIAs [wounded in action].”

LtCol Trainor made his decision. “Let’s bring ‘em out,” he said. With his now unlit cigar stub clamped in his teeth, the colonel threw on his flight gear and a pistol and headed for the waiting helicopters. They were running and ready to go as he reached the LZ. One chopper had already been rigged with a SPIE in anticipation of extracting Achilles. The colonel checked it, then boarded the other chopper which would act as the chase bird. Only the Extract Officer, 1stLt Anderson, the B Company CO, and his assistant, Staff Sergeant Gene Giles, would ride in the extract bird. Giles was the senior man of four men in the battalion qualified to work the SPIE rig. One of the other men was SSgt Rodney H. Pupuhi, Cpl Makaneole’s cousin. Pupuhi wanted to go on the extract, but since they would be using the SPIE rig, they couldn’t afford to carry any more weight than the Extract Officer and Giles.

Above Rudder, the AO, in his OV-1 Bronco, and the Cobra gunships were making their runs, trying to keep the enemy’s head down. On the ground, the team began to run low on ammunition. The firefight was so heavy that Ast alone had used up 22 magazines.

“We put out a good volume of fire,” Makaneole said, “and we had them pretty well pinned down. We were shooting in front of them and to the side. According to the AOs, we got quite a few of them, more than we thought. But when we started to run low on ammo, we had to move to a new spot. That’s when they started to move, too.

“The only time I got worried,” Makaneole continued, “was when the AO scared us. He came down over our position and it looked like that rocket was coming right at us. I was yelling, ‘Tell him to back off, back off!’ But he knew what he was doing. He laid a rocket right in on top of them.”

When the CH-46s arrived, they circled



**Above: Cpl Kawelo Makaneole, center, team leader of Rudder, explained how the Marines had run into an enemy patrol shortly after arriving at the insert LZ.**



**A thorough discussion of its patrol is SOP for each returning team. Even though their mission had been compromised by enemy detection, what they had seen and heard would prove to be of extreme value.**



With three days of stalking through enemy lines behind him, LCpl Clyde Brewer joined the other members of Achilles in a steak dinner at the battalion mess hall.

**After a few minutes which seemed like half an hour to the team, the CH-46 lifted the team out, dangling on the SPIE rig. They could see tracer rounds zipping by them. One round sliced part way into the rig.**

a few times, allowing the gunships to make a couple more runs. LtCol Trainor leaned into the wind from the chopper's open porthole, watching the action below. The colonel—a former enlisted man, a veteran of British Royal Marine Commando training, on his second tour with 1st Recon Bn—knew well the dangerous situation his men were in. The earphones he wore kept him in contact with Rudder's radio transmissions. He could see the red muzzle flashes all around his team.

The extract helicopter made a wide circle around Rudder's position. Suddenly it dropped from 1,500 feet to treetop level and came skimming across the ground to where the team lay. As soon as the extract chopper moved in to get them, the area

around the team opened up like the Fourth of July. It was impossible to set down and take them aboard. The chopper hovered on a pillow of air about 60 feet off the ground with the SPIE rig hanging through an opening in the floor of the craft. SSgt Giles, stretched out on the floor of the chopper, was operating the rig. He could see that the team, bunched into a tight group, was in bad trouble. Muzzle flashes were everywhere.

**T**he men had to move about 10 feet under the enemy fire to reach the SPIE. Cpl Matson was the first to hook up, followed by LCpl Moses J. Lee, who was moving painfully on a sprained ankle. The team leader hooked up last. The extract chopper was now receiving heavy fire as the chopper crew sprayed the area with their two mounted .50-cal. machine guns.

After a few minutes which seemed like half an hour to the team, the CH-46 lifted the team out, dangling on the SPIE rig. They could see tracer rounds zipping by them. One round sliced part way into the rig. The rig left their hands free, so every man opened up with the ammunition he had left. As the extract bird lifted out of the zone, the crewmen in the circling chase bird looked in amazement at the team members flying through the air several hundred feet up in space over the valley. The crew chief, Cpl Jimmy

L. "Bucky" Buckland, clasped his hands over his head and flashed a wide grin at the other crewmen. They shook their heads and grinned back. Rudder was safely out.

LtCol Trainor wasn't smiling. The men in the extract bird had seen Lee moving with difficulty on his injured ankle. Word had reached the colonel that one of his men was perhaps seriously injured.

When they had reached a relatively secure area, the extract bird lowered the team into a rice paddy. There they could unhook from the SPIE and board the chopper. By this time, Lee was incapable of walking. Makaneole and the team's corpsman, HN Dale E. Rutkowski, lifted him into the chopper. The other wounded man, Ast, was moving under his own power. Circling overhead, LtCol Trainor watched grimly.

As they reached the 1stMarDiv area, the extract bird set down immediately at 1st Medical Battalion. The chase bird delivered LtCol Trainor to the Division LZ. The Marines of Company B were waiting for him. While the colonel was talking to them, the extract chopper set down in the LZ to unload the rest of the team. They were mobbed by Company B.

Makaneole made his way through his jubilant friends to the colonel and briefed him on Ast's and Lee's injuries. The entire company celebrated their safe return right there on the LZ.

LtCol Trainor left them and walked briskly up the hill to the COC. For him, it wasn't over yet. He received a briefing by Maj Bub on Achilles' status. The QRF had linked up with the team and they would be staying overnight. In the morning, they would decide whether to extract the team, or let them sweep the area with the QRF.

Meanwhile, the team would be sent to chow and then debriefed. The information they had gathered during their engagement would tell the battalion intelligence chief, Gunnery Sergeant Lavon Roberts, a great deal about the enemy. According to how the enemy was dressed, his general upkeep and how he reacted, the intelligence section could put together what type of enemy he was, Viet Cong or North Vietnamese Army, and perhaps even what his plans were. Even though their mission had been compromised, what they had gathered with their eyes and ears would turn out to be valuable.

As the colonel walked back up the hill to his office, Maj Bub returned to the COC. His watch NCO, Sgt Balliet, noted the current team insert missions and listened to Corporals Keady and Deloach on the radios. Balliet still had an hour and a half to go on his 12-hour watch. Other teams were still out and, at the moment, so was the contact light. 🍀



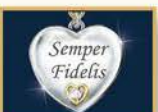
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Jerry Keenan stands beside a roving gun in Korea during the summer of 1952. The roving guns were often used in the hills of Korea for missions fired to deceive the Chinese.

# Recollections of a Korean War CANNONCOCKER

By Jerry Keenan

I graduated from boot camp at Parris Island, S.C., on Dec. 8, 1950. After the usual 10-day furlough, I reported for duty at Battery C, 1st Battalion, 10th Marine Regiment, Camp Lejeune, N.C., with several guys from my boot camp platoon who had also been assigned to that battery.

It was something of a surprise to me to discover that most of the guys in the battery were World War II veterans along with some active reservists, and all had been recalled to active service as a result of the crisis in Korea. Those of us newly arrived from boot camp constituted Battery C's small cadre of regulars.

After our holiday leave, we were introduced to our new duties. Most of the men were assigned to one of the battery's six gun sections, but several of us were assigned to a local security unit. We were told that because of problems with infiltration in Korea, it was decided that each battery should have its own local security section. Most of our time was spent becoming familiar with and maintaining .30-caliber and .50-cal. machine guns.

In February 1952, I was assigned to the 20th Replacement Draft for eventual deployment to the 1st Marine Division in Korea. After some six weeks of infantry training at Tent Camp 2, Camp Pendleton, Calif., the 20th Draft boarded *General John Pope* (AP-110) at the Broadway Pier in San



**Unfortunately, all my time in Btry C had been spent in local security. I had not one minute of training on a 105 howitzer, which now meant that instead of being a field artillery leader, I was, in fact, a “learner.”**

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Diego on Easter Monday in 1952. We arrived at Kobe, Japan, on May 1, and following a brief 12-hour liberty, resumed our voyage. We soon arrived at Inchon. Prior to disembarking, we were handed our new assignments. My orders revealed that I was assigned to Btry A, 1st Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment.

From Inchon, we were taken to Seoul, which looked every bit like the war-torn city it was. I saw buildings in ashes, as well as urchins and dirty and poorly clothed citizens looking for any kind of handout. In Seoul, we boarded a rickety train that hauled us north to the railhead at Munsan on the south bank of the Imjin River, where trucks were waiting to carry us to our final destinations.

It was dark by the time we climbed aboard the trucks. Until this moment, I had not realized that the night could be so black. As the truck lurched and bounced its way toward the next stop, it was not difficult to tell I had reached a war zone. The boom of artillery rumbled through the blackness, while all along the horizon, the flashes of the cannons could be seen as they fired.

At battalion headquarters, we boarded a second truck that would carry us to whichever one of the three firing batteries we had been assigned. Two of us were destined to find a home in “Able” Battery. My companion was a kid from Mississippi named Brown. At Btry A, we were greeted by the first sergeant, who instructed us to grab a cot, stow our gear in a nearby tent and grab a couple hours of sleep. In the morning, Brown and I were both assigned to Gun Section 4—Brown as a cannoneer, while I was assistant section chief.

Being assigned as assistant section chief was something of an embarrassment for me. I arrived in Korea with an 0812 MOS—Field Artillery Leader—which ostensibly meant that I was qualified to be a chief or assistant section chief of an artillery gun section. Unfortunately, all my time in Btry C had been spent in local security. I had not one minute of training on a 105 howitzer, which now meant that instead of being a field artillery leader, I was, in fact, a “learner.” In the years since, I have always thought that the Marine Corps did me something of a disservice by failing to ensure that I was trained on a 105. In my opinion, it would have been better to assign us to a gun section after, say, six weeks of training, and then rotating others



**Above: Jerry Keenan, right, and D.G. Schmidt clean the .50s at Camp Lejeune in 1951.**



into local security, so that all of us received equal training in both areas. Fortunately, the crew on Gun 4 was a great bunch and they quickly taught me the ropes.

When I arrived in Korea, 1stMarDiv had been transferred from eastern Korea to the west in March. The eastern part of South Korea was more mountainous with noticeably colder winter conditions. Western South Korea, in contrast, offered milder winter conditions with a landscape that always reminded me of the terrain in Southern

**Above: Jerry Keenan, right, during maneuvers at Camp Lejeune in the summer of 1951.**

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**The biggest shoot Keenan was engaged in during his time in Korea called for battery left every five seconds and continued for more than 12 hours.**

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California where I trained with the 20th Replacement Draft. However, if winters were not as cold as in the east, this is not to suggest that winter here was mild, only less cold than in the east, and with occasional light snow.

By the time I arrived in Korea, the war of maneuvering with hard-fought battles had become a war of attrition with both sides facing each other across a Main Line of Resistance (MLR). In a sense, this outpost war, as it is sometimes known, was not unlike the conditions of World War I. In between the MLR and the Chinese side was a sort of no man's land with a landscape pocked with knobby little hills, which sometimes offered excellent points of observation to watch what the Chinese were up

to. Of course, these little knobs served the same purpose for the Chinese. These outposts acquired such colorful sobriquets as "The Hook," "Bunker Hill," and "Reno," "Carson" and "Vegas," known collectively as "The Nevada" outposts.

During this phase of the Korean War, 1stMarDiv operated with two infantry regiments online, say, the 5th and 7th Marine Regiments, with the 1st Marines in a general reserve or supporting position. These units would be rotated periodically depending on conditions. So it was, too, with the 11th Marines. Two of the three battalions of 105s would be in active support of the two infantry regiments online. The third battalion would be in general support, while the fourth battalion, with 155s positioned some distance behind the 105 battalions, were always in general support, ready to add their heavier firepower wherever needed.

The infantry units would frequently send a detachment to create outposts on these hills. The composition of these detachments varied, but typically might consist of a squad—12 men—plus artillery forward observers. When the Chinese elected to contest our occupancy of these hills, which was frequent, they generally did so with a numerically superior force, which sometimes amounted to overwhelming numbers. Sometimes, these attacks were launched strictly to gain political leverage. Truce talks had been going on at Panmunjom since 1951 with little progress; however, should we be forced off an outpost, it could mean a little political capital for the Chinese.

Whenever the Chinese attacked one of these outposts, the artillery was prepared to support our defenders with fire mission coordinates that were prepared in advance for each of our outposts. One such supporting effort was called a "box-me-in" mission, which in effect called for three batteries (one battalion) to each be responsible for protecting one leg of a perimeter around our detachment's position. On occasion, the Chinese would launch a massed assault in which case the artillery would respond by firing directly on top of our position while the defenders took cover in their bunker. Sometimes, these attacks called for additional support from the 155s, and on occasion, from the bigger 8-inch and 240 mm guns in Corps artillery.

While most fire missions were similar in that they called for the High Explosive (HE) shell with a standard fuse, other missions called for different ingredients. For example, a White Phosphorus, or "Willie Peter," shell was sometimes used as an incendiary weapon and to create a smokescreen. White phosphorus has a deadly, burning effect on the human body.

The type of fuse employed determines how and when the shell will explode. The basic fuse was the "quick" fuse and was the one used on most fire missions. Sometimes, a fire mission called for a shell that did not immediately detonate upon striking the ground, in which case a



**During the many months Keenan spent in Korea, he experienced the cold for which the country is often most remembered by American veterans of the Korean War.**



# Season's Greetings

FROM  
the 11<sup>TH</sup> MARINE REGIMENT



1<sup>ST</sup> MARINE DIVISION FMF  
KOREA  
• 1952 •

My dear friend:

The 11th Marines in Korea send their best wishes for a happy Christmas season.

I am sure that you are anxious to know what we shall be doing to enjoy the holidays here.

First of all, every man will be lonesome for his loved ones, and wishing he were there to spend the days with you. But we will have a full schedule of Divine Services, a Christmas dinner with all the trimmings, Christmas trees and decorations, music, and all the other customs that Americans associate with this happy day.

As you see, every effort will be made to make Christmas as home-like as possible, even under these difficult conditions.

I know that you will be thinking of your Marine on Christmas Day especially, and you may be sure that he is thinking of you.

All of us join in extending to you our best wishes for a happy and prosperous New Year.

Sincerely yours,

*H. N. Shea*  
Col. H. N. Shea, USMC  
Commanding Officer  
11th Marine Regiment

Generally, nights tended to be quiet, save for the occasional harassing and interdiction mission, intended to disturb the enemy's normal routine. Anytime the Chinese made a serious effort to take over one of the outposts, there would be a corresponding increase in the number of fire missions.

On occasion, the individual firing batteries, and sometimes, individual guns would be sent out as roving batteries and roving guns, respectively. These were usually all-day affairs in which the roving battery or gun would leave the parent position and take up a temporary location. A few missions would be fired to deceive the enemy as to the location of our guns.

One unit that was permanently on roving status was the 1st 4.5" Rocket Battery. This unit, which we called "Charley Rockets," moved up and down the line, taking up a position behind one of the firing batteries when an appropriate target had been identified, almost always at night. Things would be relatively quiet when suddenly this rocket battery would erupt with a fearsome noise. The

**Col H.N. Shea, the commanding officer of 11th Marine Regiment, sent out a "Season's Greetings" letter to the families of his Marines who were in Korea in 1952.**

time-delay fuse would be attached to the projectile after removing the standard fuse. An optional third fuse was called a Variable Time (VT). This fuse had a small transmitter embedded within the fuse itself. Once fired, the transmitter would emit a signal. When it struck an object, the signal would then report back to the fuse and the shell would thus be detonated. Fire missions that called for a VT fuse were commonly used on large troop concentrations or when the enemy was employing human wave assaults on one of our outposts. VT missions could be very effective but could also be dangerous to "friendlies" who happened to be underneath a VT shell when triggered by a cloud, for example, and exploded, raining shrapnel down on the unsuspecting troops below.

The number of missions fired during any given day depended on the level of enemy activity.

**On occasion, the Chinese would launch a massed assault in which case the artillery would respond by firing directly on top of our position while the defenders took cover in their bunker.**

**Toward the end of March 1953, the Chinese launched a massive assault on the Nevada outposts (Reno, Carson and Vegas). Keenan was standing watch the first night of the assault and was wearing headphones when the initial fire mission was called in.**

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rocket battery's mission only lasted a minute or so, and then they were gone. Due to the noise and fire they generated, the rocket battery attracted the attention of the Chinese artillery and quite often, within minutes, we could anticipate receiving a couple of rounds of incoming fire.

Fire missions varied in accordance with the needs of the infantry units online, supporting aircraft or for special purposes. For instance, one of our 105 shells loaded with propaganda leaflets was fired at the enemy in the hope of persuading some of them to surrender or at least recognize that their effort was futile (at least from our perspective). Sometimes we fired "Flak-Suppression" missions,

reach the safety of our lines. Without a doubt, the most impressive type of fire mission was a Time-On-Target (TOT), when several batteries fired on a single target. The idea was to coordinate the actual firing so that all the ordnance reached the target at approximately the same time. Such missions were a mighty demonstration of the power of our artillery, especially when it was as big as a Corps TOT. My recollection is that these missions were usually fired at night, and the boom of those guns, from 105s to the big 240 mm howitzers, steadily working their way along the MLR was a truly impressive performance.

The gun section stood four-hour watches every 24 hours. The schedule of watches rotated through each man in the section. During the daylight hours, those men not on watch could be assigned to clean the howitzer, to a working party, or to routine duties such as adding strips of garland to the camouflage net or filling sandbags. At night, those not on watch were free to pursue personal activities.

During this last phase of the Korean War, when we prepared to move into a new position, we were usually preceded by a bulldozer that plowed out a parapet for the gun. Once or twice, we moved into a position that had previously been used by artillery, so no preparation was necessary. As soon as all guns were in position, the battery was "laid" viz, so that all the firing tubes were pointed in the same direction using pre-established coordinates. This was necessary so that when the Fire Direction Center (FDC) called for a fire mission and issued the necessary directions (type of shell, fuse, Deflection: tube, left-right; Elevation: tube, up-down), all the guns would be firing on the same target.

