

JUNE 2022

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LEATHERNECK

MAGAZINE OF THE MARINES

Readiness in the Pacific:

**Marines Train for
Crisis Response
on Camp Fuji**

**Toxic Exposure—
Bill Would Expand
Victims' VA Benefits**



A line of Marine Raiders in camouflage gear and helmets, holding M4-style rifles, is positioned in a dense forest. The focus is on the front of the line, with the background slightly blurred. The text "EARN IT EVERY DAY" is overlaid in the top right corner.

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VOL. 105, No. 6

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Marines are often known for their toughness and resolve, but there’s nothing like an animal to bring out their softer sides. This month *Leatherneck* is featuring some heartwarming photos of Marines and the animals they have befriended in combat, during training exercises or in other lucky encounters.



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COVER: A U.S. reconnaissance Marine with Maritime Reconnaissance Force, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, provides security for a drop zone at Combined Arms Training Camp Center Camp Fuji, Japan, March 7, during Maritime Defense Exercise-Amphibious Rapid Deployment Brigade. For more about the bilateral exercise, see page 8. Photo by LCpl Christopher W. England, USMC. Copies of the cover may be obtained by sending \$2 (for mailing costs) to *Leatherneck Magazine*, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134-0775.

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Letter of the Month

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

When my mother died in 1992, I found souvenirs that my brother, Bill Niader, sent her from Japan during World War II. Bill was killed in action June 12, 1945, on Kunishi Ridge during the Battle of Okinawa.

One was a postcard written in Japanese that Bill had found sometime during the battle. In 2002, I read a story in *The New York Times* about a woman who was a schoolteacher in Okinawa during World War II. She wrote about her former students being killed and that they would never have a wife or family. I emailed the reporter and asked for the teacher's address. I wrote and told her that Bill was 18 when he was killed, and he would never have a wife or children. I also sent her a copy of the postcard my mother had. A

month later she wrote back and said she had found the Japanese soldier who wrote the postcard. He told her he had written it in 1942 while stationed in China and had sent it to his family in Okinawa. I was able to return the original postcard to him. He thanked me for the card and said he was sorry my brother had been killed.

In February a young lady reached out to me through Facebook and wanted to know if Bill Niader was my brother. It was the granddaughter of the Japanese soldier who had written the postcard. Fortunately, it had been passed on to her. She thanked me for sending her grandfather the postcard. I was sorry to hear her grandfather had passed away in 2006.

Frank Niader
Wayne, N.J.

M1: This is My Rifle

The venerable M1 had an even longer service life than the article, "This Is My Rifle: How the M1 Garand Became a Legend Among Riflemen" in the April

issue suggests. I went through Parris Island in the summer of 1966 with an M14, but when we arrived at Camp Geiger for ITR in the fall, we were issued M1s. I'd hazard a guess that the rapid ongoing buildup in Vietnam put the M14s and 7.6 mm ammo in short supply. We all put an awful lot of .30 ammo downrange every day. Even though old and worn, many showing overhaul marks, those M1s were still darned dependable and damned accurate. M1 Thumb was always a risk for the careless, but I have fond memories of that rifle.

SSgt Dan Stires
USMC, 1966-1976
San Antonio, Texas

DI Owned Up to Mistake

This is in response to Ron "Tank" Rotunno's letter, "Looking Back at the Marine Corps," in the March issue. I was at Parris Island around the same time he was with Plt 1017, Co D, 1st Bn in November 1965 through January 1966. We really did not like our senior drill