Once the battery had been laid, a semi-circular trench was dug about a foot deep by a foot wide. Into this trench was placed heavy logs or railroad ties when we could get them. These logs were then secured using steel rods taken from ammo boxes. The reason here was to provide a support base to absorb the howitzer's recoil upon firing. When the howitzer is first moved into position in its new home, the trails (legs) are spread apart, and the spade-shaped end of each trail is then set on the logs.

On occasion, the location of a target might be to the extreme right or left of our howitzer's traversing range, in which case the gun had to be physically shifted in the appropriate direction. This was usually a two-man job, one man on each trail lifting the howitzer then shifting it to the firing position. Ordinarily, shifting trails could be managed by two men, so on a three-man watch with the third guy manning the headphones and checking the deflection setting, the other two guys could shift trails. On occasion, two men might have difficulty shifting the trails. If this could not be accomplished in time, it might be necessary to scrub the gun from the mission, an alternative that was to be avoided if possible. Although a rare occurrence, it did happen that the trails got hung up, preventing the gun from shifting to its temporary firing position. Because



**The most impressive type of fire mission was a Time-On-Target (TOT), when several batteries fired on a single target. The idea was to coordinate the actual firing so that all the ordnance reached the target at approximately the same time.**

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which were intended to knock out or at least soften up enemy antiaircraft positions in advance of an airstrike. When one of our aircraft was hit, usually one of the inverted gull-wing Corsairs, forcing the pilot to bail out, we might be called on to fire a protective mission that would allow the pilot to





of this, it became standard operating procedure for all gun sections to stand four-man watches.

Fire missions were directed at enemy troop concentrations, truck convoys or artillery emplacements. Most of these missions were called in by forward observers (FO) who called in targets to the FDC. These guys were usually stationed with the infantry on advanced outposts. Enough cannot be said about the FOs and the role they played in directing our artillery fire.

In September 1952, I was sent back to Division headquarters to attend a 30-day noncommissioned officer school. When I returned, the Chinese had launched a big push on one of our outposts called "The Hook." Fighting was fierce and resulted in heavy artillery support.

About this time, we were issued cold-weather gear, which included a warm, woolen shirt, a knee-length parka and thermal boots, known as "Mickey Mouse boots" because they resembled the famous Disney character's footwear. These boots were ungainly looking things but did a wonderful job of keeping our feet warm. If only those boots had been available to the guys at Chosin Reservoir.

In February, I was fortunate to be granted R&R and spent 10 days in Kyoto, Japan. Toward the end of March, the Chinese launched a massive assault on the Nevada outposts (Reno, Carson and Vegas). As I recall, the fighting began around 10 p.m. I was standing first watch that night and was wearing headphones when the first fire mission

was called in. The mission called for battery left every five seconds, and it continued until mid-morning the next day. A huge pile of empty brass cases accumulated outside the parapet. This was the biggest shoot I had been involved with during my time in Korea.

On my birthday at the end of April, I was relieved of duty to prepare for being rotated home. Around the middle of May, we landed at Treasure Island, and after three days of processing, including liberty in San Francisco, we headed for home to begin the customary 30-day furlough. Immediately upon landing at Treasure Island, I learned that as a short-timer (three months or less), I was assigned to Great Lakes Naval Station, Ill., the closest station to my home in Milwaukee.

I often think about my Marine Corps service, which was certainly a special experience and one that will stay with me for the rest of my life.

*Editor's note: All photos courtesy of Jerry Keenan.*

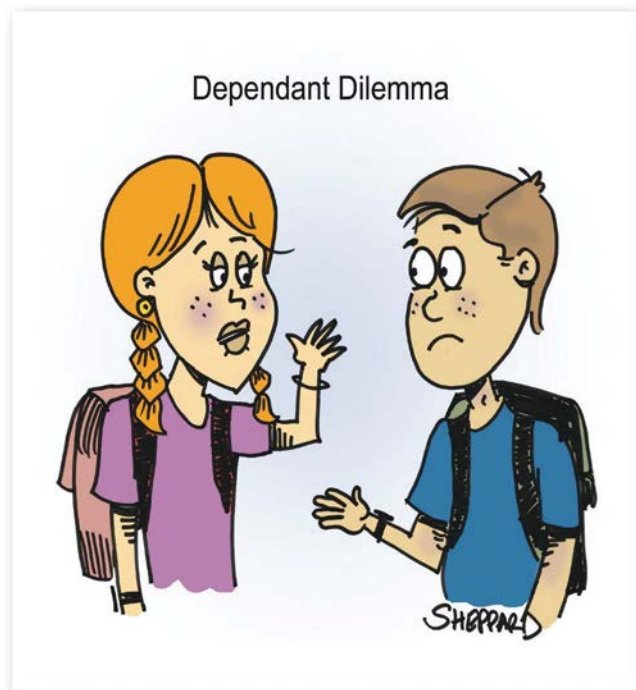
*Author's bio: Jerry Keenan served from 1950-1953 and attained the rank of sergeant. After retiring as the managing editor of a small regional trade press, he has devoted his time to researching and writing about the American Civil War and the 19th-Century American West. The author of eight published books, his work has also appeared in Wild West, America's Civil War, and Montana The Magazine of Western History.* 🐾

**Jerry Keenan is seen loading the 105 roving gun during the summer of 1952. Note the trail logs.**

# Leatherneck Laffs



"He's definitely yours!"



"I'm going TAD to my aunt's house for the summer."

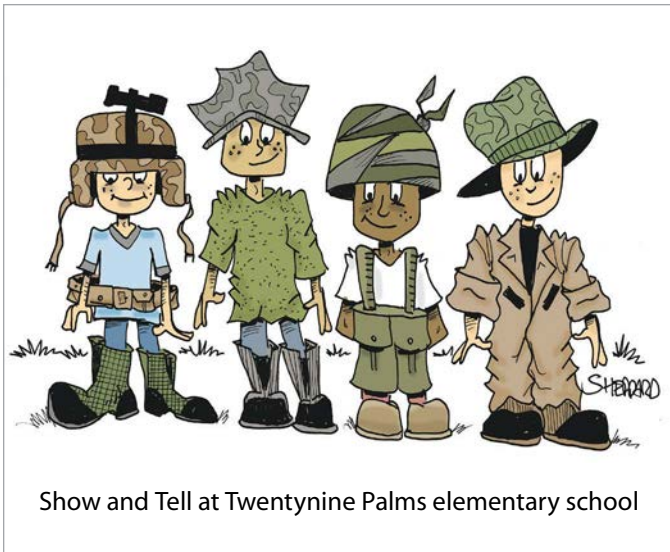


"Look, Mom ... I made my new jeans into dress blues."



First day at base school





Show and Tell at Twentynine Palms elementary school



"Hey, Dad ... look what I got at the surplus store."

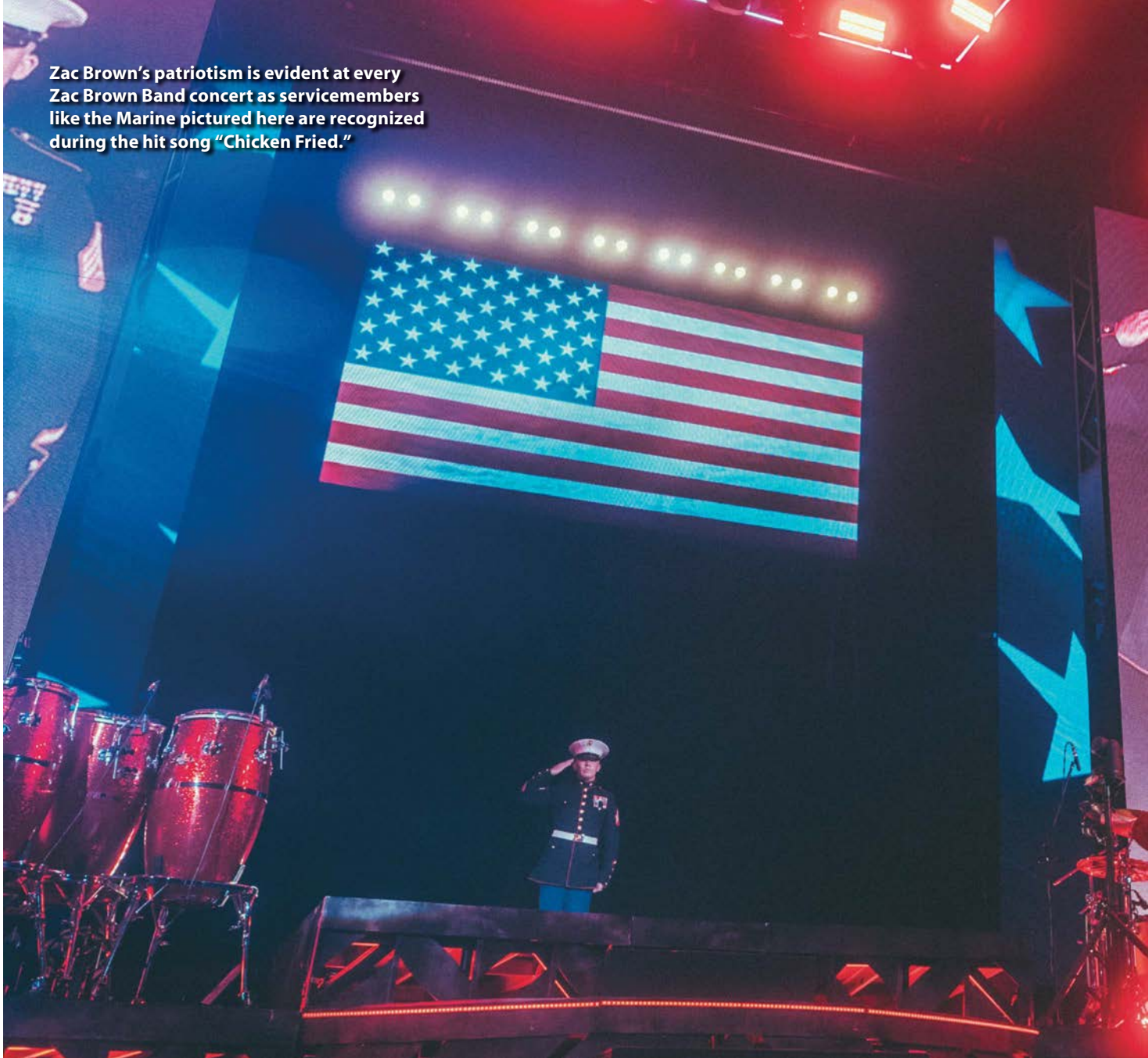


Military sibling rivalry



"Can Billy come out and play Marines and ISIS?"

Zac Brown's patriotism is evident at every Zac Brown Band concert as servicemembers like the Marine pictured here are recognized during the hit song "Chicken Fried."



# Camp Southern Ground

## Award-Winning Musician's Nonprofit Brings Purpose, Growth to Veterans

By Sara W. Bock

*I thank God for my life  
And for the stars and stripes.  
May freedom forever fly, let it ring.  
Salute the ones who died  
The ones that give their lives so we  
don't have to sacrifice  
All the things we love*  
—Zac Brown Band, "Chicken Fried"

**F**ifteen years after he was severely injured by insurgent fire during the Second Battle of Fallujah while serving with 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment in Iraq, Travis Pollok found himself drinking heavily, losing his temper frequently, and attempting to salvage a marriage that was teetering

on the brink of divorce. The combat veteran, who is partially disabled due to the wounds he sustained to his hip and foot, tended to turn down free programs and opportunities for veterans—"I always felt like there's someone else out there that needs it more than I do," he says. But in October 2019, Pollok said "yes" to Camp Southern Ground and traveled from his home near San Antonio, Texas,





**“This is not therapy. If you want therapy you need to go somewhere else. This is training. In the same way that you were trained in the military to do your job, we’re going to train you to live a civilian life now.”**

**—Brent Taylor**



**Above: During Warrior PATHH, veterans explore and identify the core values that define them and determine their priorities. For this veteran, the Marine Corps’ core values of “honor, courage and commitment” remain central.**

to rural Georgia to participate in Warrior PATHH (Progressive Alternative Training for Healing Heroes).

He says with confidence that the week he spent there changed his mindset and turned his life around.

“One of the things that they say all the time is, ‘It’s not who you are, it’s what happened to you.’ So, me being wounded, that doesn’t make me a disabled, useless person in society, which I somewhat considered myself,” said Pollok of what he learned during Warrior PATHH. “I’ve been through a valuable experience, and I have knowledge and information that I can pass on to people, and that’s of value ... if I can get through that, there’s nothing else that can slow me down or stop me in my life.”

The extent of Pollok’s injuries dealt a heavy blow to the young, vibrant Marine,



**A PATHH veteran shoots blindfolded while his partner helps him aim. The exercise allows the participants to build trust and learn that they may have to lean on others in order to reach a goal.**



**Below: Twelve acres at Camp Southern Ground are dedicated to a USDA-certified organic farm that provides fresh produce for veterans and summer campers and helps them connect with the food they eat.**



**Warrior PATHH participants spend time with horses, as the animals tend to mirror the attitudes and behaviors of those around them. These interactions provide a platform where individuals can address not only how they are feeling but also regulate those emotions, an essential step in the process of post-traumatic growth.**

who had hoped to recover and return to his unit.

“I was 24 years old, I was active, I snowboarded, I mountain biked, I rock climbed,” said Pollok. “So I had pretty high hopes that this was going to be a little time off.”

But after a series of surgeries and lasting nerve damage to his foot, he was forced to come to terms with being medically retired as a sergeant and face the realization that his life had changed

forever. “It really put a damper on my self-esteem,” Pollok added.

The Warrior PATHH program, developed by the veteran-led Boulder Crest Foundation, was designed to promote the idea of “post-traumatic growth” for combat veterans who struggle with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or other combat-related stress. It’s one of two programs that the Camp Southern Ground staff runs that are designed to help post-9/11 veterans find direction, purpose and




healing during—and even long after—their transition back to civilian life. The second, Warrior Week, is a workforce and wellness transition program which Pollok had attended the previous year in 2018.

Both involve a “high-touch” week at camp, followed by a 12-month transition support program for Warrior Week attendees and an 18-month follow-on program for participants in Warrior PATHH.

By all accounts, there’s something unique and intangible about Camp Southern Ground that extends far beyond its pristine, well-appointed buildings, nestled among the trees on a secluded 400-acre campus in Fayetteville, Ga.,





A veteran enjoys the zipline on the Camp Southern Ground Confidence Course. The course builds camaraderie and strengthens self-confidence as participants are pushed to reach personal achievements, expand their comfort zone, conquer their fears and trust their teammates.

30 miles south of Atlanta. The passion project of singer-songwriter Zac Brown, lead vocalist of the multi-platinum and Grammy award-winning Zac Brown Band, the camp, which operates by the motto “Where Goodness Grows,” features a lodge and dining hall; a high ropes course with ziplines; a 12-acre organic farm that supplies food for three chef-prepared meals a day that follow a gluten-free, allergen-free, anti-inflammatory diet; activities like axe throwing and archery; and a treehouse that was featured on an episode of the Animal Planet show “Treehouse Masters.”

The facility, which according to Camp Southern Ground President and CEO Mike Dobbs, is roughly halfway to completion, will eventually see the addition of a residential village, an indoor recreation center, a conference center, an art building and a music building.

“We’ve got a grand vision that was really a master plan, and we’ll just continue building as we continue to raise funds for it,” said Dobbs, whose varied professional background includes architecture, telecommunications, marketing and public relations as well as serving on the boards of various charities and volunteering with youth programs. Brown’s dynamic vision for Camp Southern Ground attracted Dobbs to the helm of the musician’s nonprofit, where he played an integral role in turning it into a reality in 2018 when the camp rolled out its first year of programming.

**Below: Veterans join hands during one of Camp Southern Ground’s programs, which were founded on the premise that it is our obligation to honor the men and women who have protected our freedom and kept this country safe, and to care for those warriors upon their return home.**

**“Every step of the way in building this camp, we take one step out in faith and the road rises up to meet our feet. ... It’s just a beautiful thing to watch it all come together.”**  
—Camp Southern Ground







A self-described “product of camp,” Brown, who grew up in North Georgia, attended summer camp each year from a young age and later became a camp counselor and staff member who dreamed of one day starting a camp of his own. Following the Zac Brown Band’s first hit song, “Chicken Fried,” in 2008 and their subsequent rise to fame, Brown began laying the groundwork to make his vision a reality.

“Zac will say, ‘I don’t care what your belief system is, whether it’s just karma, or whether there’s a divine intervention, but every step of the way in building this camp, we take one step out in faith and the road rises up to meet our feet. The right people come along at the right time, and the right introductions are being made, and it’s just a beautiful thing to watch it all come together,’” said Dobbs.

During the summer months, children between the ages of 7 and 17 attend Camp

**“I think the biggest thing that we’ve seen with the veterans that have come through our program is how much they crave that self-understanding.”**

**—Jennifer Selke, Ph.D.  
Camp Southern Ground  
Director of  
Veteran Programs**

Southern Ground’s inclusive program, designed to serve those from varied socioeconomic backgrounds, races and religions. Children with autism spectrum disorder, learning and attention issues and social or emotional challenges attend alongside typically developing children

and children of military servicemembers. The campers are divided into “tribes” that include members of each of these categories.

“That’s sort of where we see the magic happening, is when you put them all together and they’re in the same tribe, they’re doing everything together, they bond and create friendships with people that may not look or act exactly like they do,” said Dobbs. “So they learn this appreciation for differences in backgrounds and differences in abilities, with the ultimate goal that they walk away realizing that everybody has worth, everyone has value, and it’s our job to find that in the people that we meet.”

The same can be said for Camp Southern Ground’s veteran programs, which run during the remainder of the year—January through May and August through December—and are offered free of charge to veterans thanks to the generous support





**During Warrior PATHH, veterans use the “labyrinth” as a walking meditation tool, quieting the mind and allowing them to reflect on important questions or challenges. All participants carry an object that symbolizes the burdens they want to release, the experiences that no longer serve them, and then leave that object behind as they find a new center from which to grow.**



of various organizations who believe in the camp’s mission of providing “extraordinary experiences for individuals to recognize and magnify the unique gifts within themselves and others to profoundly impact the world.”

Brown, who has long been known as a staunch supporter of America’s active-duty and veteran servicemembers, relied heavily on a hand-selected team of individuals to develop Camp Southern Ground’s veteran programs; in particular, Marine veteran Joey Jones, a double amputee who lost both of his legs in Afghanistan in 2010, was integral to the creation of the Warrior Week transition program.

Brown’s vision for Camp Southern Ground also attracted Jennifer Selke, Ph.D., who left behind a 26-year career at the University of California, Berkeley to serve as the Director of Veteran Programs.

According to Selke, the Warrior Week program implements a number of different



**Marine veteran Brent Taylor, veteran program manager at Camp Southern Ground, serves as a guide and shares his story with participants. There is nothing the guides ask individuals to do that every guide would not do or has not done themselves.**

tools and assessments to help veterans contextualize their experiences in the military and translate their talents into a purpose through meaningful employment and involvement in their communities. One component is the CliftonStrengths assessment, which identifies an individual’s strengths and is a tool commonly utilized by Fortune 500 companies.

“I think the biggest thing that we’ve seen with the veterans that have come

through our program is how much they crave that self-understanding,” Selke said, adding that the Warrior Week program also utilizes the Gallup organization’s five essential elements of well-being: physical, career, social, financial and community. Warrior Week is highly individualized in that each veteran participant may recognize which area or areas of well-being they need to improve in order to thrive—whether that’s exploring a career change, working on a budget or relocating to a new area.

Selke references a 2010 Gallup study that found that active-duty military servicemembers score higher than the general population on its well-being index, but that veterans score particularly low.

“When you think about that perceived drop from this high to this low, I think that creates a lot of discontent,” Selke said. That gap, she added, is precisely what Warrior Week is designed to bridge.

Brent Taylor, a Marine veteran who served in Iraq, understands that discontent all too well. He attended one of the very first Warrior Week programs at Camp Southern Ground while working in a management position in the firearms industry.

“I was just never really happy, didn’t feel fulfilled, just not really doing a good job of taking care of myself,” said Taylor.

After completing Warrior Week, Taylor knew he wanted to be a part of Brown’s growing vision and left his job to join the staff as veteran program manager at Camp Southern Ground.

“I think a lot of these programs, a lot of these organizations out there, they’re out there for this sense of wanting to rescue



people, and to me that's very narcissistic," said Taylor. "I don't think the veteran community needs rescuing. I think we need training."

Travis Pollok's mind was put at ease when he arrived at the Warrior PATHH program and heard Taylor say these words: "This is not therapy. If you want therapy you need to go somewhere else. This is training. In the same way that you were trained in the military to do your job, we're going to train you to live a civilian life now."

Rather than offer therapy, Warrior PATHH aims to equip combat veterans with the tools they need to turn their trauma into a means for growth and recovery, said Selke.

During the veteran programs, each cohort is divided into "tribes" comprised of three veterans and a tribe leader, a veteran who has already completed the program and elects to return. According to Taylor, it allows the tribe leaders to get a "refresher," and it's mutually beneficial for them to share their experiences with the first-time attendees.

"Veterans are very skeptical," said

**"Because if you're not ready to change, we've got to make sure that we keep those seats open for people who want to change. If you think this is going to be a week of getting drunk sitting around a campfire, that's not it."**

**— Brent Taylor**

Taylor, whose grandfather served in the Marine Corps and fought in the Battles of Iwo Jima and Guadalcanal during World War II. "We want to learn from somebody who has been there, we don't want to learn from somebody who just knows about it."

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, each cohort also had a "prior generation" mentor, typically a Vietnam-era veteran, to share their experiences and provide their own unique perspective.

For Warrior Week attendees, the

12-month follow-on program provides a support network of peers and mentors to help each veteran continue their journey to finding fulfillment as well as promote a sense of community and camaraderie. The long-term nature of the program also allows for connections to other resources like Hire Heroes USA, which helps with resume writing, LinkedIn profiles and interview coaching, and a "resilient warrior" program led by veteran service organization Hope for the Warriors.

"It's less about them being dependent on us and it's more about magnifying their skills and their talents so that they can share themselves with the world," said Taylor. "I think that's where real change is going to happen in our society, is when we stop looking at veterans as diminished or as something that needs help. No. Just give them the space, give them the tools, let them have a moment of healing, they'll be dynamic people for our society."

The application process for Warrior Week and Warrior PATHH is thorough and designed to weed out what Taylor refers to as "program hoppers," as well as those who think it might be a good

**Sitting around a campfire, PATHH participants write down their stories and share with the group before burning the stories. This is hugely powerful as it is the beginning of a new chapter in which they are not held captive by their old trauma.**







opportunity to meet Zac Brown, who, according to the camp staff, avoids the limelight primarily because he doesn't want the camp to be about him.

"It's about making sure we capture people at the right moment," said Taylor. "Because if you're not ready to change, we've got to make sure that we keep those seats open for people who want to change. If you think this is going to be a week of getting drunk sitting around a campfire, that's not it. Not that there's anything

wrong with that kind of recreation, but we're just trying to do something different."

Interested veterans can apply online by visiting [www.campsouthernground.org/veteran-programs](http://www.campsouthernground.org/veteran-programs).

The Camp Southern Ground staff runs a Facebook group called "Warrior Wellbeing and Transition Support @ Camp Southern Ground," open to all active-duty and veteran servicemembers who may be interested in the camp's

**Those best equipped to train others who are struggling are those who have struggled themselves. The facilitators, peers and mentors—including those from earlier generations—that make up this veteran support network are essential to the success of these programs.**

programs and would like to learn more about the opportunities they provide.

Pollok encourages those struggling with the transition to civilian life or with PTSD to apply to attend Camp Southern Ground.

"I wish I had gone 10 years sooner," he said.

At Camp Southern Ground, he found a place that feels like home and a support system to encourage him as he continues the work of post-traumatic growth.

"The biggest thing I learned is that showing that you need help is not a sign of weakness, it's a sign of strength. That reaching out for other people that have gone through similar situations that you have, reaching out to them is a sign of strength," Pollok said. "Even if you don't think you need it, you can go there and possibly help someone else, and in the process, you're going to find out that you needed to be there too."

*Editor's note: All photos courtesy of Camp Southern Ground. 🇺🇸*



**Both Warrior Week and Warrior PATHH begin with a high-touch week in the safe and peaceful environment of Camp Southern Ground. Here veterans have a chance to connect with each other over shared experiences that only those who have lived through combat can understand.**

## SEA STORY OF THE MONTH

### Dangerous Liberty

When I graduated from boot camp at San Diego in 1960 as a three-year aviation guarantee recruit, I was assigned to NATTC Naval Air Station, Millington, Tenn., for aviation schooling. After I received the 6441 MOS (Aviation Structural Mechanic), I was retained at Millington as a mail clerk for the Marine Air Detachment. My hometown is in the foothills of the Ozarks in Mulberry, Ark., but the liberty limit was only as far as Little Rock and Hot Springs, which was about 150 miles short of home.

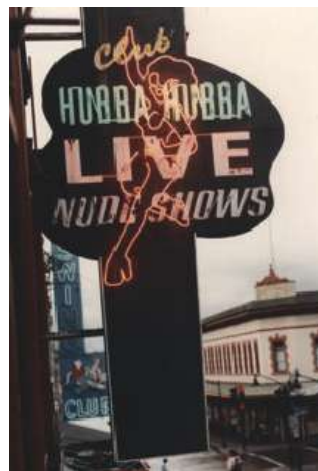
I decided to take advantage of the situation. There was a special girl at home waiting for me so when I didn't have duty, I hitchhiked home for the weekend. I would catch a bus loaded with little old ladies headed for the Greyhound Racetrack in West Memphis, Ark., then start hitchhiking. Over the next several months, I hitchhiked home numerous times. The assortment of rides that I caught was amazing. I rode in a hearse, an ambulance, a U.S. Mail truck, a motorcycle, and once I even caught a ride with Burl Ives and his wife.

One of the most memorable rides I caught was with four Sailors wearing civvies. There had been a prison break and we came upon a police blockade at Morrilton, Ark., at about 1 a.m. We thought they had flagged us on through, so we didn't stop. However, when we went on, they came up behind us with sirens screaming and lights flashing. When we pulled over, they surrounded the

car with weapons drawn. We were bewildered, wondering what in the world we had done wrong. They checked our IDs and said they had been about to fire through the back glass if we hadn't stopped. I was sitting in the center front seat in a class A uniform. They admonished the Sailors, telling them they could've gotten a Marine killed.

It was an exciting time in my life, but the hitchhiking came to a halt in October 1962 when I was transferred to HMM-264 in New River, N.C., just in time for the Cuban Missile Crisis. The excitement just got more intense.

LCpl Donald S. Wilcox  
Mulberry, Ark.



COURTESY OF NORM SPILLETH

**The Hubba Hubba Club located in Honolulu, Hawaii, was known as a gentleman's club back in 1963 and was a popular destination for Marines on liberty.**

### Memories of a Kaneohe Bay Marine

I was a private first class assigned to A4 Skyhawks at MCAS Kaneohe Bay from 1961 to 1963. A PFC didn't make enough money to buy a car back in those days, so the only way to get to Honolulu for liberty call was in a taxicab. The taxicabs were actually a fleet

of used hearses owned and operated by a local company that provided exclusive, nonstop, round-trip service to Honolulu. The cab/hearse only cost 50 cents but the driver wouldn't leave until the vehicle was full with nine guys. The drop off location in Honolulu on Beretania Street was only a block away from Hotel Street, our first introduction to the pleasures of the South Pacific. It was a street right out of "From Here to Eternity." It was an old two-story wooden building with bars on the ground floor and dance halls or massage parlors on the second floor. It was filled with Sailors and Marines on weekend liberty and patrolled by teams of Hawaiian Armed Services Police in jackboots and Billy clubs.

There was the Singapore Bar with the King Ballroom upstairs that had a Philippine brass band providing music and girls who provided 50-cent dances. I spent 15 bucks there one night in about as many minutes before I realized that the band only played two bars of a song before going to the next 50-cent song book.

There was also the Hubba-Hubba Club where Gina, the Italian volcano, danced. Gina was a stripper with long, red hair. She was married to a Honolulu police officer, whom she shot one night in her dressing room.

On one occasion, I thought I would get my fortune told by a gypsy who had a table in a doorway on the street, so I popped in to have my palm read. I wasn't as much interested in my fortune as I was in the gypsy who was wearing a low-cut dress, not to mention a tattoo and a gold tooth with a silver star mounted

on it that she flashed when she smiled. Somehow, she found out I was from New Jersey. She told me my girlfriend was waiting for me back home and then she told me there was a terrible snowstorm in Newark and people were starving. She pointed to a can with a slot in the top and told me to put money in it for the poor people in Newark. "Wait a minute," I said. "I might be dumb, but I'm not stupid."

I got up and walked through the curtains back out onto the street. I didn't know anybody in Newark and had never been there. She came running after me shaking her fist and yelling, "I put a hex on you, you gonna be a big crook. You gonna be another Al Capone," all because I didn't donate to the poor people back in Newark. I never had the luck to be another Al Capone, so I guess gypsy fortunes are not what they seem to be.

Norm Spilleth  
Minneapolis, Minn.

### Unappreciated Humor

For many years I was a lousy student. My energies were focused on entertaining classmates and annoying teachers with my commentary. I was the class clown. In large part, this educational approach led me to a new duty as a Plt 261 recruit located at the Parris Island resort in 1967.

Our most memorable drill instructor was Sergeant Bowling. He was intimidating. On one occasion, he had the platoon standing at attention in some grassy area where we were under assault by sand fleas. He was walking around watching us for any flinches or unacceptable movements. I then heard him yell, "Private Leary,



did you pick your ass?" My fairly quick response was, "No, Sir. I was born with it." There was a moment of silence, then some giggles, then an all-hands laughter including Sgt Bowling. This was followed by me running for an hour with my rifle held over my head. Some of us never learn.

Sgt John Leary  
Yorba Linda, Calif.

### The Flying Circus Comes to Yuma

In May 1965 I was a jet engine mechanic in VMA-223 stationed at MCAS El Toro when we went to MCAS Yuma for gunnery and bombing practice. One night after too many drinks at the officers' club, several of our younger pilots decided that it would be fun to park a Stearman crop duster on our flight line. Yuma airport shut down around 10 p.m., so it was no problem for the pilots to walk across the runway separating the air station from Yuma's general aviation airport. They pushed the Stearman back to our flight line but were caught by the flight line watch.

The next morning a lot of unhappy brass and some nervous pilots were standing around the Stearman. The person who owned the biplane was a former Navy pilot who thought the whole thing was funny as hell. Lucky for our pilots, their only punishment was

to stand as squadron duty officers for several months. It could have been a career ender.

Cpl Charles Goodhead  
USMC, 1962-1966  
Shell Knob, Mo.

### My Trip Up Mount Fuji

I was in Weapons Company, 2nd Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment, stationed at Camp Fuji, Japan, in 1957. One morning in April at muster, the company gunny called us to attention and ordered us to take one step forward. He then told us we had just volunteered to climb Mount Fuji. The entire regiment was trucked around the far side and let off at 2,000 feet. We hiked to 5,000 feet and camped. I caught the midnight to 4 a.m. watch. The next morning, we were issued pre-stamped Fuji sticks but had no weapons as we started up the mountain. I don't know if it was the steep side, but it sure seemed like it.

We got to the rim about 2 p.m., went down into the crater out of the wind, and crawled in our bags. Within 20 minutes, the place was covered with snow. I tried eating my C-rats, but they were still cold after trying to heat them—a lesson in physics. We got up about 5 a.m. the next day, ate cold C-rats again and climbed to the crater rim where the wind was blowing like mad. We were delayed there as

the leaders couldn't find the right trail down. We finally started down about 8:30 a.m., and every 20 minutes or so, I would hear a scream and some poor Marine would be sliding down in the ash. One Marine broke his leg and the medical chopper couldn't get high enough, so they had to hump him down. We got to the bottom before noon where they brought up a hot meal. I seriously think it was the coldest I have ever been in that wind, it was miserable. My face and fingers were completely numb.

We kept asking where the trucks were and were told we were going back 2x2. It was 50 freaking miles because we were on the opposite side from Camp Fuji. We got back to camp about 3 a.m. I don't think I have ever been so physically stressed. A never-to-be-forgotten episode in my life. I still have my Fuji stick, but with a lathe, I cut it down to a swagger stick.

Charles Logan Delp  
Garden Grove, Calif.

### Mess Duty

In December 1950, after having been evacuated from Hungnam, North Korea, I was put on mess duty back in the Masan area of South Korea. After several weeks we moved up to the Pohang area and I thought that I would be finished with mess duty. No such luck. Naturally, we had no

electricity and I worked from dawn to dusk.

One day, local fishermen gave us a batch of fresh caught shrimp and I was stuck with helping to clean them. Fresh shrimp are very ugly with beady eyes, many legs and loaded with eggs. I cleaned shrimp for several hours and finally got up and walked away. This did not go over too well with the mess sergeant.

My mess duty time was finally up, and the mess sergeant told me that I had better get a good recommendation from the cooks or I would stay on mess duty. My relationship with the cooks was at the same level as with the mess sergeant. I told the cooks that I had better get a good recommendation or they were stuck with me for another 30 days. I got a good recommendation.

SSgt Len Martin, USMCR  
Tallahassee, Fla.

Do you have an interesting story from your time in the Corps that will give our readers a good chuckle? We would love to hear them. Write them down (500 words or less) and send them to: Patricia Everett, *Leatherneck* Magazine, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134, or email them to p.everett@mca-marines.org. We offer \$25 or a one-year MCA&F membership for the "Sea Story of the Month." 🍷



As a prank in May 1965, pilots from VMA-223 pushed a Stearman crop duster, belonging to a former Navy pilot, from Yuma airport to the flight line at MCAS Yuma, Ariz.

## American Village Cleanup In Okinawa: Community Service Integral to SMP Mission

More than 30 members of the U.S. military community volunteered with the Single Marine Program (SMP) to clean up the Mihama American Village in Okinawa, Japan, Jan. 16, spending their Saturday morning picking up trash while also greeting members of the local community.

“The reason why we do this is that we want to give back to the community and give back to the people of Okinawa,” said Lance Corporal Jarod J. Jankowski, a landing support specialist with Combat Logistics Battalion 4, 3rd Marine Logistics Group and the assistant president of the Camp Foster SMP. “One of the pillars of the SMP is community involvement, and this is a good way for Marines to get out of their barracks room, get a couple of [volunteer] hours and clean up American Village.”

The volunteers scoured the area for litter, which they then divided up between trash and recyclable waste.

“We had 11 bags of trash and three bags

of recycle waste,” said Jankowski. “This was a pretty good haul, a little bit better than what we are used to.”

Petty Officer 2nd Class Trevor Bellagamba, USN, a religious program specialist with 3rd Medical Battalion, 3rd MLG, attended the event and shared his perspective.

“The attitude is always good,” said Bellagamba, who is also the treasurer for the Camp Foster SMP. “Today was a beautiful sunny day and was perfect for people to volunteer.”

According to Bellagamba, the Camp Foster SMP’s monthly cleanup events at American Village allow servicemembers who are new to the island to explore the area, which is home to many restaurants and shops. The SMP also conducts a monthly beach cleanup on Okinawa.

The SMP serves as a voice for single Marines by identifying concerns, developing initiatives and providing recommendations through advocacy, recreational activities, special events and community involvement.