THE U.S. MARINE CORPS TRANSFORMATION PATH

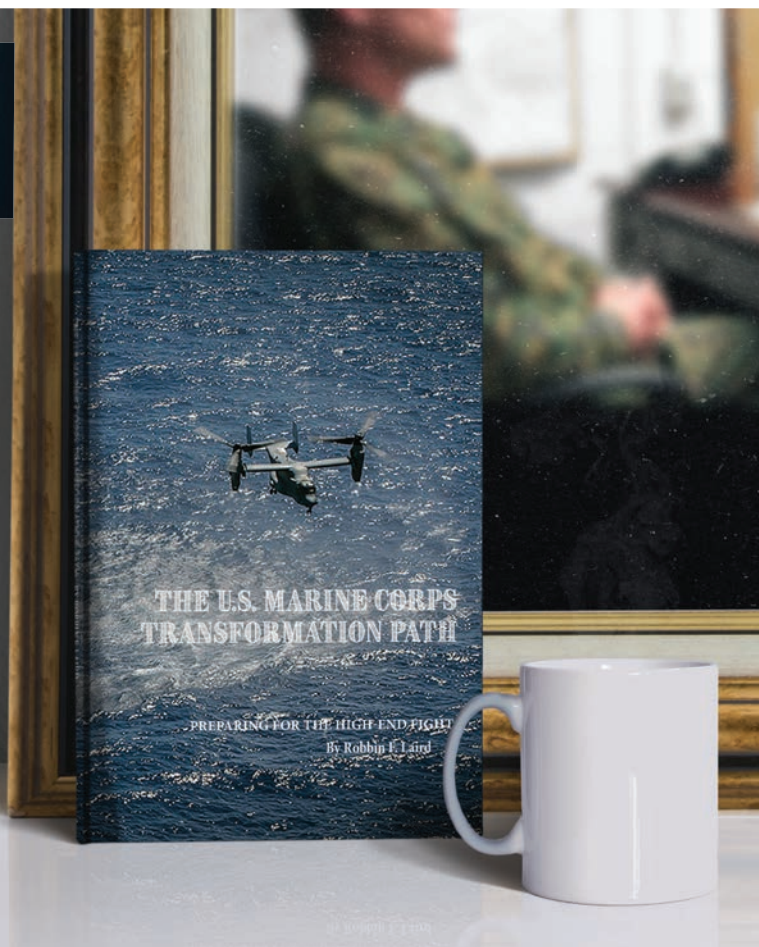
By Robbin F. Laird

This book focuses on the Marine Corps in the strategic shift from the Middle Eastern land wars to the return to Great Power Competition and the high-end fight. The transformation path began in 2007 with the introduction of the Osprey.

Only time will tell how the Marine Corps navigates this treacherous transformation journey, but it's not the equipment that will make the Corps successful on the future battlefield - it's the Marines. Their imaginations, ideas and creativity will lead to innovative employment of the tools they are given. That's true of every piece of equipment in use today and it will remain that way in the future. *The USMC Transformation Path: Preparing for the High-End Fight* makes a valuable contribution to the professional dialogue that must occur by giving voice to those who are charged with managing the change.

LtGen George Trautman
United States Marine Corps (Ret)
Former Deputy Commandant, Aviation

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instructor (DI), SSgt Harrison. He was hard on us. When we saw he had the duty, we knew we were going to have a rough day, but it paid off in the long run.

When it came to final drill, we had swim qualification and rifle range instructors come to watch us—we were that good. During our final drill our senior DI forgot a move. We continued like nothing happened but lost the drill competition.

When we got back to the barracks, our senior DI called a "school circle." He came out and tied a boot lace around our guidon with all the other awards we had won because he knew it was his fault that we lost our final drill. That move gave us even more respect for him.

Peter Wenning
Dumont, N.J.

Reader Appreciated Background About Hugh Purvis, MOH Recipient

"Hugh Purvis: Patriot Led a Life of Military Service, Culminating in Medal of Honor" in the April issue, was a wonderful article on the career of Pvt Purvis. I never realized the U.S. was involved in Korea back in 1871. It was fantastic following the Marines up the Han River to success. If I am not mistaken, the U.S. forces in 1950 were bottled up in the Pusan area until our forces landed and fought their way up to liberate Seoul along the Han River. If so, I think mention might have been made to that 1871 action.

Charles Babcock
Binghamton, N.Y.

Reader Sheds Light on Emblem Question

A "Sound Off" letter [February issue] included a request by MSgt Ben Spotts to determine the dates of vintage eagle, globe and anchor emblems. I draw on some 40 years of collecting Marine Corps uniforms and field gear, as well as volumes of reference materials, to offer the following:

During World War I, Marines were compelled to wear U.S. Army olive drab uniforms replacing the Marine Corps forest green wool, allegedly due to supply issues and their resemblance to German field gray uniforms. Unlike the U.S. Army, these blouses with standing collars had

no distinguishing emblems for the Marine Corps. In August 1918, then-Undersecretary of the Navy, Franklin D. Roosevelt, authorized U.S. Marines in France to wear bronze collar disks displaying the eagle, globe and anchor.

In 1920, with the change to roll-collar blouses, the Marines adopted a collar and large frame cap emblem design with extended wings and longitude lines to replace the earlier collar disk.

On May 25, 1925, Marines were authorized the "droop wing" collar emblems (Pattern 1925) as private purchase items through the exchange and other vendors as approved by the 13th Commandant of the Marine Corps, MajGen John Lejeune. The emblem was also used on correspondence but, to my knowledge, no large droop wing cap piece was officially authorized. Legend has it the droop wing emblems weren't popular due to looking more like a seagull than an eagle. Regardless, by early 1930 there were documented plans to return to the older emblem design of 1920.

In 1937, the Marine Corps standardized the emblem with the eagle wings straight and fully extended, removed the longitude lines, and retained the unfouled anchor. Designated Pattern (P) 1937, this emblem was worn throughout WW II and was still issued as late as the 1960s. It was commonly worn as a "salty" cap piece on the port side of tropical (khaki/tan) and green wool garrison covers well into the Vietnam War era.

The current enlisted device, with fouled anchor, was adopted in 1955 in a dark brown or Cordovan finish. The emblem color was changed to black in June 1963.

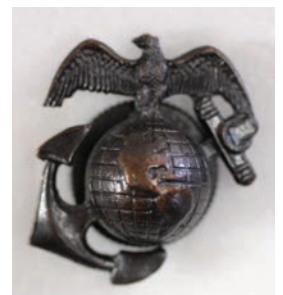
Of all the 20th century Marine Corps collar emblems, the rarest is probably those made by L.G. Luke of Melbourne, Australia, in 1942-1943, for 1st Marine Division officers following the Guadalcanal campaign. Hallmarked on the back of the eagle, these have a unique pin-back fastener. During WW II, metal shortages led the Marines to experiment with plastic emblems but found these were prone to breakage. Because of limited experimental issue, the plastic emblems are also rather rare.

Cpl C. "Stoney" Brook
Santa Cruz, Calif.



The disc emblem is from WW I, circa 1918, and worn by Marines in France. The emblem on the right, Pattern P-1937, was worn from 1937 through WW II and was still limited issue as late as the 1960s.