Cpl Ryan Pulliam, USMC

## Tank Marine Finds Future, Fulfillment in New MOS

Since the Marine Corps’ divestment of tank battalions as part of the Commandant’s Force Design 2030 initiative, hundreds of tank Marines have been displaced from their jobs as tank mechanics, drivers and related military occupational specialties. The Corps has made an effort to “keep the faith” with these dedicated warriors, giving tank Marines the option to change careers within the Marine Corps, switch to a different branch of the military, or separate from service altogether.

For Sergeant James Webb, a former member of the tank community, taking up a new career within the Marine Corps seemed the obvious choice.

After leaving his original MOS as a tank mechanic with 2nd Tank Battalion, 2nd Marine Division in early 2020, Webb requested to become a Marine Corps Community Services (MCCS) specialist, an MOS that would allow him to manage retail and administrative tasks within the Marine Corps Exchange system.

When he originally made the decision



Members of the U.S. military community stationed in Okinawa, Japan, participated in a cleanup of the Mihama American Village hosted by the Camp Foster Single Marine Program, Jan. 16.



**Sgt James Webb, pictured here on an M88A2 Hercules recovery vehicle at MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C., is a former tank mechanic who recently made a lateral move to a new MOS due to the Marine Corps' elimination of tank battalions.**

to serve his country, Webb knew that he wanted to be a Marine first and foremost, so he was happy to continue serving as a Marine even after the tank community dissolved.

"I love Marines and the Marine Corps," Webb said. "The Marine Corps has taken care of me at my worst times and given me everything I needed to get through them."

During Webb's time at both 2nd Tank Battalion and Combat Logistics Battalion 24, Headquarters Regiment, 2nd Marine Logistics Group, he served as a main battle tank repairman/technician, ultimately holding billets as a driver, rigger and vehicle commander. He deployed to several countries, including Greece, Kuwait and Jordan.

Webb says he enjoyed the friends he made as a tanker and plans to keep in touch with them, but he said that he believes the career change will have a positive impact for him going forward.

"The Marine Corps [reveals the] more competitive side of me," Webb said. "I chose this MOS because I know it will push me and will do more for my future."

Webb began on-the-job training in October at the Marine Mart at Building H-1, Marine Corps Base Lejeune, N.C. He took quickly to his new duties and even excelled at managing the busy outlet—one of just a handful of stores without resident supervision.

"Something just clicked with this MOS," Webb said. "I like interacting with people and I want to learn more business management."

He admits that while he found success as a tanker, he didn't always feel he was being utilized to his full potential. In fact, prior to the divestment, he had already been considering other opportunities. Since the switch, Webb says he has found new happiness in the Corps and has encouraged other Marines facing disappointment in their own careers to explore their options.

"Don't base your whole Marine Corps experience on your MOS, on your one duty station or on one enlistment," Webb said. "Don't give up. There are so many MOSs that people don't know about. Do research and find the one that clicks for you."

LCpl Jacqueline Parsons, USMC



COURTESY OF SGT JAMES WEBB



LCPL JACQUELINE PARSONS, USMC

**As an MCCS specialist, Sgt Webb handles retail and administrative tasks within the Marine Corps Exchange System and said he is enjoying learning about business management. He's pictured here restocking items at a Marine Mart at MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C., on Dec. 3, 2020.**





LCPL LEVIVOSS, USMC

**Above: MajGen Christopher Mahoney, the commanding general of 3rd MAW, stands in front of the newly unveiled F-35 simulator building at MCAS Miramar, Calif., Jan 21.**

### New F-35 Simulator Building Unveiled by 3rd MAW

The 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing dedicated its inaugural F-35 simulator building at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., Jan. 21. This marks the next step in streamlining the training process of the fifth-generation joint strike fighter.

In addition to providing a much more efficient means of producing highly trained pilots to fly the aircraft, the simulator will allow 3rd MAW aviators to train, rehearse and refine their integrated abilities alongside the Navy and other Marine Corps allies operating across the globe.

Flight simulators are an essential tool and an integral part of Marine aviation training that allow squadrons to hone critical skills in simulated environments and refine their ability to conduct operations in multiple environments from a centralized location.

“Distributed mission training will have the ability to integrate with other Navy and Marine Corps assets that are off site,” said Jennifer Moore, training and operations manager for Lockheed Martin,



COURTESY OF LOCKHEED MARTIN

**In this 2015 photo, pilots at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., use full mission simulators as part of their training to fly the F-35 Lightning II. With a brand-new F-35 simulator building at MCAS Miramar, the Marines of 3rd MAW are more prepared than ever to defend against America’s adversaries.**



which produces the F-35. Moore added that the on-site simulators can be linked with air wing operations flown by Navy counterparts and integrated with other Marine Corps units so that everyone can join in the same simulated environment. “The Air Force has their own distributed mission training network, and the next step would be to get connected and let all the services play in the same domain,” Moore added.

According to Major General Christopher Mahoney, the commanding general of 3rd MAW, the opening of the new simulator building is a deterrent for America’s adversaries.

“The building is a manifested result of the teamwork and dedication of Marines that everyone talks about,” said MajGen Mahoney. “To the team here that allows us to take another step against our adversaries, my hat’s off to you.”

The Marines of 3rd MAW continue to live out their motto of “Fix, Fly and Fight” as the Marine Corps’ largest aircraft wing, which remains combat-ready, deployable on short notice and lethal when called into action.

1stLt Charles Allen, USMC

### “Social Media Network” Provides Information Hub for Marines

Marine Corps Systems Command (MCSC) drew inspiration from social media and video games to create an information hub catering to the needs of the 21st-century Marine.

In February, MCSC’s program manager for infantry weapons (PM IW) launched the Infantry Weapons Information Tool, an intuitive website inspired by social media that aims to increase communication within the fleet and better support Marines’ needs.

The easy-to-use Common Access Card-enabled website provides Marines with relevant technical doctrine, training manuals, instructional videos and other tools associated with PM IW equipment to make them a more effective force.

“We wanted to fill a need for this generation of Marines,” said Joshua Adams, a project officer for company and battalion mortars with PM IW. “Our research and brainstorming led to the creation of a hub that Marines can use to learn more about systems within PM IW.”

Adams said the site incorporates a user interface similar to the video game “Call of Duty.” It also includes a chat feature resembling an online message board or Facebook thread, providing familiar online elements for today’s Marines to ask and answer questions about their equipment.

“We’ve essentially created a professional

social media network for Marines,” said Adams.

Traditionally, access to training manuals was limited to a few personnel within a unit. Instead of having to refer to physical documents or visit multiple websites to obtain training or safety information, Marines can leverage this site to learn more about their gear at any time or from any place.

For example, a Marine with a question about the M320A1 can post the inquiry within the site’s virtual discussion room to see if a fellow Marine can answer. If they cannot, MCSC representatives can route the question to the system’s subject matter expert at PM IW, who can provide

fills a critical need for the Marine Corps. In recent years, PM IW realized many Marines were not consistently receiving the instructions and technical guidance needed for their equipment. Not having easily accessible information on their systems affects their ability to carry out missions.

When the information wasn’t there, Marines adapted. They referred to open sources, such as social media, to find immediate answers. Marines posted videos on their own social channels, asking very in-depth, technical questions. Their peers and seniors answered the questions.

“As a PM, we asked ourselves what



**A Marine with 5th Marine Regiment reviews and provides feedback on the new Infantry Weapons Information Tool at MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif., Jan. 15. The easy to use CAC-enabled site provides Marines with relevant technical doctrine, training manuals, instructional videos and other tools needed to make them a more effective force. (Photo by Amy Forsythe)**

the information directly to that Marine.

“Through the discussion forum, Marines can have secure, open conversations about employment techniques, best practices and other topics,” said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Dave Tomlinson, MCSC’s infantry weapons officer. “Everything is centrally located, allowing us to go to one location and pull information quickly, which makes life easier for Marines.”

Adams said the site fosters direct communications to Marines at all levels. The platform equips the warfighter with a quick, useful avenue for collecting necessary information to more efficiently and effectively complete their mission.

“We are providing a single location or access point to information that Marines may not know how to find,” said Adams.

The Infantry Weapons Information Tool

we were missing,” said Adams. “It was abundantly clear that Marines did not have a professional forum to search for information or even chat about experiences they have with our gear.”

Under the direction of Lieutenant Colonel Tim Hough, the program manager of infantry weapons, that became the mission: find a way for Marines to unite in a professional forum and provide them with the technical doctrine, training and instructional videos to increase their knowledge and effectiveness.

“Keeping the Commandant’s Planning Guidance in mind, we are set on ensuring all Marines have everything they need to accomplish their mission anywhere in the world,” said Hough. “In the most austere environments, Marines should have access to vital information necessary



LCPL CHASE DRAVER, USMC

**Col John Rochford, CO of 8th Marine Regiment, and SgtMaj Keith D. Hoge, the regimental sergeant major, case the regimental colors during a deactivation ceremony at MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C., Jan. 28, in accordance with the Commandant's Force Design 2030.**

to accomplish their mission.”

The team at MCSC worked with Marine Corps Tactical Systems Support Activity, spending more than 1,000 hours developing and testing the site.

According to CWO-4 Tomlinson, feedback on the Infantry Weapons Information Tool has been overwhelmingly positive. In January, a group of Marines at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., tested the site and provided their input, including recommendations for improvement which have already been implemented.

Sergeant Nicholas Delgado, an infantry Marine with 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, who participated in the event, praised the site for its usability, which he believes can save Marines time and resources.

“I’m not very tech savvy, but this website brings together all of our [publications] and will help streamline our training,” said Delgado.

Adams said the team plans to make the website—which has already become quite popular among Marines—accessible on smartphones, tablets and personal computers in the future. He implores Marines to take full advantage of the plat-

form to explore its features and provide necessary feedback.

“This tool is for Marines,” said Adams. “And if there is something Marines want or need, it is our job to get that to them. We will adjust this tool to fit the needs of our Marines.”

To access the Infantry Weapons Information Tool (CAC required), visit <https://mceits.usmc.mil/sites/iw>.

Matt Gonzales

### **Making Way for the Future: 8th Marine Regiment Deactivates**

For an evolving Marine Corps, a step forward means having fewer Marines and Sailors in its ranks, but a more effective strength to carry out the mission.

The Corps faced several cuts in 2020, and the trend continues into 2021 as 8th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division ended its most recent, 70-year activation period with a deactivation ceremony at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., on Jan. 28.

“It’s just a natural transition that we go through as we contract or expand the Marine Corps in certain locations and places, either by skillset or by geographical

location, that fits with force design,” said Major General Frank Donovan, the commanding general of 2ndMarDiv.

The 8th Marines Regimental Headquarters, which has participated in myriad major conflicts over the last two centuries, including World War II, the Cuban Missile Crisis and Operation Desert Shield, has been deactivated three times since its 1917 establishment: in 1919, 1925 and 1949. It reactivated in 1950 and remained active until the January ceremony.

In casing its colors, 8th Marines joins a growing list of Camp Lejeune-based units that have recently been deactivated, which includes Combat Logistics Regiment 25, 2nd Law Enforcement Battalion and soon 2nd Tank Battalion.

“Losing a regiment, we lose some flexibility,” said MajGen Donovan. “But the reality is we also spread some of that talent and that capability to our other regiments.”

The cuts aren’t specific to Camp Lejeune: The deactivation is part of an overall restructure in accordance with the Commandant’s Force Design 2030 (FD 2030). The intent is to reshape into a leaner, more efficient maritime-centric



operational force with a focus on defending against adversaries overseas.

“This will allow us to modernize and prepare for the next fight against a peer competitor,” said Colonel John Rochford, the commanding officer of 8th Marines.

According to FD 2030, by reducing legacy systems and capabilities, the Marine Corps is afforded the opportunity to reallocate revenue in order to incorporate long-range precision fires and refocus on integration with the Navy in accordance with its roots as a naval expeditionary force.

“The force design effort does not imply that [the capabilities and units] are not of value,” said General David Berger, Commandant of the Marine Corps, in his FD 2030 mandate. “Rather, this effort confronts the reality that in a future threat-informed fight, other capabilities will be more useful to the maritime and joint mission.”

Marines and Sailors from 1st Battalion, 8th Marines now belong to 6th Marine Regiment and currently serve as the battalion landing team for the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit, while 2nd Battalion, 8th Marines now falls under 2nd Marine



CPL ELIJAH ABERNATHY, USMC

**Col John H. Rochford gives remarks during the 8th Marine Regiment deactivation ceremony at MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C., Jan. 28.**

Regiment. However, 3rd Battalion, 8th Marines will deactivate following its return from a unit deployment program rotation to Okinawa, Japan.

“The last six months have been the most impactful for me,” Rochford said. “We’ve been undermanned and understaffed. During that time, we were able to certify and deploy 1st Battalion to a Marine Expeditionary Unit, another [battalion] to a UDP on Okinawa, and we’ve also been able to accelerate this shutdown four months ahead of schedule.

Going forward, servicemembers from the deactivated unit will either move to other units, be assigned new military occupational specialties, or may opt to transition out of the Marine Corps.

“I hope that we’ve made them proud, those of the past and those who have now moved out of the [regiment] to other battalions and units,” said Sergeant Major Keith D. Hoge, the 8th Marines sergeant major. “They can take with them the 8th Marine Regiment’s fighting spirit and go on and do good things in the Marine Corps.”

LCpl Chase Drayer, USMC



## Crazy Caption Contest

### Winner



SGT PATRICIA MORRIS, USMC

“Roses are red,  
MarPat is green,  
Here are deployment orders,  
For my favorite Marine.  
—Gen Berger.”

Submitted by:  
Jim Cannon  
Pittsburgh, Pa.

### This Month’s Photo



CPL JUSTIN M. MARTINEZ, USMC

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

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

# The History of the 1st Division Through World War II

By Joel D. Thacker, USMC

*This is a history of the Marine Corps' famous 1st Division. The account begins back in Feb. 1, 1941, when the 1st Marine Brigade became the 1st Division. The history carries through the Okinawa campaign, last ground battle before the occupation of Japan itself.*

On Feb. 1, 1941, one of history's greatest fighting units—the 1st Marine Division—was born. It came into existence by change of designation from the 1st Marine Brigade.

At that time the brigade was under the command of Brigadier General (later lieutenant general) Holland M. Smith and was composed of the 5th Regiment, the 1st Battalion, 10th Regiment, and the 1st Marine Aircraft Group. The 5th Regiment was commanded by Colonel Charles D. Barrett, and Lieutenant Colonel Raphael Griffin commanded the 1st Battalion, 10th Marines while the 1st Marine Aircraft

Group was led by Col Field Harris.

The strength of the brigade was approximately 2,000 officers and men.

Before the “First” was born, the brigade had carried out practice landing operations in the Caribbean and had participated in amphibious maneuvers with the United States Atlantic Fleet.

About two months after formation, the Division's strength had been increased to approximately 306 officers and 7,288 enlisted men composed of Division Troops and the 1st, 5th, 7th and 11th regiments. This division would later lead America's offensive in the Pacific.

Early in June 1941, the division participated in joint maneuvers with the U.S. Army and the Atlantic Fleet. On June 13, General Smith relinquished command to BGen P.H. Torrey and assumed command of the 1st Corps (Provisional), U.S. Atlantic Fleet.

When the Japanese made their treacherous attack on Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941, the 1st Division consisted of 518



officers and 6,871 enlisted men. Spurred by the need of American fighting men in the Pacific, the division increased its strength to 577 officers and 11,753 enlisted men by July 31, 1942. Meanwhile, BGen Torrey turned over his command to Major General Alexander A. Vandegrift on March 23, 1942.

Expansion from a prewar nucleus to a war strength division presented serious problems in training, equipping, and quartering, which were complicated further by the early detachment of a provisional brigade for immediate service in the Samoan Area.

Formation of this brigade, built around the 7th Marines (reinforced), withdrew from the division a considerable number of officers, noncommissioned officers and men trained and experienced in amphibious warfare.

The loss was too great to overcome immediately, so the Division was reconstituted as a two-regiment division with supporting units. It remained a two-regiment Division until the arrival of the 7th Marines at Guadalcanal on Sept. 18, 1942. Arrival of the 7th returned the Division to the original triangular form of organization.

All units of the division (except the 1st Regiment, which remained inactive until March 1942) participated in intensive training at New River, N.C., during the period between December 1941 and April 1942.

Each reinforced combat team of the 5th Marines and one team from the 1st



**RADM Richmond Kelly Turner, USN (left), and MajGen Alexander A. Vandegrift working on the flag bridge of USS McCawley (AP-10) during the Guadalcanal-Tulagi operation in the summer of 1942.**





**Raising the colors on Guadalcanal after the initial landings on Aug. 7, 1942.**

COURTESY OF U.S. NAVAL HISTORY AND HERITAGE COMMAND

Marines, engaged in a 10-day landing drill at, prophetically enough, Solomons Island, Md. This came during March and April.

Although training had been proceeding at top speed, it was believed that the Division had not yet attained a satisfactory state of readiness for combat.

Then in mid-April came the first intelligence of a plan for the establishment of the SoPacAmphFor (The “Lone Wolf” Plan). The plan called for early transfer of the Division (minus the 7th Marines, reinforced) to New Zealand. A training base in New Zealand and intensive amphibious exercises there in preparation for actual combat were planned.

At that time, it was estimated the Division would not see action before Jan. 1, 1943.

In accordance with the “Lone Wolf” Plan, campsites were secured in the vicinity of Wellington, New Zealand. The division was scheduled to ship out in two echelons.

The first echelon, composed of Division Headquarters Special Troops, 2nd Battalion of the 11th Marines, and the 5th Marines (reinforced), embarked on the

*Wakefield* (formerly the SS *Manhattan*) at Norfolk, Va., and sailed on May 20, 1942, via the Panama Canal. *Wakefield* arrived at New Zealand on June 14.

The bulk of the remaining troops went from New River to San Francisco by rail and sailed June 22, 1942, on the SS *John Ericson*, *Barnett* and *Elliott*. By July 11, the remainder of the Division, including the second echelon (1st Marines, reinforced, and the 11th Marines), had arrived at New Zealand.

Just 12 days after the first echelon arrived in New Zealand, the division commander was informed of a plan for an offensive operation in the South Pacific. It was indicated the 1stMarDiv would draw the attack assignment. They were to be reinforced, according to plan, by the 2nd Regiment of the 2nd Division, 1st Raider Bn, and the 3rd Defense Bn.

The Solomon Islands area was named as the proposed theatre of operations with the Tulagi-Guadalcanal area as the probable specific objective of a landing attack.

Everyone concerned realized that perhaps the Japanese sneak-attack at Pearl Harbor had cut short the normal training

routine. The urgency and high national importance of the projected undertaking provided the answer—“the 1st” would attack.

At 9 a.m. on July 22, 1942, the transport group carrying the division left Wellington under naval escort for Koro Island in the Fijis. There they rehearsed the forthcoming Guadalcanal operation, after which they held a rendezvous with the remainder of the task force. At sunset on July 31, the entire force left the Koro area and began the approach to the Solomon Islands. The 1st was shoving off to make history.

The weather was on the side of the Marines. During the final two days of the approach to the Solomons, the sky was generally overcast with a low ceiling and occasional rain squalls—ideal weather for a landing.

At 2:40 a.m., Aug. 7, 1942, the task force split into two groups: The Tulagi group passed to the north of Savo Island, and the Guadalcanal attack group slipped in between Savo Island and Cape Esperance.

Beginning at 7:40 a.m., Aug. 7, the 1stMarDiv (reinforced) opened America’s offensive against Japan under the command of MajGen Vandegrift. Marines went ashore on the north coast of Guadalcanal and on the smaller islands of Florida, Tulagi, Gavutu and Tanambogo while two naval task forces and other naval units gave their support.

The 1st Raiders, under LtCol Merritt A. Edson, reinforced by the 2nd Bn of the 5th Marines, landed on Tulagi, and the 1st Parachute Battalion landed on Gavutu and Tanambogo.

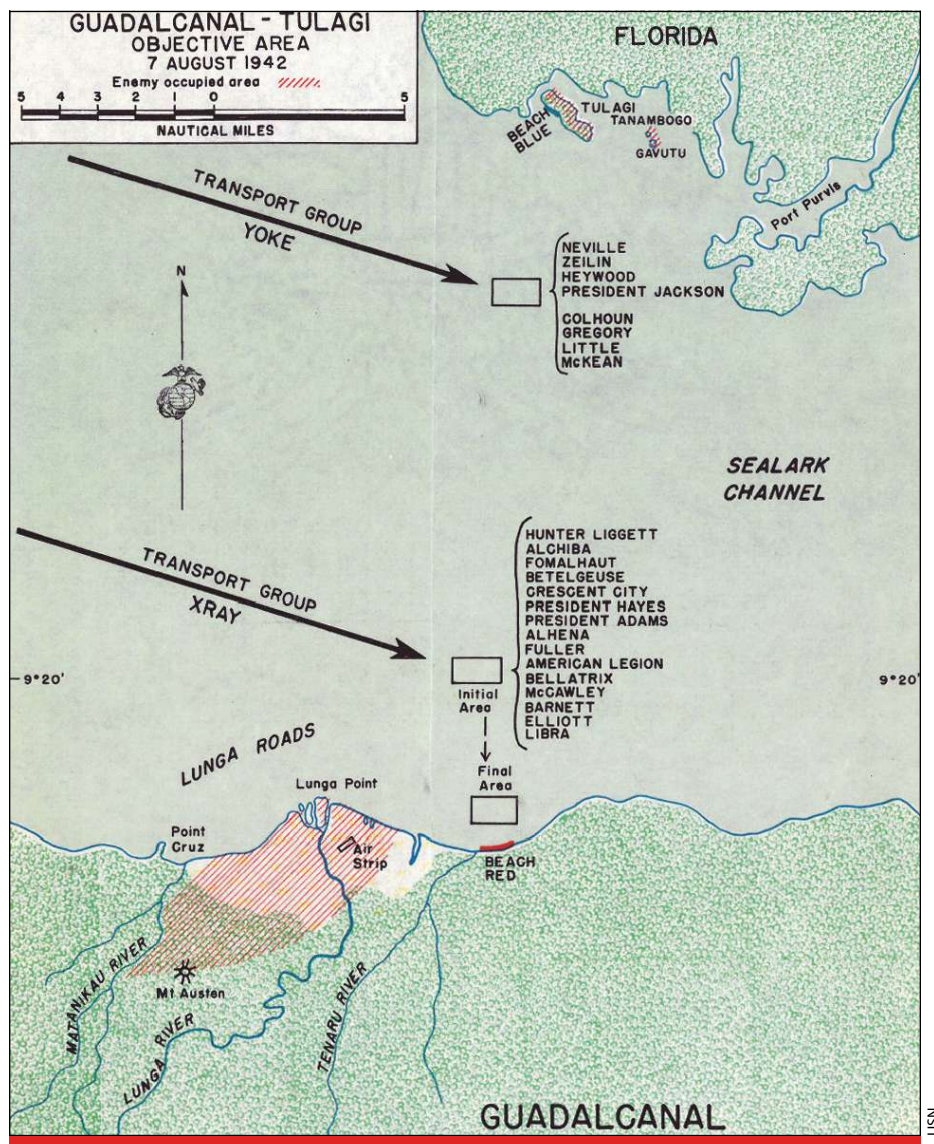
Gen Vandegrift was in personal command of the forces landing on Guadalcanal while the assistant division commander, BGen William H. Rupertus, was in general command of the landings of the smaller islands.

By the end of the first day, beachheads had been established on all of these islands with the exception of Tanambogo. A small American flag was hoisted at Kukum on Guadalcanal—the first marker on the long road back to Tokyo.

The bulk of the division took part in the Guadalcanal landing and met with light resistance. They soon seized the partially completed landing field. This airstrip became the center of war impact for ground, sea and air activities in the South Pacific until the Japanese were driven from the island on Feb. 9, 1943.

Meanwhile, landings on the smaller islands to the north met with considerable opposition and desperate fighting continued for two days.

It soon became apparent that the 1st Division was going to see some “rugged duty” on Guadalcanal. Shortly after the



beachheads were established firmly, it became necessary to withdraw the carrier-borne air support—the flattops were operating close to Japanese-controlled waters and were in grave danger.

Then the carriers shoved off, the Marines were left without air support except for the little coverage provided by long-range patrol and bomber planes.

There were no troop reserves in the Southwest Pacific with which to reinforce Marines in the Solomons. No land-based aviation was available and the night naval battle off Savo Island, in which the Allies lost four heavy cruisers and suffered heavy damage to a number of other vessels, had eliminated any possibility of immediate naval support.

Without air or sea protection the transports and supply ships were forced to flee to safer waters.

The Japanese didn't wait long before taking advantage of the Marines' lack of air and naval support. They began bombing our positions on Guadalcanal and made the adjacent waters almost

untenable during daylight hours. Their surface forces, coming in at night, bombarded the airfield at will.

The Japanese High Command, incensed at reverses ashore, began assembling troops to reinforce their scattered units, which had been routed from the vicinity of the airfield. They made plans for counterattacks against 1st Division forces defending the airfield perimeter.

**T**he Japanese apparently underestimated the strength of the 1st or had little respect for its fighting ability. They landed reinforcements to the east of the airfield about 10 days after the Marines had landed. Hardly waiting for adequate artillery and other supporting elements, they hurled a detachment of approximately 1,200 men against Marines near the Ilu River.

At that time the Ilu River was thought to be the Tenaru River and this action was termed the "Battle of the Tenaru." This Japanese attack was repulsed by the 2nd Bn, 1st Marines, and supporting artillery. The enemy suffered heavy losses.

The 1st Bn, 1st Marines, then crossed the river farther upstream and attacked the Japanese on their flank, driving them into the sea and killing or capturing the entire force.

The Japanese then concentrated substantial naval reinforcements in the general area. Apparently, their purpose was to cut off communications of Marines to the south.

Our naval forces moved in to stop this threat and the Battle of the Eastern Solomons was the result. This naval action proved somewhat indecisive because the enemy retained practically full control of the sea, and the only supplies that reached the Marines on Guadalcanal during the remainder of August were those rushed in on light vessels.

Japanese naval units made no serious move for several weeks. Ashore, the Japanese reinforced their forces on the flanks of the Marine positions—poised for another attack to recapture the airfield.

Gen Vandegrift knew the enemy was preparing to attack, but he was unable to determine the direction or probable force of the anticipated assault.

Then it came. Following the procedure they had used during the first attack (The Battle of the Tenaru), the Japanese launched an attack on the south side of the Marine perimeter during the night of Sept. 13-14. The spearhead of the attack hit a comparatively thin line held by the 1st Marine Raiders under the command of Col Edson. They were reinforced by the depleted 1st Parachute Battalion.

The issue was in doubt for several hours but the battle-worn Marines rallied against great odds and put up one of the most gallant and determined fights in the history of the Corps. At about dawn on the following morning, the 2nd Bn, 1st Marines (Division Reserve) reinforced the Raiders and Paratroops. All Marines on the line joined in a smashing counterattack and the Japanese forces were thrown back with heavy casualties. The enemy troops were chased right back into the jungle fastness.

Later it was estimated that approximately 2,000 Japanese were used in the attack. More than 600 dead were left on the field and many more were killed in mopping up operations that followed. During the afternoon of Sept. 14, the Japanese also attacked from the Matanikau River along the beach road, while another force struck across the Tenaru River in the vicinity of the "Big Bend." Both attacks were repulsed, and the Japanese again suffered heavy losses.

After the battle of Bloody Ridge, there was a brief lull in the fighting except for extensive patrolling by the Marines. Patrol reports indicated the Japanese were





**Above: BGen William H. Rupertus, USMC, (center) aboard USS *Neville* (AP-16) during the landings on Tulagi, Aug. 7-8, 1942. BGen Rupertus, Assistant Division Commander, 1stMarDiv, was in charge of combat operations on Tulagi and the other nearby Japanese-held islands. Note landing craft in the background. The destroyer in the center is probably USS *Buchanan* (DD-484).**



**Marine officers on Tulagi Island in the Solomons. Seated on the steps of the staff house are, left to right, front row: LtCol O.K. Pressley, Col M.A. Edson, LtCol H.E. Rosecrans, and LtCol R.E. Hill. Second row: LT E.B. McLarney, MC, USN; BGen W.H. Rupertus; Col R.C. Kilmartin; and Maj William Enright. Third row: Captains Ralph Powell, Daryle Seeley and Thomas Philpott. The photograph was taken soon after the Marines captured Tulagi in August 1942.**

building up practically an entire division to the west, in the vicinity of Kokumbona, in preparation for an all-out attack to recapture the airfield.

In the meantime, MajGen Vandegrift advanced his lines to the Matanikau River to prevent the enemy from moving artillery within effective range of the airfield.

When a Japanese naval force moved in for the obvious purpose of heavy bombardment—to cover the landing of additional troops and to knock out Guadalcanal's aviation—our naval units came out to meet them. On the night of Oct. 11-12, the two sea forces clashed. Both sides suffered some losses.

The enemy sea units returned the night of Oct. 13-14 and shelled the airfield and vicinity. The shelling proved a prelude for an attack on the morning of Oct. 14 by enemy land forces. They struck at the Marine lines from the east, west, and the south. Bloody fighting raged, but the enemy was thrown back.

On the afternoon of Oct. 21, following an artillery and mortar barrage, the Japanese launched another attack—this time on the Marines' forward patrol positions at the mouth of the Matanikau River. They used tanks, supported by infantry. The attack was broken up with the enemy losing at least one tank.

During the afternoon of Oct. 23, the Japanese again laid down a heavy barrage on Marine positions at the mouth of the Matanikau and followed up the bombardment with an attack by tank and infantry across the sand spit at the mouth of the river. Our 75 mm guns on half-tracks and 37 mm anti-tank guns knocked out one enemy tank after another, and the Japanese infantry which trailed the tanks, was slaughtered by machine gun, mortar and rifle fire.

The battle raged for nearly eight hours, but the Marine lines held fast. One Japanese tank succeeded in penetrating the line but was put out of action by a Marine who slipped a grenade under the track when the tank passed over his foxhole. Thirteen tanks were destroyed, and Japanese casualties were high.

The enemy struck again during the night of Oct. 24-25. A Japanese regiment made a thrust from the south through the woods between Bloody Ridge and the Lunga River. Fierce fighting continued until dawn when the enemy fell back, leaving their dead and dying sprawled over the battlefield and in the jungle which cloaked the retreat. The Japanese hit again the following night—heavier than before—but again were repulsed.

At the same time, a strong Japanese force, which had crossed the Matanikau





**The officers of the 1stMarDiv on Guadalcanal, August 1942. MajGen Alexander Vandegrift, the Division's commanding general, is in the front row, fourth from the left. Another future Commandant, Col Clifton Cates, is third from the right in the front row.**

the night of Oct. 23-24, attempted to out-flank the Marines' Matanikau lines. They succeeded in breaking through at one point but a hastily organized force, composed of the band and Headquarters and Weapons Companies of the 7th Marines, counterattacked and threw back the Japanese. The fighting was bitter and at close quarters in the darkness.

Meanwhile, the Japanese were moving fleet units toward Guadalcanal. Our carriers and naval forces moved out to intercept. And thus, the Battle of Santa Cruz was joined. Our airplanes gained an early advantage in the fight by putting two enemy carriers out of action. Our fliers practically wiped out four Japanese air groups. The engagement turned out to be a battle of carriers and definitely broke up Japanese attempts to bombard Guadalcanal.

The 1st had won its spurs in battle. On Dec. 9, 1942, after four months of continuous fighting, the Division was relieved by U.S. Army troops and units of the 2ndMarDiv. MG Alexander M. Patch Jr., USA, became the island's commanding officer.

The 1stMarDiv (reinforced) received the Presidential Unit Citation for the campaign.

On July 8, 1943, MajGen Vandegrift turned over command of the Division to MajGen Rupertus.

The 1st Marine Division was launched on a glorious career.

After the Guadalcanal campaign the 1st Division went into South Pacific rest camps, but it was back in action again on Dec. 26, 1943, when Marines hit the beach at Cape Gloucester on the western end of New Britain.

The 7th Regiment, under Col Julian Frisbie, made up the first wave. A beachhead was established north of Silimati Point. The 1st Bn, 7th Marines, advanced to the southeast and secured Target Hill while the 2nd and 3rd Battalions pushed inland, expanding the existing beachhead farther to the westward.

The 1st Marines, minus 1st and 2nd Battalions, came in about 30 minutes after the 7th. The 1st Regiment was commanded by Col William J. Whaling. The 2nd Bn, 1st Marines, landed on the opposite side of Cape Gloucester to block escape routes on the west coast and to prevent enemy reinforcements from reaching the airfield area.

The first night ashore Marines repulsed a number of strong enemy counterattacks,

and the next morning, Dec. 27, continued their advance on the airfield. The 1st Regiment pushed its lines to a point about 1 1/2 miles from the airfield. Meanwhile, the 7th Marines expanded the beachhead perimeter and improved their defense positions.

On Dec. 29 at 8 a.m. the 5th Marines, under Col John T. Seiden, began landing on Cape Gloucester. Just seven hours later an all-out attack was launched on the enemy-held airfield.

The 5th Marines advanced inland to a grassy ridge southwest of the airfield, then attacked to the northwest in an enveloping maneuver. The 1st Marines, supported by tanks, advanced to the west along the coast.

**B**y nightfall, the 1st Marines reached the airstrip and set up a perimeter defense covering the southeastern side of the airdrome area. The 5th Marines established a line to the west of the airstrip from the coast to the right flank of the 1st Marines. The airfield was secured.

Shortly after midnight on Dec. 30, an enemy force moved up from the south and attacked positions held by the 2nd Bn, 1st Marines, on the west side of Cape Gloucester. The action that followed was called "The Battle of Coffin Corner."





USMC

**A chaplain says a prayer for Marines who lost their lives in the capture of the airfield at Cape Gloucester. MajGen William H. Rupertus, Commanding General, 1stMarDiv which made the New Britain invasion, stands at left. A wrecked Japanese bomber forms a ghostly altar during mass, January 1944.**

Nearly 100 Japanese were killed, and the rest of their force fled into the jungle.

Sporadic fighting and mopping up operations behind the airdrome area continued during the morning of Dec. 30. At 1 p.m. MajGen Rupertus sent a message to the commanding general of the Sixth Army. It read in part:

“First Marine Division presents to you as an early New Year’s gift, the complete airdrome of Cape Gloucester ... ”

At noon on Dec. 31, the American flag was raised over Cape Gloucester by MajGen Rupertus.

During the next few days, 1st Division forces were reorganized and a perimeter defense was established around the airdrome.

After capture of the airdrome, the 7th Marines; the 3rd Bn, 5th Marines; the 1st and 4th Bns, 11th Marines; the 2nd Bn, 17th Marines, and other units of the division were placed under the command of BGen Lemuel C. Shepherd Jr., the assistant division commander. They were then assigned the mission of driving the Japanese from the Borgen Bay area.

The initial attack force shoved off from the beachhead perimeter at 10 a.m. on Jan. 2, 1944. They advanced toward the

rugged hills and ridges to the southeast.

For two weeks they fought courageously against a fanatical enemy heavily entrenched along the rivers and streams. The Marines had to overcome swamps and mud, the devilish kunai grass, tropical storms and other almost impossible obstacles of terrain and nature. The wily Japanese took full advantage of the terrain.

Hill 150 fell to the Marines on Jan. 6, and Aogiri Ridge was seized in a bloody battle on Jan. 9. The enemy threw a series of savage counterattacks at the ridge, but Marines held their positions. Hill 660 (called Manju Yamma by the Japanese) was attacked by Marines on Jan. 13 and 14. The fighting was savage, but the Marines took the hill on Jan. 15.