(Photos Courtesy of
Cpl C. "Stoney" Brook)



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John Wayne Visits Da Nang

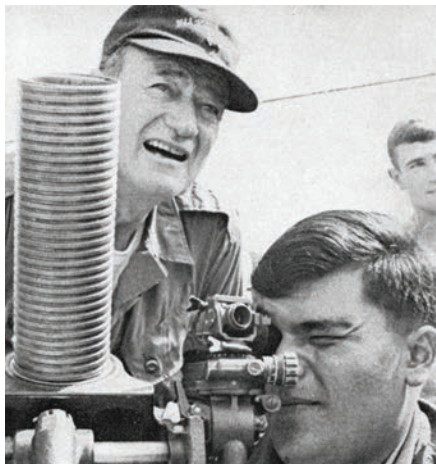
My dad, Cpl Vance Kenton Burch, was a squad leader with 2nd Bn, 9th Marine Regiment in Da Nang in May 1966 when John Wayne paid a visit. My dad is in the photo published in *Leatherneck* magazine shortly thereafter. He used to have that issue of the magazine but we've since lost track of it.

I would love to find that photo or that issue for him if possible as I have not had luck finding it myself. A friend of mine suggested contacting *Leatherneck* directly to try to find it. It's a picture of John Wayne with another Marine, and my dad is seen just behind John's left shoulder.

Tracy Roberson
Laramie, Wyo.

• *Editor's note: We were able to find the photo in our October 1966 issue. Cpl Burch confirmed that he is the Marine pictured in the photo. He sent us his personal account of that day. It reads:*

"May 1966, Da Nang area, Vietnam. I was 22, a Marine corporal. My platoon was in the field—I was eating noon chow in a mess tent while my gunner, PFC Mirales, was doing gun watch in our 81 mm mortar gun pit. Suddenly, a huge group of Marine officers and photographers ran past the mess tent saying John Wayne was coming



PFC S.E. Mirales, center, shows John Wayne how to sight in an 81 mm mortar during a visit to Da Nang in May 1966. Cpl Vance K. Burch can be seen over Wayne's left shoulder.

through. They were headed right in the direction of my gun pit. I ran out to the gun and alerted Mirales. Wayne suddenly appeared outside the gun pit, walked right in, and stood for photos. I instructed Mirales to show Wayne how to sight in our gun. Wayne then peered down through the gun sight while photos were taken. There must have been over 100 people standing there watching us. Wayne seemed to be

in charge, giving orders to everyone, with officers saying, 'Yes, Sir' to him. That would have been right around his 60th birthday, still winded from his recent lung cancer surgery, yet still willing and able to be with all the troops.

I didn't get to speak with him that day—too many folks and activities happening. A few months later at home in Casper, Wyo., I was thumbing through several *Leatherneck* magazines I'd sent home, looking for familiar stories—then I saw the photo of me and PFC Mirales in our gun pit with Wayne! I was never able to locate Mirales. He probably never knew that photo existed."

Cpl Vance K. Burch
Laramie, Wyo.

Tyrone Power: Aviator, Veteran And Hollywood Actor

Already an established actor, Tyrone Power starred in such productions as "Lloyd's of London," "The Mark of Zorro," "The Black Swan," "Jesse James" and "Marie Antoinette." Tyrone was the second largest box office star in 1939. His career was in full swing when he walked away to serve his country.

Power enlisted in the Marine Corps at the age of 28 in August of 1942. According to the Flying Leatherneck Historical

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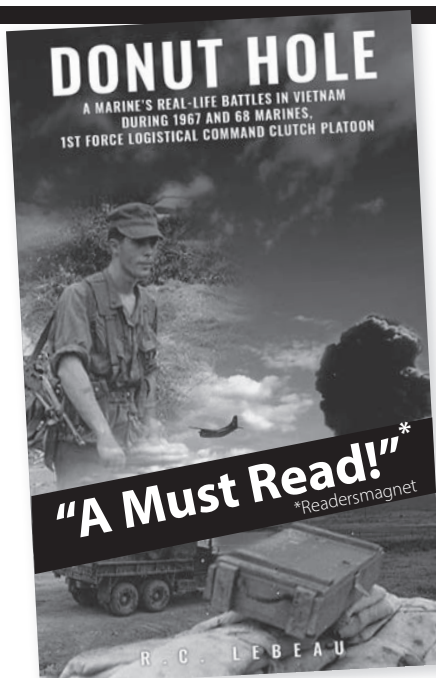
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Foundation, Power attended boot camp at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, Calif., then Officer Candidates School at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., where he was commissioned a second lieutenant on June 2, 1943. Power was an accomplished pilot prior to his enlistment so was able to go through an accelerated training program at Naval Air Station Corpus Christi, Texas.

In July 1944, 1stLt Power was assigned to Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 352 as an R5C transport pilot at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, N.C. The squadron moved to MCAS El Toro, Calif., in October 1944. He was later reassigned to VMR-353, joining them on Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands in February 1945. From there, he flew missions carrying cargo in the Battles of Iwo Jima and Okinawa and transporting wounded Marines out. Power received the American Campaign Medal, the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with two stars, and the World War II Victory Medal for his service in World War II.