On Jan. 17, the 7th Marines were relieved by the 5th Marines, and the Borgen Bay phase of the New Britain campaign came to a close.

From Jan. 22 to Feb. 15, 1944, extensive patrolling of the western part of New Britain was carried out by 1st Division units. On Jan. 23, an amphibious force from the 5th Marines, supported by tanks, landed and captured Natomo Point. Then they advanced eastward to the Natomo River. A strong patrol was sent to Turitei,

and on Feb. 6, forward elements of this force reached Nigol enroute to Gilnit to contact an Army patrol from Arawe.

On Feb. 11, Col Fuller’s force arrived at Gilnit. They waited 48 hours for the Army patrol and then returned to Turitei, leaving one platoon at Gilnit. Contact with the Army unit was made on Feb. 17, and the next day Col Fuller’s force began the trek back to the 1st Division perimeter at Cape Gloucester.

A landing on Rooke (Umboi) Island in the Dampier Strait was made on Feb. 12, 1944, by a company from 1st Marines (reinforced). The unit met no opposition on the island, which lies a short distance west of New Britain.

It was on March 6, 1944, that the 5th Marines (reinforced) under the command of Col O.P. Smith moved from Iboki Plantation and landed near Volupai Plantation on the western coast of the Willaumez Peninsula. The battalions fanned out across the area, and on March 8, a patrol from the 2nd Battalion occupied the Talesea Airfield.

The three battalions of the 5th, supported by artillery of the 2nd Battalion, 11th Marines; 1st Tank Battalion; 1st Special Weapons Battalion; 1st Amphibian

D-day on Peleliu, Sept. 15, 1944. Marines on one of the "Orange" landing beaches seek cover from Japanese fire behind an LVT.



Tractor Battalion, and other small units launched a coordinated attack against the Waru villages on the morning of March 9.

By 1 p.m. the entire Talesea area was cleared of Japanese. Defensive positions were set up around the airfield and Talesea Point, and a perimeter defense was established around the Waru villages.

During the following week, units of the 5th Marines patrolled the Willaumez Peninsula area, wiping out pockets of resistance and driving the enemy forces westward toward Rabaul. The 5th Marines were relieved on April 25, 1944, by an Army regiment.

Meanwhile the 1st Bn, 1st Marines, had landed March 11, 1944, at Linga Linga Plantation on Eleanora Bay. After covering the area with patrols, which killed and captured more than 100 Japanese, the unit returned to Cape Gloucester on March 18.

The division was relieved in the Cape Gloucester-Talesea area on April 28, 1944, by Army forces under the command of MajGen Rapp Brush.

Thus ended another phase in the history of the 1st Division.

After the Marianas campaign, the Pacific offensive shifted to the south and west.

On Sept 15, 1944, the 1st Division stormed ashore on Peleliu in the wake of a lengthy naval and air bombardment. The division met strong opposition from veteran Japanese troops and encountered one of the worst coral reefs since Tarawa. Despite these obstacles, the 1st made a successful landing.

Opposition increased as Marines moved inland. The Japanese again had taken advantage of every feature of the terrain. They had machine guns concealed in

caves and snipers in the crags and trees. These defensive points inflicted heavy casualties on the advancing Marines.

Japanese mortar shells walked up and down the beach in a bloody procession and enemy artillery churned the water into a dirty, debris-laden froth.

The Japanese made three well-organized and determined counterattacks during the afternoon of the first day. They first hit at the center of Marine lines, then smashed at the left, and finally rallied for one more assault on the center. These attacks were spearheaded by enemy tanks, but most of them were destroyed by U.S. tanks, bazookas and antitank guns.

At dawn on the second day. Marines began cleaning out enemy caves and pillboxes. They threw bazookas, flame-throwers, mortars and tanks against the entrenched Japanese, but the intense heat,





USMC

heavy mortar fire, and stiff resistance from concrete fortifications slowed the advance of three Marine regiments.

This second day saw more enemy tanks on the attack. During the morning, seven Japanese tanks, attacking a detail of the division's commissary unit, were knocked out by a Sherman tank and three planes. Shortly after noon, a free-for-all tank battle broke out. Fifteen Japanese tanks were knocked out while the Marines lost one of their own.

By nightfall, the Peleliu airfield was in the hands of the 1st Division. Marines were then in position to assault high ground to the front.

The 1st picked up the attack again on the morning of Sept. 17, lashing out under a cover of naval gun fire, artillery and air bombardment. The day's heavy fighting resulted in the capture of the south part of

the island, including the town of Asias and tiny Ngarmoked Island off the southern tip of Peleliu. During the day the Eighty-First Infantry Division landed on tiny Angaur Island and forestalled any move by the Japanese to harass the Marines on Peleliu with artillery fire. This landing was supported by Marine heavy artillery emplaced on Peleliu.

On Sept. 19, at 7 a.m. the 1st again moved to the attack. On the right, the 5th Regiment advanced rapidly and seized the area of Ngardolok to the northwest while the 1st Regiment continued its difficult operations against rugged terrain and determined resistance along the west coast.

By Sept. 20, the 5th Marines had a secure hold on the eastern coast and the 1st Marines were making slow but steady progress in their sector. During the day, the 7th Marines moved into position on the right of the 1st Regiment.

An all-out attack by the 5th Marines completed the seizure of the entire eastern coast on Sept. 21. However, very little progress was made against the ridges along the west coast.

During the afternoon of Sept. 22, advance elements of the 321st Infantry Regiment, Eighty-First Division, moved from Angaur to Peleliu to relieve the 1st Regiment which had suffered heavy casualties in the bitter fighting on the ridge north of the airfield. After being relieved the 1st Marines moved into the area held by the 5th Regiment. The 5th was then sent into Division Reserve.

The attack was resumed the morning of Sept. 24 after an intense air and artillery bombardment. The 321st Infantry captured the village of Garekoru and then moved eastward. This advance was slowed by enemy resistance from Kamilianlul Mountain. During the afternoon, a Marine squadron of night-fighting Hellcats from the 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing and a group of transports and patrol planes landed on Peleliu airfield.

The advance began to roll again on the morning of Sept. 25. The 321st Infantry Regiment reached the ridge line east of Garekoru. Shortly after noon the 1st Marines took over the line positions of the 5th Regiment. The 5th then passed through the 321st Infantry and launched an attack to the northeast. Then they moved up the west coast of the island and dug in for the night in front of Amiangel Mountain near the northern tip of the island.

By Sept. 26, the Japanese defenses on Peleliu had begun to crumble under the terrific pressure applied by our troops. Both the 5th Marines and the 321st Infantry chalked up new gains. Although the Japanese fought desperately, the 5th Marines took the hill about 1,000 yards

southwest of Amiangel Mountain and a second height which flanked this mountain on the north.

Old Glory was raised in front of the 1st Marine Division command post at 8 a.m. on Sept. 27. This was official confirmation of the fact that the situation on Peleliu was "well in hand."

By nightfall, the 5th Marines had advanced around the northern point of Peleliu capturing the remainder of the high ground on the northern part of the island. Although the enemy put up a stubborn defense from caves and natural barriers, Marines secured the larger portion of the island, except for a few pockets of resistance that still remained to be wiped out.

On the morning of Sept. 28, the 3rd Bn, 5th Marines, supported by armored LVTs and Sherman tanks crossed the coral reef along the northern coast of Peleliu and seized Ngesebus Island. Warships, aircraft and 1st Division artillery on Peleliu supported the attack. Corsair fighter planes of Marine Fighting Squadron 114 covered the landing.

**S**hortly after noon, this small amphibious force had captured the airfield and overcome all enemy resistance on Ngesebus with the exception of one pocket on the northwestern tip. Our forces also controlled the adjoining island of Kongauru, and a smaller unnamed island nearby was also in our hands. Capture of these islands eliminated the threat of Japanese gunfire to the Peleliu Airfield.

On Sept. 29, only one pocket of enemy resistance remained—Umurbrogol Mountain (Bloody Nose Ridge). Meanwhile the 3rd Bn, 5th Marines, completed the mopping up of Ngesebus Island. They were relieved by the 321st Infantry Regiment. Other units of the 5th Regiment continued blasting the Japanese from their last stronghold on the northern tip of Peleliu.

The main assault phase of the Palau Islands operation ended on Oct. 12, 1944, although fanatical Japanese in the remaining pocket of Bloody Nose Ridge continued to offer stubborn resistance. This pocket finally was wiped out on Nov. 27 by elements of the Eighty-First Infantry Division. This Army unit had relieved the 1st Marine Division during the middle of October. The 1st Bn, 7th Marines, the last unit of the 1st Division remaining on the lines, was relieved on Oct. 17.

First Marine Division casualties for the period from Sept. 15 to Oct. 14, 1944, were 842 killed, 4,963 wounded, and 126 missing—a total of 5,931 casualties.

At 8:30 a.m. on April 1, 1945, the 1st and 6th Marine Divisions, 3rd Amphibious Corps and the 24th Army Corps, which made up the newly organized Tenth American Army, began landing on the

west coast of Okinawa, largest island of the Ryukyu group.

The invasion of Okinawa, the strongest link in the Ryukyu chain that stretches from Formosa to the Japanese home islands, marked the end of the “island hopping” drive against Japan which began at Guadalcanal on Aug. 7, 1942. More than 3,300 miles had been covered and many changes had been made since that memorable date. When the 1st Division hit the beaches at Guadalcanal, less than 250 planes covered the landing; at Okinawa more than 1,500 carrier-based aircraft covered the assault.

The 3rd Amphibious Corps encountered light opposition on the Okinawa landing and even during the early advance inland. The beach area, however, was spotted with strong hill and trench positions.

Within four hours after the landing, the Marines had taken Yontan Airfield and the 24th Army Corps on the right had secured the Katena Airfield.

The 3rd Amphibious Corps was commanded by MajGen (later lieutenant general) Roy S. Geiger, MajGen Pedro A. del Valle led the 1st Division and MajGen Shepherd the 6th Division.

The 1st Division struck out to the east and by April 3, had reached the east coast. By the next day, Marines of the 3rd Am-

phibious Corps had occupied Katchin Peninsula on the east coast. The Marines stretched their lines across the narrow neck of the island from Yakada on the west coast to Yaka on the east.

After the northern part of Okinawa had been secured by Marines of the 3rd Amphibious Corps, the 1st Marine Division (reinforced) was relieved from Tenth Army Reserve and attached to the 24th Army Corps. This came on April 30.

**S**hortly before daylight on May 2, 1945, Tenth Army troops, supported by tanks and flame-throwers, opened a coordinated drive against the heavily fortified positions in southern Okinawa. The Japanese fought back with savage fury.

The Seventh Infantry Division on the east coast bypassed Yonabara Airfield and drove a deep salient into Japanese positions which extended beyond the southern end of the field. The Seventy-Seventh Infantry Division, reinforced by the 1st Marine Division, pushed ahead in the central and western sectors, driving toward the three major cities, Naha, Shun and Yonabaru.

The Japanese had massed tremendous concentrations of artillery and mortars. They had installed elaborate machine gun nests in pillboxes, concrete blockhouses

and reinforced caves. They were prepared for a last-ditch stand.

On May 4, the enemy hurled a vicious counterattack against the American forces. The Japanese brought into play their tanks, suicide boats, airplanes and pilot-guided flying bombs.

On the heels of this attack, four amphibious units attempted pre-dawn landings on both coasts—behind the American lines. The landing forces were composed of about 600 men.

Three of these Japanese assault units managed to land on the west coast but were trapped and quickly wiped out.

At dawn, more than 3,000 Japanese troops, spearheaded by 20 tanks, attacked Seventh Infantry Division positions. The attack came under cover of the enemy’s heaviest barrage of the campaign to that date. Marine Corps and Army heavy guns smashed the tanks, and Seventh Division infantrymen blocked the enemy charge in fierce hand-to-hand battles.

The 1st Division remained in the thick of the bloody Okinawa fighting until June 21, when Gen Geiger announced that organized Japanese resistance on the island had ceased. The last ground battle before the occupation of Japan itself had drawn to a close. 🇺🇸



**Leathernecks from MajGen Pedro del Valle’s 1stMarDiv advance over a hill against the Japanese forces on Okinawa. The men near the crest kept low to avoid outlining themselves against the skyline. Each Marine keeps his trigger finger ready and a weary eye searching for any signs of the enemy.**



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# Passing the Word

Compiled by Sara W. Bock

## Secure App Monitors Holistic Health, Combat Readiness

A Marine's greatest threat isn't always a physical adversary.

Some warfighters deal with a range of social, financial or mental health concerns upon returning home. This can lead to the Marine experiencing personal issues that compromise their overall health and combat readiness.

In 2020, Marine Corps Systems Command released an application designed to help commanders and their leadership teams monitor behavioral changes among Marines.

Command Individual Risk and Resiliency Assessment System (CIRRAS) is a Common Access Card-enabled software application that stores a Marine's personal information, such as health, social, educational and familial data, in a secure electronic environment for a commander's awareness.

CIRRAS enables commanders to maintain a holistic view of Marines' overall health and combat readiness from a single secure source.

"CIRRAS is a system built by the Marine Corps for the Marine," said Mary Feltis, project officer for CIRRAS at MCSC. "The Marine Corps' chain of command is responsible for supporting the overall well-being and combat readiness of their Marines. CIRRAS assists them in accomplishing this mission."

CIRRAS tracks indicators that could affect performance or welfare. This in-

formation might include mental health, relationship issues, alcohol- or drug-related offenses and more. Commanders leverage this data to assign risk scores and send automated alerts to leaders of at-risk personnel.

The goal of CIRRAS is to provide commanders with relevant information to be used to increase the overall wellness of their Marines. If a Marine is dealing with serious personal struggles, commanders and their leadership staffs can develop a mitigation plan that might include counseling or other professional assistance.

The development of the new application was driven by an unprecedented number of suicides among Marines in 2009 as forces were returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. Many Marines grappled with anxiety, PTSD and depression, which affected their personal lives and work performance.

In response, the Marine Corps established the Force Preservation Council (FPC)—a monthly review of all Marines by commanders. FPC meetings allow commanders to monitor a Marine's well-being using personal information on spreadsheets and other word processing documents.

Eventually, Marine Corps leaders realized the need for a more secure avenue for storing this data.

"These spreadsheets allowed commanders to proactively address those behavioral elements in Marines," said Cristina Miguel Moore, a product manager with MCSC.

"But the Marine Corps needed something more secure than a spreadsheet."

CIRRAS is located in a secure cloud environment, accessible only through a government-furnished computer. Access is limited and controlled by commanders. Only personnel given access by the commander can see the confidential information. The Marine Corps provides a Privacy Act statement to Marines prior to collecting any personally identifiable information.

Major Indigo Gregory, a company commander with Headquarters Battalion, Training and Education Command, Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., oversees about 500 Marines and has participated in several Force Preservation Councils during his career. He began using CIRRAS in November 2020.

"When I first heard about CIRRAS, I was eager to see it implemented within the battalion and more specifically within my company," said Gregory.

Gregory said the application is easy to employ and has been a valuable tool in the preservation and holistic readiness of those in his company. He raved about how this at-your-fingertips tool provides commanders with a holistic view on readiness rather than just for training purposes.

"I think the application overall will benefit Marines, but more specifically it will benefit commanders," said Gregory. "CIRRAS is a valuable tool in assessing Marines and will benefit the Marine Corps for many years to come."

Matt Gonzales



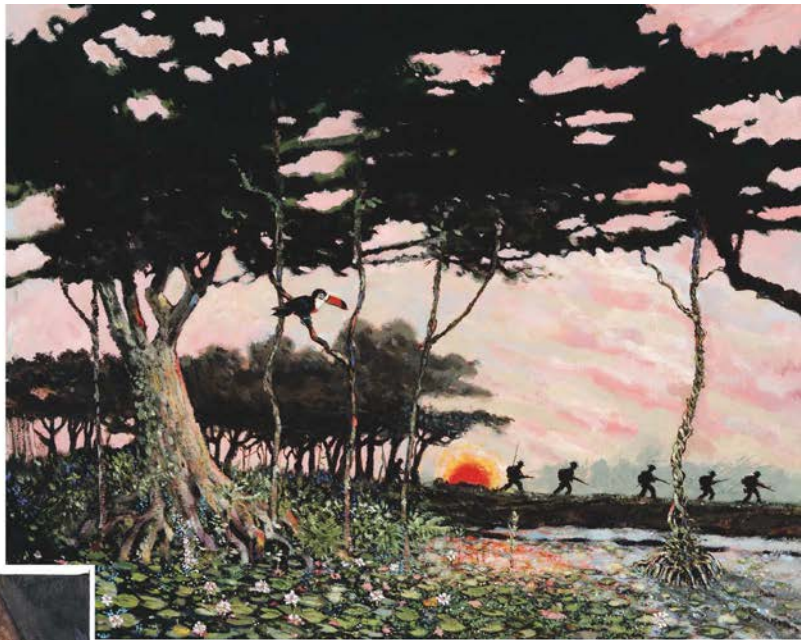
LCPL ALEX FAIRCHILD, USMC

**VACCINATION DAY—With the support of the Gary Sinise Foundation, USO representatives passed out drinks and snacks to Marines and Sailors as they waited to receive the COVID-19 vaccine at the U.S. Naval Hospital Okinawa, Japan, Feb. 2. Despite the challenges of COVID-19, the USO is committed to serving and has found ways to adapt and reach out to servicemembers in every way that they can.**

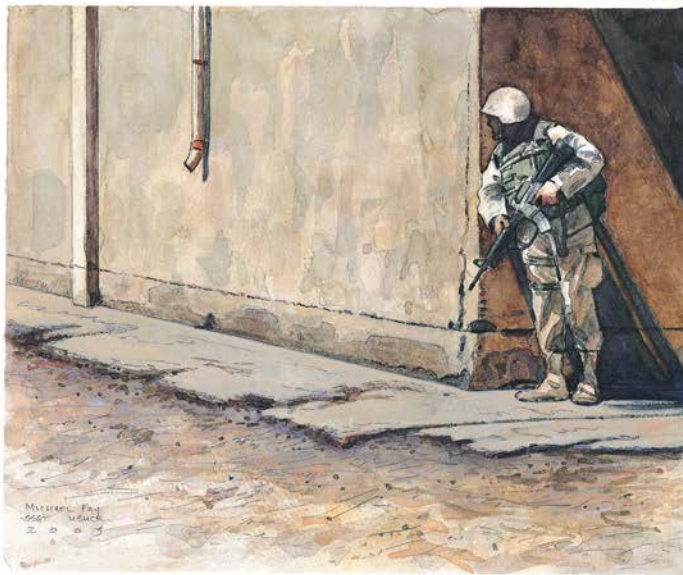




**ABOVE: "Viper Inbound" by Maj Alex Durr, USMCR**



**ABOVE: Jungle Patrol  
by Col Edward M.  
Condra III,  
USMC (Ret)**



**LEFT: Raid Outside of  
Yusifiyah, Iraq"  
by CWO-2 Michael D.  
Fay, USMCR**

**RIGHT:  
"Tanja Cools Out"  
by LtCol Keith A.  
McConnell, USMCR**



### Coming Soon to a City Near You: NMMC Announces Traveling Combat Art Exhibit

On Feb. 2, the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation and National Museum of the Marine Corps announced a new traveling combat art exhibit titled "Honor, Courage, Commitment: Marine Corps Art, 1975-2018." The exhibit features 36 works of art by 15 combat artists which focus on Marine Corps service immediately following the Vietnam War through recent years.

The exhibit will travel across the country from early 2021 until mid-2023 and is free of charge so everyone is encouraged to come and immerse themselves in Marine Corps history and experiences. The tour begins in Tucson, Ariz., at the Pima Air & Space Museum.

"The Marine Corps Heritage Foundation proudly sponsored this exhibit in order to bring a piece of the National Museum of the Marine Corps to Americans across our great nation," said Major General James W. Lukeman, USMC (Ret), Pres-

ident and CEO of the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation. "We all benefit from understanding the history, traditions and culture of the Marine Corps, and, through artwork, we are able to convey those experiences in a very personal and powerful way."

The majority of the artwork on display is from the inaugural Combat Art Gallery at the National Museum of the Marine Corps, located in Triangle, Va. The selected pieces include 34 works on canvas and two sculptures. The art speaks to the experiences of the artists, most of whom were deployed in combat. The Marine Corps' direction to these artists was simply: "Go to war, do art." The result is a rich commentary on the men and women of the Marine Corps who are "no better friend, no worse enemy" in their engagements around the world.

"Marine Corps art is up close and personal. It is about the individual Marine in combat, during training or while delivering assistance during times of great need," said Lin Ezell, former director of

the National Museum of the Marine Corps and the curator of the traveling exhibit. "This art helps us better appreciate those who have worn the uniform and those who continue to serve today." The traveling art exhibit allows the public to visually connect to the history and experiences of Marines, developing a deeper understanding of those who serve. A guide for young visitors can be used by all ages to help appreciate the exhibit.

The Pima Air & Space Museum in Tucson will host the exhibit until August followed by the National Museum of the Pacific War in Fredericksburg, Texas, from October to December. Three locations for 2022 will be announced soon. The George H.W. Bush Presidential Library & Museum in College Station, Texas, will host the exhibit from January to May 2023.

Marine Corps Heritage Foundation



## George P. Shultz

George Pratt Shultz, a World War II Marine who later held four different Cabinet positions, including Secretary of State, died at his home in Stanford, Calif., Feb. 6. He was 100.

During his six-year tenure as the country's chief diplomat guiding U.S. foreign policy during the Reagan administration, Shultz, who earned a Ph.D. in industrial economics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, helped draft and sign landmark arms control treaties and other agreements with the Soviet Union, which helped bring the Cold War to an end.

"America has just lost one of its greatest Marines and Secretaries of State ... He was one of the finest public servants the American people have ever had," said former Secretary of State and retired Army General Colin Powell in a statement. "When I was National Security Advisor to President Reagan, it was my great honor to stand alongside someone as strong and dedicated as George. Every morning Secretary Shultz, Secretary Frank Carlucci and I met in my White House office to discuss issues of the day. It seldom lasted more than 20 minutes before we left to brief our staffs. It was George's idea, and it was a great way to solidify our teams. He made sure we were 'one team, one fight.'"

Shultz was born and raised in New Jersey and completed an undergraduate degree at Princeton University where he played football until an injury sidelined him. He planned to begin a master's degree program at MIT, but instead joined the Marine Corps in 1942. After training at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., he was commissioned and served in the South Pacific, rising to the rank of captain. He was attached to the Army's 81st Infantry Division during the Battle of Angaur, one of the Japanese-held Palau islands.

In the book "The Greatest Generation," by Tom Brokaw, Shultz is quoted as saying that one of the first lessons he learned in the Marine Corps is one that stayed with him throughout his life, including during negotiations with world leaders. "My sergeant handed me a rifle and said 'Treat it like your friend. Never point it at anyone unless you're prepared to pull the trigger.' That's a very fundamental lesson," said Shultz.

After the war, Shultz returned to academic pursuits, and he accepted a position as a professor at the University

of Chicago's Graduate School of Business after completing his doctorate degree. He was named the dean of the school five years later.

Shultz was appointed as Secretary of Labor by President Richard Nixon in 1969 and a year later he was tapped to head up the Office of Management and Budget. Two years later, President Nixon selected Shultz as Secretary of the Treasury.

Shultz left government work in 1974 and entered private industry as an executive with the Bechtel Corporation; he later served as president of the Bechtel Group. He also taught management and public policy at Stanford University until he became Secretary of State in the Reagan administration, where he focused his efforts on the Middle East, negotiating an agreement between Israel and Lebanon. He also led the U.S. response to the new Soviet policies of perestroika.

In 1989 at the conclusion of President Reagan's second term, Shultz returned to Bechtel and Stanford, where he continued to advocate for arms control.

"Our friends around the world respected and believed in us, and our adversaries knew we wanted peace. He loved the State Department," GEN Powell said.

Nancy S. Lichtman

**John D. "Jack" Armstrong**, 95, of Portland, Ore. He enlisted during WW II and served in the South Pacific on Guam and Peleliu.

**Maj Theodore "Ted" Bean**, 81, of Woodbridge, Va. He enlisted in 1958 and served for 20 years. He completed a tour in Vietnam in 1968. After his retirement, he worked as a government contractor working on the development of command and control systems. He was a docent at the National Museum of the Marine Corps.

**Cpl George L. "Frenchy" Carrere**, 94, of Woodland, Calif. He served as a radioman with the 3rd MAW in WW II. After the war ended, he became a successful businessman, owning multiple retail liquor stores. He was an active member of various charitable programs in his community, to include delivering meals to shut-ins. He also volunteered with Toys for Tots and was a member of the MCL.

**SSgt William H. Chittenden**, 100, of Wheaton, Ill. He grew up during the Depression and enlisted in 1939 to earn some money and see the world. Serving as an embassy guard in Peking, China,

he was captured and held as a prisoner of war for 44 months. After his release from captivity in 1945 and his discharge from the Marine Corps, he used the GI Bill to attend Notre Dame. He studied marketing and philosophy and later had a career with Sears Roebuck and Co. He was a member of the MCL and the VFW.

**John "Jack" Christian**, 93, of Potomac, Md. He served in the Army Air Corps during WW II and later earned a degree in communications. He had a lengthy career in marketing and sales and for nearly two decades was the *Leatherneck* magazine advertising representative. "Jack was a good, good man. He dealt with a lot of 'Mom and Pop' advertisers who were Marines. He brought in a lot of revenue for *Leatherneck* and was well thought of and respected," said Nancy Lee White Hoffman, former deputy editor for the magazine. After his retirement, he remained a good friend to *Leatherneck*.

**Col Arthur Corbett**, 64, of Woodbridge, Va. He was commissioned a second lieutenant through the NROTC program at Villanova University. He served 31 years as an infantry officer and then spent a decade continuing to support the Marine Corps. He was an avid sailor and outdoorsman and was a good friend of the MCA.

**Cpl Rick Cortese**, 70, of Huntington Beach, Calif. He enlisted in 1968 and served a tour in Vietnam, where he was wounded. He later had a career as an entrepreneur in California. He was a member of the VFW and the Purple Heart Veterans Association.

**Don O'Cain Daniels Sr.**, 95, of Columbia, S.C. He enlisted when he was 18 and served with the 5thMarDiv on Iwo Jima.

**Carl H. Delaruelle**, 82, of Green Bay, Wis. He enlisted after his high school graduation and served for three years.

**LtCol Richard E. Dietmeier**, 80, of Dana Point, Calif. During his 25-year career, he served at a variety of duty stations. He served as assault amphibian vehicle officer for 17 years and was also a naval aviation observer and a weapons and tactics instructor.

**Cpl Lloyd F. Dinsmore**, 97, of Tulsa, Okla. He grew up on the family farm and enlisted in 1943. He served with 2nd Armored Amphibian Bn and first saw action on Saipan. He also fought in the battle of Iwo Jima. After the war, he was an investigator for the Department of Labor.



**Chip E. Dix**, 37, of Jefferson City, Mo. He was a Marine who served with Weapons Co, 1st Bn, 5th Marines. He enlisted in 2007 and deployed to Afghanistan in 2009 and 2011.

**Bobby Ray Eason**, 87, of Albuquerque, N.M. He served in the Marine Corps in Japan and at Camp Lejeune, N.C., before attending North Carolina State University. He had a career working for the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

**Harold J. Eckman**, 90, of Portland, Ore. He enlisted in 1952 and served until 1955. He was assigned to the MarDet of USS *Yorktown* (CV-10).

**Capt Joseph V. Fisher Jr.**, 85, of Semmes, Ala. He was a Marine who served from 1955-1977.

**Capt Ronald G. Garland**, 83, of Champaign, Ill. He served 20 years in the Marine Corps and later had a career working for the Postal Service.

**1stSgt Jan Lee Gartside**, 82, of Ramona, Calif. He enlisted in 1958 and was a Recon Marine who served three tours in Vietnam. He was a member of the Marine Corps shooting team and also served as a DI.

**Adam Gibson**, 31, of Roseville, Calif. He served in the Marine Corps before beginning a career with the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department. He and his police dog, Riley, were shot and killed in the line of duty.

**Pvt Carol (Silver) Gorman**, 77, of East Peoria, Ill. She was a disbursing clerk at MCB Camp Lejeune where she met her future husband, a fellow Marine. After they married, she spent the next 16 years as a Marine wife.

**Michael A. Graham**, 72, of Portland, Ore. He was a Marine who served two tours in Vietnam.

**Jerry J. Hoffer**, 80 of Mesa, Ariz. He enlisted in 1958 and served as an MSG at embassies in Oslo, Norway, and Paris, France. He was a skilled marksman, competing in tournaments throughout California.

**Jerry L. Hough**, 78, of Rock Island, Ill. He served in the Marine Corps and later completed college, earning a degree in horticulture.

**Kenneth J. House**, 95, of Wilton, N.Y. He enlisted in 1942 and served in the Pacific during WW II.

**George H. Iken Jr.**, 90, of Green Bay, Wis. He enlisted after his 1948 high school graduation. His four years in the Marine Corps included service in the Korean War. He was an avid Green Bay Packers fan and attended the "Ice Bowl" in 1967.

**Lloyd G. Koester**, 93, of Cleveland, Tenn. He served in the Pacific during WW II and later earned bachelor's and master's degrees.

**Col Joseph Laterra**, 79, of North Kingstown, R.I. In 1965, when he was a platoon commander with 3rd Recon Bn in Da Nang, Vietnam, he was wounded during one of his patrols. He left active duty in 1966 and had a 27-year career in the Marine Corps Reserve. In his civilian career, he was an educator, teaching science at the high school level, eventually becoming the department head.

**William A. Lynn**, 90, of Moline, Ill. He was a Marine who served during the Korean War.

**Francis H. McGraw**, 78, of Carlisle, Pa. He enlisted in 1960 and was a jet aircraft mechanic. Duty stations included MCAS Cherry Point and USS *Capricornus* (AKA-57).

**Donald R. "Mac" McKinley**, 73, of El Paso, Ill. He was a Navy corpsman who served with 2nd Bn, 7th Marines, 1stMarDiv in Vietnam. He was a veteran of the Battle of Hiep Duc. His awards include the Purple Heart.

**Cpl Willie L. "Bill" New**, 79, of Oak Ridge, Tenn. He was a helicopter mechanic with HMR(L)-163 "Ridge Runners" in the late 1950s and early 1960s. He also served with Air America. He later graduated from the University of Tennessee and worked as a manufacturing sciences engineer in the nuclear and aerospace industries.

**Gary R. Njirich**, 79, of Sonora, Calif. He served in the Marine Corps before beginning his career in law enforcement.

**Capt David G. Noland**, 85, of Hamilton, Ohio. He served in the Marine Corps and later owned and operated a camera store.

**PFC John M. Nordlund**, 77, of Murietta, Calif. He was a Marine who served with 5th Marines at MCB Camp Pendleton from 1958-1961. He later owned his own medical equipment manufacturing business.

**Sgt Glenn E. Prentice**, 72, of Carlsbad, Calif. He enlisted in 1967 and served a tour in Vietnam. He saw action on Hill 881s during the Battle of Khe Sanh, while he was attached to "India" Co, 3rd Bn, 26th Marines as the radio operator in an artillery forward observer team. He later had a career in the public works sector in Southern California. He was also a team leader and later the vice president for History Flight, a nonprofit MIA recovery organization. He made many trips to Betio, helping to locate and recover the remains of the Marines buried on the island.

**Robert Presl**, 89, of Oconto, Wis. He served from 1952-1954. He later worked for nearly 40 years as a carpenter.

**Sgt Ralph L. Pugh**, 98, of New Castle, Pa. He enlisted in 1942 and served as an aircraft mechanic.

**Harry C. Schenk**, 96, of Lewisburg, Pa. After two years in the Civilian Conservation Corps, he enlisted in the Marine Corps. He was assigned to the 5thMarDiv and served in the South Pacific.

**Victor H. Schmidt**, 101, of Davenport, Iowa. He was a Marine who served in the Pacific in WW II.

**GySgt Gerald M. Smith**, 78, of Hanceville, Ala. He enlisted at age 15 with an altered birth certificate and his mother's forged signature. After nine months as a Marine, his ruse was discovered, and he was sent home. When he was 16, he enlisted again, with his mother's permission, and went through boot camp a second time at MCRD Parris Island. He retired 20 years later, having served in Vietnam and Sasebo, Japan, as well as Camp Pendleton and Camp Lejeune. His son is also a Marine.


**Capt Rick A. Smith**, 72, of Delaware, Ohio. He was an artillery officer and a forward observer in the Vietnam War. He later had a career in engineering. He was a member of the MCL Sgt Justin F. Hoffman Det.

**Cpl Leon Spinks**, 67, of Las Vegas, Nev. Before making a career as one of boxing's greats, he served in the Marine Corps. He completed boot camp at MCRD San Diego in 1973 and was assigned to MCB Camp Lejeune, where he stepped into the ring and onto the All-Marine boxing team. He was a gold medalist in the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal, Canada, in the light heavyweight division. In 1978 he made headlines when he won a split decision over heavyweight boxing champion Muhammad Ali in a 15-round fight in Las Vegas.

**Sgt Dmytro "Whitey" Strykowski**, 85, of Selbeyville, Del. He served from 1954-1959 and was assigned to Marine Barracks Fort Meade, Md. He later had a career with AT&T and he also did volunteer work with Telephone Pioneers of America, repairing equipment for the blind.

**Sgt John Taynor**, 73, of Delaware, Ohio. He served from 1966 to 1970 as an ammunition technician and computer operator.

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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, dates of service, units served in, and, if possible a published obituary. Allow at least four months for the notice to appear. Submissions may be sent to *Leatherneck* Magazine, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, Va., 22134, or emailed to [leatherneck@mca-marines.org](mailto:leatherneck@mca-marines.org) or [n.lichtman@mca-marines.org](mailto:n.lichtman@mca-marines.org). 

**SOUND OFF**  
[continued from page 7]

ation Desert Storm with the words, Send in the Marines! Yes, we Marines went in, and the rest is history.

SgtMaj John Harlow, USMC (Ret)  
Dillon, S.C.

I am writing to the magazine concerning the February issue regarding the article, “The Storm is Over.” On page 26 the writer is talking about the two helicopters in the landing zone (LZ). The helicopter in the LZ at the left of the picture with the crew chief standing out in front is in fact a CH-53E Super Stallion. However, the helicopter next to the CH-53E Super Stallion is in fact a CH-53D Sea Stallion. You can easily tell the difference between the two airframes. The “Echo” is currently our heavy lift. It has a canted tail pylon and a support strut that connects the horizontal stabilizer to it. If you look at the tail pylon at the horizontal stabilizer it has a slight bend in it as well. This is characteristic to the Echo model. Sikorsky did this to the Echo because it provides

lift for the aircraft. As well the Echo has an extra main rotor blade, seven total. The D models only have six main rotor blades. Also, another standout on the Echo is that they have an in-air refuel probe whereas the D models do not as you can see looking at the two aircraft turning/burning in the LZ. I hope this is enough of a description to know what a CH-53 Echo looks like.

Let’s talk about the CH-53D Sea Stallion. This airplane flew for more than 60-plus years. It actually out flew the Echo’s in the sandbox and was there until 2012. HMH-362 was the last active squadron to leave. After that they were retired. Some of our airframes flew in Vietnam. The CH-53D has a straight tail pylon, no refuel probe and only six main rotor blades. And it has the elastomeric rotor head, not the old nasty wet head that they kept and put on the Echo. You can tell that as well because the beanie ring sets up higher on that rotor head than it does on the Echo. That being said, they are both our heavy haulers. Both are manufactured by Sikorsky Helicopters—the flying S. I hope this will help moving forward when speaking about the two very different

airframes, i.e., the CH-53E Super Stallion, the CH-53D Sea Stallion.