Power returned to the United States in November 1945 and was released from active duty in January 1946. He was promoted to the rank of captain in the Marine Corps Reserve on May 8, 1951. He would

[continued on page 70]



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WHERE THINGS START TO GET BETTER.

In Every Clime and Place

Compiled by Sara W. Bock

A recon Marine with Maritime Reconnaissance Force, 31st MEU, navigates to a drop zone at CATC, Camp Fuji, Japan, March 7, during MDX-ARB, a bilateral exercise meant to increase interoperability and strengthen ties between U.S. and Japanese forces.



LCPL CHRISTOPHER ENGLAND, USMC

CAMP FUJI, JAPAN **Bilateral Exercise Prepares for Future in Indo-Pacific Region**

Marines from the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit and members of the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force's Amphibious Rapid Deployment Brigade (ARDB) began their first dedicated bilateral training exercise together, which was held at Numazu Beach, Japan, and Combined Arms Training Center Camp Fuji, Japan, March 7.

The exercise, known as the Maritime Defense Exercise-Amphibious Rapid Deployment Brigade (MDX-ARDB), began with a staff exercise which allowed 31st MEU and ARDB leadership to conduct detailed planning at the ARDB home station, Camp Ainoura, Japan.

"The 31st MEU and ARDB are two of the best-trained and most prepared crisis response forces within the First Island chain," said Colonel Michael Nakonieczny,

the commanding officer of the 31st MEU. "The main purpose of MDX-ARDB is to reinforce our longstanding relationship with the ARDB, deter competitor and adversary aggression and highlight that the 31st MEU and ARDB are prepared to respond to any crisis, at any time, together."

MDX-ARDB enables participants to work as dedicated partners in support of the U.S.-Japan security alliance while demonstrating evolutions such as an amphibious landing, combined arms trainings, and functional level training to hone key tactics and skills.

The exercise included Marines and Sailors from the 31st MEU, including participation from the U.S. Air Force 374th Airlift Wing and Seabees with Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 3. Japanese counterparts are provided by the 1st Amphibious Rapid Deployment Regiment of the ARDB, which is an

amphibious unit of the JGSDF.

"We are committed to our enduring foundation and to building interoperability," said Japanese Col Masahi Hiraki, the commander of the 1st Amphibious Rapid Deployment Regiment.

"We are here to strengthen our ties. Bilateral trainings like MDX-ARDB conducted between the U.S. Marine Corps and ARDB demonstrate both countries' devotion to their mutual partnership and dedication to peace and stability in the region."

MDX-ARDB seeks to strengthen the defensive capabilities of the U.S.-Japan alliance in support of defending key maritime terrain. Combined bilateral activities such as bilateral command and control in a distributed environment allow the two countries to mutually learn and grow from one another.

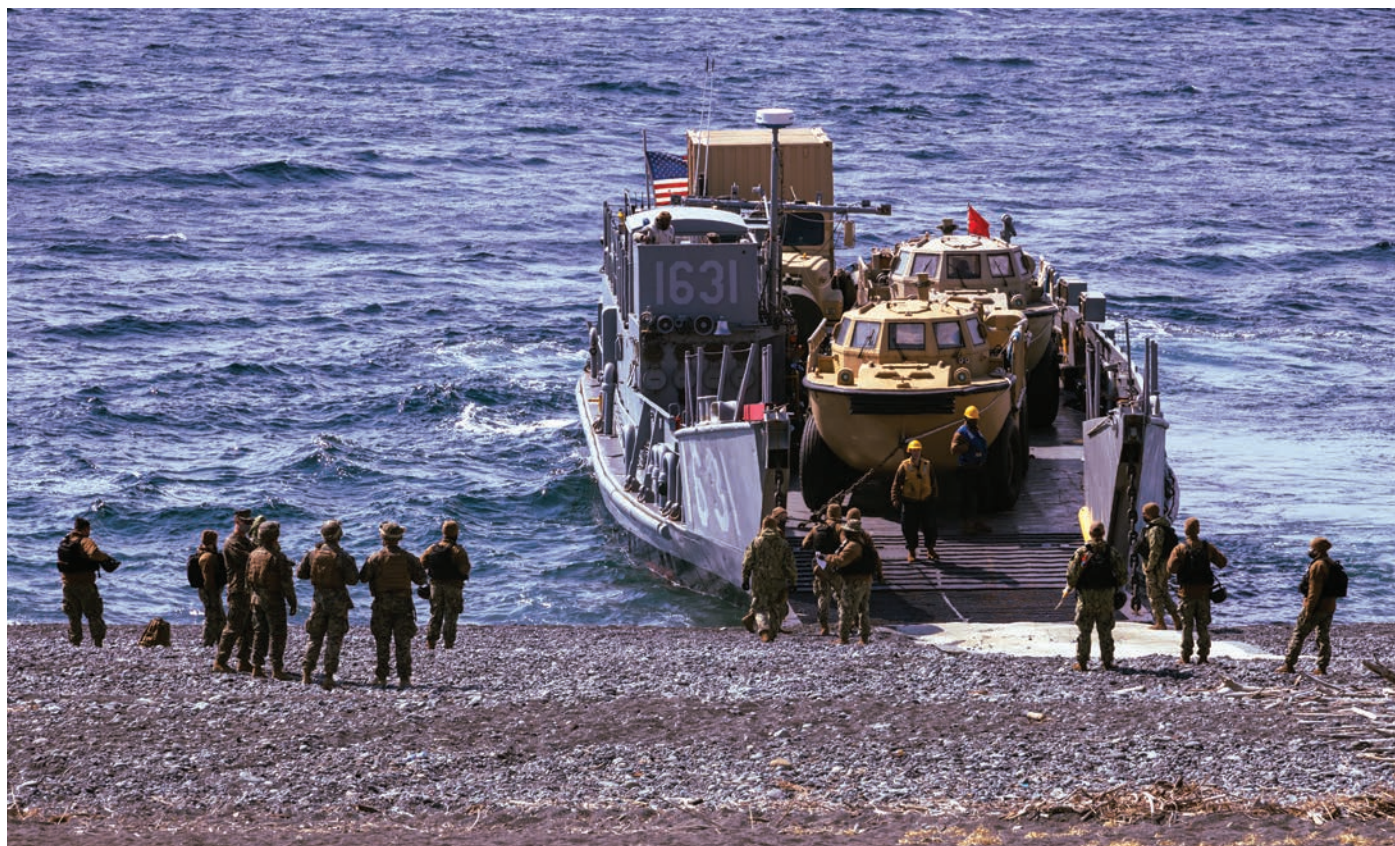
Bilateral training exercises like MDX-ARDB allow the Japan Self-Defense Force