Thank you all for what you do and for a great magazine. I’m a lifetime member of *Leatherneck*.

GySgt Michael J. Flanagan, USMC (Ret)  
1979 to 1999  
Gainesville, Ga.

### Saved Round

On the last page of the February *Leatherneck* [Saved Round] it shows movie posters. The caption to the right states that the flying sequences in the movie, “The Great Santini” were flown by VMFA-312. The major flying scene is a practice dogfight between two Marine F-4s and two Navy F-4s. The two Navy F-4s are actually from VMFA-251. We had to paint “NAVY” on our planes for the movie. On a sad note, during the year after the filming we had a series of accidents and three of the four 251 Marines in the movie lost their lives.

Allen Massey  
Mebane, N.C.



One of our readers, GySgt Michael J. Flanagan, USMC (Ret) points out the differences between the CH-53E Super Stallion, foreground, and the CH53-D Sea Stallion. (Photo by Ross Simpson)



## Mustangs of the Corps

Each month I read *Leatherneck* cover to cover and enjoy the articles. In the January issue, the article titled, "Mustangs of the Corps" missed one of the giants of the Corps, Lieutenant General Roy Geiger. Geiger received a law degree and attempted to secure a commission but due to physical defects, he was denied. On Nov. 2, 1907, he enlisted as a private in the Marine Corps. By June 2, 1908, he received his Certificate of Appointment to corporal. On Feb. 4, 1909, he was honorably discharged and the following day he accepted his commission as a second lieutenant with his date of rank being Jan. 20, 1909.

Thank you for continuing to provide an outstanding magazine.

Cpl Scott Dinga, USMC  
Chicago, Ill.

## Jackknife Made its Way To Southeast Asia and Back


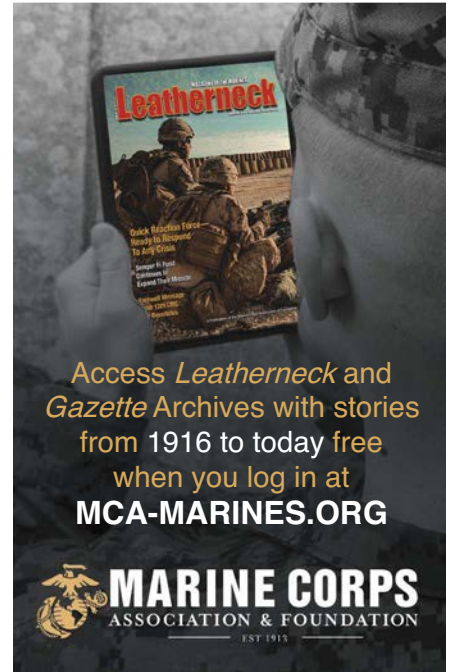
Just read the article, "Lay Bare a Few More Nerves: Under Fire at Roi-Namur" by Geoffrey Roecker in the February *Leatherneck*. This is an absolutely great article and it led me to discover information about PFC George E. Boisvert Jr., who served in Co C, 1/24 by going to the website [www.1-24thmarines.com](http://www.1-24thmarines.com) men-

tioned at the end of the article. This is why the article and information are important to me.

The night before leaving for boot camp at MCRD Parris Island in January 1968, I was at the home of the girl I was dating. Her father, George E. Boisvert Jr., was a Marine. Mr. Boisvert told me that he graduated from high school in June 1943 and enlisted in the Marine Corps. He said, "I went to Parris Island and became a 'shitbird' just like you will be tomorrow." He mentioned that he served with the 4th Marine Division and was seriously wounded at Iwo Jima. He held up a jackknife and said, "This is the last item I have from my service in the Marines. I want you to carry it to Southeast Asia and bring it back home." To me, Mr. Boisvert was a tough person, so it was a surprise to see tears run down his cheeks as he spoke. I was humbled that he thought that much of me to share this Marine jackknife. I did carry it in Vietnam and did bring it back home. Unfortunately, I never saw Mr. Boisvert again, but I never forgot him.

What happened to the Marine jackknife? After discharge from the Marine Corps, I returned to Cortland State College to obtain my degree. I met Emerson Banks, who was a corpsman with the 4th Marine Division and was at the battle for

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## UPCOMING TOURS

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Civil War Adventure—Bull Run-Gettysburg-Antietam

### MAY 22-31

WWI Devil Dogs in France Belleau Wood-Reims

### MAY 27-JUN 9

D-Day: 77th Anniversary of "The Longest Day + the Bulge" Normandy-Bastogne-Paris

### JUN 1-9

D-Day: "The Longest Day" Normandy-Paris

### JUN 12-25

Cathedrals of Northern France—Normandy

### JUL 31-AUG 5

"Bloody Tarawa"

### AUG 1-9

Guadalcanal Op Watchtower

### AUG 14-27

Germany—"Rise & Fall of the Third Reich"

### AUG 21-31

Vietnam I-Corps with SgtMaj Overstreet

### AUG 26-SEP 8

"Footsteps of Easy Co" D-Day-Battle of the Bulge

### SEP 7-21

Ireland—"Irish Marines"

### SEP 9-14

Battle of Midway Return

### SEP 29-OCT 10

England WWII

### DEC 5-14

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Iwo Jima. His youngest son, Billy, enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1971 and at his “going away party” I told the story of my night before going to Parris Island, and I gave Mr. Boisvert’s knife to Billy Banks. I said, “Billy, carry this jackknife back to Southeast Asia and bring it back home again.” Billy did go to Okinawa but I don’t know if he brought the knife home as I had moved from the area and lost touch with Emerson and Bill.

Jack Stubbs  
Albany, N.Y.

### Simple Act Changed My Life

As I enter my eighth decade of life, I look back and realize how fortunate I have been. After graduating from high school in 1958, I joined the Marine Corps that year. Little did I know how that simple act would change my life in such a dramatic fashion.

In 1967 I had orders to WestPac. While serving at MCRS St. Louis, I attended quite a few funerals as part of an Honor Guard for Marines killed in Vietnam. I knew the consequence of war, but like most youths, I ignored it. Arriving in Vietnam and seeing firsthand the reality of it and its cost was an eye opener. To be truthful, all I wanted to do was survive and come home to my wife and two daughters.

I was one of the fortunate ones. While serving in Vietnam I was meritoriously combat promoted to gunnery sergeant and continued my career, retiring in 1980 as a sergeant major.

As a side note, I wonder if I have been the only sergeant major who served his whole career not having been stationed at any of the four main bases of the Corps: MCB Camp Pendleton, MCB Camp Lejeune, MCRD Parris Island or MCRD San Diego, other than boot camp or passing through on orders or on an inspection. I count my time as a Marine to be an honor and take pride in it. Having served my country and Corps, it is now time for the new breed to carry on the traditions and fill the boots of those who served in the past. I am confident they will.

SgtMaj E.D. Elliott, USMC (Ret)  
Olney, Ill.

### DI Sgt Richard A. Schaad Remembered

After more than 50 years of reading the best Marine Corps publication, *Leatherneck*, I was pleasantly surprised to see a photo on page 6 of the February issue of the man who made me who I am today. I met then-Sergeant Richard A. Schaad at 0430 hours on Sept. 1, 1964, with 80 other

confused young men. In three short months Sgt Schaad transformed platoon 180 into the best marching, sharpest shooting, and proudest in the battalion. I never doubted that Sgt Schaad would make a career of the Corps and was so saddened when I learned that retired SgtMaj Schaad had been killed in a motor vehicle accident. RIP, SgtMaj Schaad, and know that your time on earth had a positive effect on the lives of so many dreadful young men. Semper Fi.

I look forward to receiving and reading *Leatherneck* each month from cover to cover.

Sgt Richard J. Arruda  
USMC, 1964-1968  
Kingston, Mass.

Feel like sounding off? Address your letter to: Sound Off, *Leatherneck* Magazine, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134, or send an email to: leatherneck@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 emails must contain complete names and postal mailing addresses. Anonymous letters will not be published.—Editor 🐾



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The Marine Corps Association Foundation's Inaugural Giving Day will be held on **Tuesday, June 8, 2021.**

MCAF's Giving Day is a 14-hour long campaign that brings together Marines, families, and friends of the Corps to raise funds for the Foundation's mission of supporting Today's Marines and enhancing their **professional development.**



Throughout the day, donors will have the opportunity to make an online gift toward this special fundraising effort. Together, MCAF will continue to provide Marines with the **support** they need to be **successful leaders.**

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[mca-marines.org/foundation](https://mca-marines.org/foundation)



## Reunions

*Editor's note: The following reunion information was current as of March 1. Given that the COVID-19 virus is still impacting future events, please continue to check with the reunion points of contact for the most up-to-date information.*

• **Marine Corps Engineer Assn.**, Sept. 23-25, Fredericksburg, Va. Contact Maj Charlie Dismore, USMC (Ret), (512) 394-9333, [www.marcorengasn.org](http://www.marcorengasn.org).

• **USMC Vietnam Tankers Assn.**, Sept. 15, Warwick, R.I. Contact John Wear, 16605 Forest Green Terrace, Elbert, CO 80106, (719) 495-5998, [johnwear2@verizon.net](mailto:johnwear2@verizon.net).

• **Marine Corps Cryptologic Assn.** is planning a reunion in September, Las Vegas, Nev. Contact Edgar Kitt, 2250 Heavenly View Dr., Henderson, NV 89014, (702) 454-1646, [edgarkitt@earthlink.net](mailto:edgarkitt@earthlink.net).

• **Marine Corps Disbursing Assn.**, Aug. 8-12, Reno, Nev. Contact MGySgt Kevin Gascon, USMC (Ret), (760) 458-2655, [mojorisin68@hotmail.com](mailto:mojorisin68@hotmail.com), [www.usmcdisbursers.com](http://www.usmcdisbursers.com).

• **Marine Air Traffic Control Assn.**, Sept. 19-26, San Antonio, Texas. Contact Steve Harris, (830) 460-0953, [sandkh2@gmail.com](mailto:sandkh2@gmail.com).

• **11th Marine Regiment, OIF (20th anniversary)**, March 31-April 1,

2023, Camp Pendleton, Calif. Contact Casey Harsh, [casey.harsh@gmail.com](mailto:casey.harsh@gmail.com). Facebook group: The Cannon Cockers of OIF-1 (20-Year Reunion 2023 Group).

• **STA Plt, 2/8 (1989-1993)** is planning a reunion. Contact Mike Moriarty, [mmoriarty81@comcast.net](mailto:mmoriarty81@comcast.net).

• **1/27 (1968)** is planning a reunion in July, Las Vegas, Nev. Contact Felix Salmeron, (469) 583-0191, [mar463@aol.com](mailto:mar463@aol.com).

• **"Stormy's" 3/3**, Sept. 27-30, Branson, Mo. Contact Burrell Landes, (303) 734-1458, [bhanon@comcast.net](mailto:bhanon@comcast.net), [www.stormys33.com](http://www.stormys33.com).

• **Battery Adjust, 3/11 (all eras)**, Aug. 25-29, Washington, D.C. Contact Brian Seals, (765) 580-2734, [bseals2013@gmail.com](mailto:bseals2013@gmail.com).

• **C/1/12 (RVN)**, Aug. 25-29, Washington, D.C. Contact Woody Hall, (931) 242-8432, [hwoodrow@charter.net](mailto:hwoodrow@charter.net).

• **H/2/7 (RVN, 1965-1970)**, June 24-27, Jacksonville, Fla. Contact Steve Cone, (843) 424-8279, [scone1948@yahoo.com](mailto:scone1948@yahoo.com).

• **Marine Expeditionary Brigade-Afghanistan, Task Force Leatherneck (2009-2010)**, May 7-9, Quantico, Va. Contact reunion committee, [taskforceleatherneck@gmail.com](mailto:taskforceleatherneck@gmail.com).

• **Philippine Embassy Marines (1976-1977)**, Nov. 10, North Carolina. Contact Tim Craig, [phildream2017@gmail.com](mailto:phildream2017@gmail.com).

• **TBS, Co F, 6-70**, June 10-13, Quantico, Va. Contact Col Tom Kanasky, USMC (Ret), (202) 366-3156, [tkanasky@earthlink.net](mailto:tkanasky@earthlink.net), or Col Mitch Youngs, USMC (Ret), (703) 493-9435, [mitchyoungs@verizon.net](mailto:mitchyoungs@verizon.net).

• **TBS, Co C, 3-72**, is planning a 50th-anniversary reunion. Contact Col Joe Mueller, USMCR (Ret), (818) 815-8331, [jnm21213@yahoo.com](mailto:jnm21213@yahoo.com).

• **TBS, Co D, 4-73**, is planning a 50th-anniversary reunion in 2023, Quantico, Va. Contact Col Bill Anderson, USMCR (Ret), (540) 850-4213, [binche57@yahoo.com](mailto:binche57@yahoo.com), or Col Bob Donaghue, USMCR (Ret), (614) 840-0267, [ip350haven@comcast.net](mailto:ip350haven@comcast.net).

• **Plt 1187, San Diego, 1969**, is planning a reunion. Contact T.E. Miller, (618) 520-9646, or Mark Elder, (314) 322-8516.

• **Plt 2057, San Diego, 1971**, is planning a reunion. Contact K.L. Christeson, (816) 830-1498.

• **Plt 3028, San Diego, 1966**, is planning a reunion. Contact MSgt Bob Rees, USMC (Ret), (619) 940-9218, [bobrees86@gmail.com](mailto:bobrees86@gmail.com).

• **USMC A-4 Skyhawkers**, Oct. 21-24, Las Vegas, Nev. Contact Mark Williams, 10432 Button Willow Dr., Las Vegas, NV 89134, (425) 327-6050, [usmcskyhawker21@gmail.com](mailto:usmcskyhawker21@gmail.com).

• **VMFA-115**, May 6-9, Pensacola, Fla. Contact Patti Kaas, (717) 422-6796, [kaasfamily4@gmail.com](mailto:kaasfamily4@gmail.com), <https://115marinereunion.com>.

## Ships and Others

• **USS Hornet and USS Essex (CV-8, CV/CVA/CVS-12) and (CV/CVA/CVS-9, LHD-2)**, Sept. 13-18, San Diego, Calif. *Hornet* contact Sandy Burket, P.O. Box 108, Roaring Spring, PA 16673, (814) 224-5063, (814) 312-4976, [hornetcva@aol.com](mailto:hornetcva@aol.com). *Essex* contact Tom Ferelli, 19808 N 43rd Ln., Glendale, AZ 85308, (602) 882-0375, [tferelli@gmail.com](mailto:tferelli@gmail.com).

## Wanted

*Readers should be cautious about sending money without confirming authenticity and availability of products offered.*

• Debbie Landry, (210) 863-9514, [pokeynav@yahoo.com](mailto:pokeynav@yahoo.com), wants a **recruit graduation book** or a copy of it for **Plt 2001, San Diego, December 1961-March 1962**, to give to her father, George Kudlinski, who was a member of the platoon.

• Gary Doyen, (863) 899-3327, [gdoyen38@gmail.com](mailto:gdoyen38@gmail.com), wants a **recruit graduation book** for **Plt 1118, Parris Island, 1990**.

• Jessica Hillis, (530) 640-2325, [jessicahillis12@hotmail.com](mailto:jessicahillis12@hotmail.com), wants a **platoon photo** and **recruit graduation book** for **Plt 2019, San Diego, 1977**.

## Sales, Trades and Giveaways

• C. David Guzicki, [cmguzicki@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cmguzicki@sbcglobal.net), has **issues of Leatherneck** from **1965 to present** to give away or sell.

Entries for "Reader Assistance," which include "Reunions," "Mail Call," "Wanted" and "Sales, Trades and Giveaways," 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 email to [s.bock@mca-marines.org](mailto:s.bock@mca-marines.org), or write to Reader Assistance Editor, *Leatherneck* Magazine, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134. 📧

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# Saved Round

By Nancy S. Lichtman



USMC

**AWARDS IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC**—Colonel Lewis B. “Chesty” Puller, the commander of 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, center, reads award citations at a ceremony held on Pavuvu in May 1944, during which several Marines were decorated for their actions during the Battle of Cape Gloucester, New Britain. Puller also was decorated for the battle—he received a fourth Navy Cross for his leadership and fighting spirit in combat.

Operation Backhander was the name given to the campaign to take New Britain, a Japanese-held island which included an airfield that was critical to the success of the island-hopping campaign during World War II. D-day was Dec. 26, 1943, and the vitally important airfield was in Allied control by mid-January 1944, although fighting continued on the island through April 1944.

When U.S. forces landed at Cape Gloucester, also known as Tuluvu, located on the west end of New Britain, Puller was the executive officer of the 7th Marines. When the commanders of two of the regiment’s battalions were wounded, Col Puller took charge of

their units. According to his Navy Cross award citation, he “unhesitatingly exposed himself to rifle, machine-gun and mortar fire from strongly entrenched Japanese positions to move from company to company in his front lines, reorganized and maintaining a critical position along a fire-swept ridge.”

In February 1944, Puller took command of 1stMarDiv’s 1st Marine Regiment and led his Marines during “mopping-up” operations on New Britain. In April, Puller and his regiment sailed for Pavuvu (where this photograph was taken) in the Russell Islands.

When the battle-weary Marines arrived on Pavuvu, the site of an abandoned coconut plantation, they were hoping to find an idyllic island paradise. Instead, they were greeted by a thick, muddy jungle covered with rotting coconuts that not only smelled terrible, but attracted land crabs and rats the size of house cats.

To read more about 1stMarDiv during World War II, see page 52. To read more about the Division’s stay in the Russell Islands, the article “Pavuvu,” from the March 2014 issue is available in the *Leatherneck* archives. 📖





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