LCPL CESAR ALARCON, USMC

Above: Marines with the 31st MEU disembark Joint Light Tactical Vehicles while participating in MDX-ARDB on Numazu Beach, Shizuoka Prefecture, Japan, March 9.

Below: Marines and Sailors with the 31st MEU off-load gear and vehicles from a landing craft, utility deployed from USS Ashland (LSD-48) on Numazu Beach, Shizuoka Prefecture, Japan, March 9.



LCPL CESAR ALARCON, USMC



LCPL MANUEL ALVARADO, USMC

During a littoral maneuver exercise at CATC, Camp Fuji, Japan, March 9, a Marine with Battalion Landing Team 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, establishes a communications network. The exercise, conducted alongside Japanese servicemembers, included several units passing through other units' positions while moving toward an objective.

and forward-deployed U.S. Marine Corps forces to focus on the development and refinement of critical bilateral planning, coordination and interoperability efforts.

"We are prepared for challenges that we may face together," said Lieutenant Colonel Brendan Neagle, the operations officer for the 31st MEU. "Together, we are strong and capable, and I look forward to planning future iterations of this exercise."

MDX-ARDB reinforces that the U.S. Marine Corps and the ARDB can operate in non-traditional environments and thrive. Continued bilateral trainings like MDX-ARDB showcase the ongoing devotion of U.S. and Japanese forces to maintain international norms and their dedication to defending a free and open Indo-Pacific region.

2ndLt Alana Stern, USMC

EL CENTRO, CALIF.

Manned-Unmanned Teaming Employs Navy-Marine Corps Team

Marines from Marine Operational Test and Evaluation Squadron (VMX) 1 and Sailors from Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 23 teamed up to conduct tactics development in integrating manned and unmanned rotary-wing aircraft at Naval Air Facility El Centro, Calif., March 10.

During the exercise, VMX-1's UH-1Y Venom and AH-1Z Viper helicopters conducted "attacks" while Marines and Sailors operating in the ground control station assisted with the target detection and strike coordination utilizing an MQ-8C Fire Scout.

"This opportunity promotes greater familiarization and concept development of the manned-unmanned teaming that builds confidence and efficiency throughout the blue-green team," said VMX-1 Commanding Officer, Colonel Byron Sullivan. "Our partnership plays an integral part of the Commandant and [Chief of Naval Operation]'s vision to embrace the future of warfare and turn it into our advantage on the battlefield."

The services continue to develop manned-unmanned tactics to better align with the 2018 National Defense Strategy and the Commandant's Planning Guidance. As the exercise in El Centro progressed, the Navy-Marine Corps team became more proficient in planning, communicating and coordinating effective fires from manned and unmanned rotary-



LCPL MANUEL ALVARADO, USMC

Working alongside Japanese soldiers with the 1st ARDM, U.S. Marines with the 31st MEU coordinate unit movements during a littoral maneuver exercise at Camp Fuji, Japan, March 9.



Above: An AH-1Z Viper with VMX-1 and an MQ-8C Fire Scout unmanned helicopter assigned to the Navy's HSC-23 conduct strike coordination and reconnaissance training near El Centro, Calif., March 10. The purpose of the exercise was to provide familiarization and concept development of manned-unmanned teaming. (Photo by LCpl Jade Venegas, USMC)

Right: VMX-1 Marines Cpl Janae Jarnagin, left, Sgt Brock Gilbert, center, and Sgt David Smaus, right, observe strike coordination and reconnaissance training from inside a UH-1Y Venom near El Centro, Calif., March 10.



LCPL JADE VENEGAS, USMC

wing aircraft. The proliferation of unmanned rotary wing platforms on Navy ships makes integration with Marine rotary-wing and the MQ-8C a likelihood in the littoral environment.

“Adversaries are going to be placed on the horns of a dilemma as we strengthen our naval expeditionary force in leveraging unmanned systems to complement our rotary wing,” said VMX-1 Science and Technology lead, Major Ben Henry.

The mission of VMX-1 is to conduct operational test and evaluation of Marine Corps aviation platforms and systems.

Maj Jorge Hernandez, USMC

LUZON, THE PHILIPPINES

Balikatan: U.S., Philippine Armed Forces Train “Shoulder-to-Shoulder”

Approximately 8,900 members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the U.S. military, including Marines with 3rd Marine Division, teamed up for Exercise Balikatan 2022, the 37th iteration of the Philippine-led annual exercise taking place across Luzon, the Philippines, March 28-April 8.

The 3,800 AFP members and 5,100 U.S. military personnel focused their training on maritime security, amphibious operations, live-fire training, urban operations,

aviation operations, counterterrorism and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

“Balikatan is a critical opportunity to work shoulder-to-shoulder with our Philippine allies toward a ‘free and open Indo-Pacific that is more connected, prosperous, secure and resilient,’ as our Indo-Pacific Strategy calls for. The U.S. is proud to continue our participation in this longstanding exercise,” said U.S. Embassy in the Philippines Chargé d’Affaires, ad interim, Heather Variava.

“During Balikatan, the U.S. military and AFP will train together to expand and



Above: Marines and Sailors conduct flight operations from USS *Miguel Keith* (ESB-5) during Balikatan 22, off the coast of the Philippines, March 28. Balikatan, which is a Tagalog word for “shoulder-to-shoulder,” strengthens capabilities, trust and cooperation between the U.S. military and the Armed Forces of the Philippines. (Photo by Sgt Kallahan Morris, USMC)



SGT KALLAHAN MORRIS, USMC

A CH-53E Super Stallion prepares to insert Marines at Appari, the Philippines, March 28, during the 37th iteration of Balikatan 22, which also coincided with the 75th anniversary of U.S.-Philippine security cooperation.

advance shared tactics, techniques and procedures that strengthen our response capabilities and readiness for real-world challenges,” said Major General Jay Barger, the commanding general of 3rdMarDiv, ahead of the exercise. “The friendship and trust between our forces will enable us to accomplish any mission across the spectrum of military operations.”

The exercise includes a command post exercise that tests the AFP and U.S. forces’ ability to plan, command and communicate with each other in a simulated environment. The annual training is designed to bolster the collective security and defensive capabilities of the alliance. “Exercise Balikatan is a testament to the strength of the Philippines and United

States’ security relationship,” said MajGen Charlton Sean Gaerlan, AFP Exercise Director for Balikatan 22. “The experience gained in the exercise complements our security cooperation endeavors and will help to enhance existing mutual security efforts.” The AFP and U.S. military also conducted multiple humanitarian and civic

SSgt Thomas King, a transmissions chief with the newly activated 3rd Marine Littoral Regiment, 3rdMarDiv, guides a Joint Light Tactical Vehicle during Balikatan 22 at Naval Base Camilo Osias, the Philippines, March 26.



LCPL MADISON SANTAMARIA, USMC

assistance projects during the exercise, including the renovation of four elementary schools, multiple community health engagements and the exchange of advanced emergency rescue and lifesaving techniques. These events improve local infrastructure, facilitate the exchange of lifesaving medical skills, and strengthen ties between Philippine communities and Philippine and American military forces.

“Balikatan” is a Tagalog word that means “sharing the load together” or “shoulder-to-shoulder,” which characterizes the spirit of the exercise and represents the alliance between the Philippines and the United States.

“Balikatan 22 coincides with the 75th anniversary of U.S.-Philippine security cooperation and a shared commitment to promoting peace,” said MajGen Barger. “Our alliance remains a key source of strength and stability in the Indo-Pacific region.”

Exercises like Balikatan strengthen international partnerships and the participating militaries’ abilities to rapidly respond to crises throughout the Indo-Pacific region.

3rdMarDiv

CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C.

Fleet Battle Problem Prepares Marines, Sailors for Future Fight

Navy Expeditionary Combat Forces (NECF) operated alongside Marines with the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit off the coast of Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., to conduct Fleet Battle Problem (FBP) 22-1, March 16-21.

Fleet Battle Problems are held multiple times each year to test coordinated fleet

capabilities. During FBP 22-1, Navy Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC) exercised command and control of multiple land and sea assets across the Navy and Marine Corps.

“We have to consider the very strong and capable command and control capability of the expeditionary forces. It doesn’t matter who you send to work with us, we are going to achieve the commander’s objectives,” said Rear Admiral Joseph DiGuardo, USN, the commander of NECC.



MCC KIMBERLY MARTINEZ, USN

RADM Joseph DiGuardo, USN, the commander of NECC, talks with Marines at the Expeditionary Advanced Base entry control point during FBP 22-1, March 20. FBPs integrate naval capabilities to support special operations, provide defense ashore and at sea, and develop the use of unmanned underwater vehicles.

RADM DiGuardo served as the mission commander for the battle staff during the exercise in which Sailors and Marines from the NECF, Amphibious Ready Group-Marine Expeditionary Unit (ARG-MEU) and Naval Special Warfare Group Two demonstrated critical sea-based and littoral operations in a real-world platform.

“We are executing the same tasks for C2 (command and control) that we have executed in the past; just the conditions are different this time,” RADM DiGuardo added. “We are not in the desert, we are in the maritime environment, but that doesn’t mean the tasks are different and doesn’t mean we are any less prepared.”

FBP 22-1 also tested the Navy’s ability to integrate the Marine Corps and Navy Special Warfare (NSW) to execute effective operations in a contested environment. The Navy’s ability to diversify the types of units that lead mission command and control ensures the Navy-Marine Corps team maintains maritime superiority and excels in joint, integrated operations during this era of strategic competition.

“Expeditionary Combat Force is where the Navy and Marines come together,” said Captain Chuck Eckhart, USN, commander of Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Group 2 and deputy commander for FBP 22-1. “The Navy Expeditionary Combat Force is uniquely equipped to lead Fleet Battle Problems because we have the flexibility to deploy in austere environments and push command and control forward to enable Distributed Maritime Operations,” said Eckhart.



SSGT BRITTNEY VELLA, USMC

Marines with the 22nd MEU celebrate after shooting down an unmanned aerial system from two nautical miles away during FBP 22-1, March 20. The missile was fired from the flight deck of amphibious assault ship USS Kearsarge (LHD-3) off the coast of MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C.

During FBP 22-1, the battle staff served as the bridge between ships at sea and Sailors and Marines operating in the littorals by communicating opportunities and threats to freedom of navigation within the mission space.

“The Navy Expeditionary Force is a part of strategic competition, and the way it is part of strategic competition may be a little bit different from what you see in other weapons, payloads and platforms in the United States Navy,” said RADM

DiGuardo. “We enhance our capability by doing this—by running C2 in a way that’s never been done before and it is very effective.”

“The pros to having a Navy Expeditionary Combat Force-led C2 battle staff is that we can push forward into an area without an established presence or an area with a smaller footprint and set up base very quickly,” said Lieutenant Commander Bruce Batteson, USN, NECC’s future operations officer. “We can operate out

of any structure available to us and are more mobile than many other entities.”

While expressing the value in having the Navy’s expeditionary force leading this integrated team, Batteson also stated the importance of leveraging the strengths of each service within the Department of Defense.

“From a national defense picture, we can’t win without joint integration and the capabilities that brings to the table,” said Batteson. “FBP 22-1 is an opportunity to use fully trained, fully ready units to push the boundaries and execute in real-world environments.”

As part of FBP 22-1, Sailors and Marines conducted unmanned underwater vehicle operations, integrated underwater and airborne passive and active sensors, and tested anti-swarm and point defense at the Expeditionary Advanced Base aboard the ARG-MEU, building upon their expertise gained over many years of global operations and past FBPs.

CPO Kimberly Martinez, USN, and
LT Brittany Stephens, USN



KYIV, UKRAINE



COURTESY OF MARINE CORPS EMBASSY SECURITY GROUP

EMBASSY SECURED—
As it became clear that the Russian invasion of Ukraine was imminent, the U.S. State Department evacuated diplomats and troops from Ukraine and strongly advised all American citizens to swiftly exit the country. In the days leading up to the events of Feb. 24, when the first wave of Russian troops crossed into Ukraine, Marine Security Guards assigned to the U.S. Embassy in Kyiv successfully secured the embassy before safely evacuating to Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., home of Marine Corps Embassy Security Group, where they’re pictured here following their return.

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Follow the Leader

The Influencers Our Generation Needs

By GySgt Chase McGrorty-Hunter,
USMC

Editor's note: The following article is the first-place winner of the 2022 Leatherneck Writing Contest. Major Richard A. "Rick" Stewart, USMC (Ret) sponsored the contest through the Marine Corps Association. Upcoming issues of Leatherneck will feature the second- and third-place winners and honorable mention entries.

The war for knowledge and education among Marines has found a new frontier for our youngest generation—and that frontier is social media.

The rise of social media over the last decade has permeated the Marine Corps, creating new challenges for units and leaders in the fight to maintain good order. Growing misconduct on social media came to a cataclysmic culmination in 2017 when the "Marines United" Facebook controversy made national headlines. This

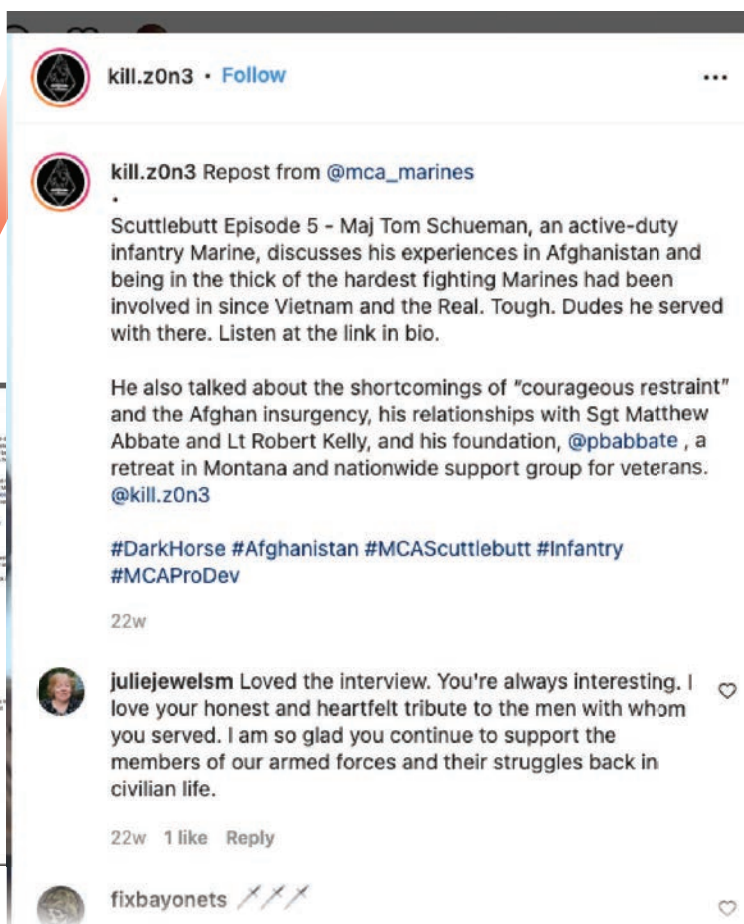
resulted in a congressional hearing that saw our Commandant having to answer for the actions of Marines on social media. Subsequent to this new attention brought on our service was the introduction of a new MARADMIN, governing Marines' conduct online.

As a result of the negative connotation that is now synonymous with social media use in the military, many leaders have been left to determine what their roles, if any, will be in the use of social media. It has been my experience that more often than not, many senior leaders choose to forgo engaging with their troops online. It can be inferred quite easily that the longstanding rules of fraternization among different rank groups have likely shaped this common outcome.

I would argue that not only is the engagement of leaders on social media warranted, but we are currently at the cusp of an awakening among the leadership of the Marine Corps on the benefit associated with their presence on social media. During the past year, I have been witness to a drastic shift online and within the ranks of the military. Now more than ever, leaders at all levels are leveraging the reach that social media has to influence the current generation of Marines. This new revolution is being spearheaded by a small group of leaders who have found a favorable response to their online presence by the tens of thousands of troops that they now have as a following.

Thought by many to be at the forefront of this new representation of leaders

Maj Thomas Schueman's Instagram account has become increasingly popular with young Marines. Schueman also appeared on a recent episode of the Marine Corps Association's "Scuttlebutt" podcast.



online is Major Thomas Schueman (Instagram @kill.z0n3), a veteran of the war in Afghanistan, a former professor at the U.S. Naval Academy, and current student at the U.S. Naval War College. The impetus for the creation of his page came from research he was conducting into the capstone for his graduate degree from Georgetown University. The goal of his social media from the beginning was to elevate the narrative around the warrior culture and to create resiliency among active and veteran servicemembers.

Maj Schueman's online presence is anything but the default motivational page that some may think a Marine leader might run. As a follower, you are inoculated by his far-reaching views on leadership, warfare, and community. His reach is not only limited to the online sphere. Last year, using his online presence, he launched the nonprofit Patrol Base

We are currently at the cusp of an awakening among the leadership of the Marine Corps on the benefit associated with their presence on social media

Abbate (IG:@pbabbate), a community for all who have served and an organization where your belonging is not predicated on anything beyond having served in the military.

The work that Patrol Base Abbate has done is deserving of its own article and to try and sum it up any shorter does not do it justice. It is the success of this organization's nationwide spread in such a short amount of time that stands as nothing less than a resounding testament to the trust that servicemembers have found in Maj Schueman online. Truthfully,

you don't need to have ever had a one-on-one conversation with him to feel the care that is expressed by him to the people he serves as a leader through social media. The conversations that are fostered on social media by Maj Schueman are the inducement for thought-provoking stimulus by his followers who are currently, in large numbers, the tactical heartbeat of our Corps.

Maj Schueman's page *Kill Zone* may be a likely catalyst for this increase in online presence by leaders, but it is only one of a growing community now available to servicemembers on social media. Unfortunately, the reality is, the average young Marine just won't have the opportunity to learn directly and regularly from their sergeant major, first sergeant, or field grade officers. This new rise in Marine Corps leadership online has filled that void and opened the door to a direct learning link between leaders like the ones mentioned and the troops who benefit from that relationship most.

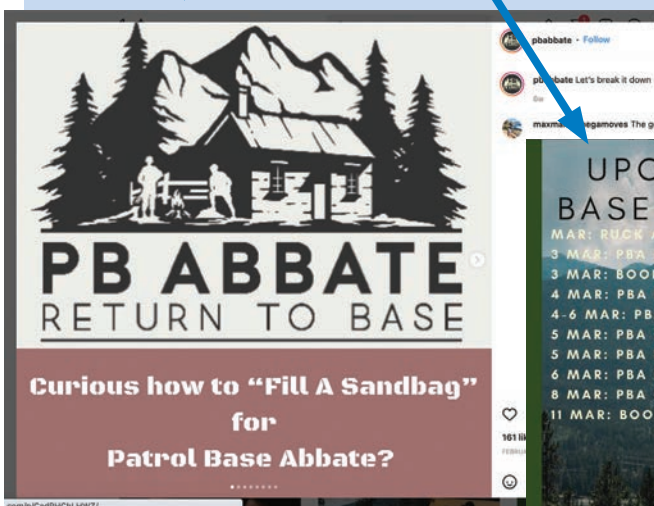


COURTESY OF GYSGT CHASE MCGRORTY-HUNTER, USMC



COURTESY OF GYSGT CHASE MCGRORTY-HUNTER, USMC

Sgt Matthew Abbate (above right) was the inspiration for the "Patrol Base Abbate" Instagram account founded by Maj Schueman, left. Abbate, a scout sniper with 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines, was mortally wounded while deployed to Sangin, Afghanistan, and posthumously received the Navy Cross.



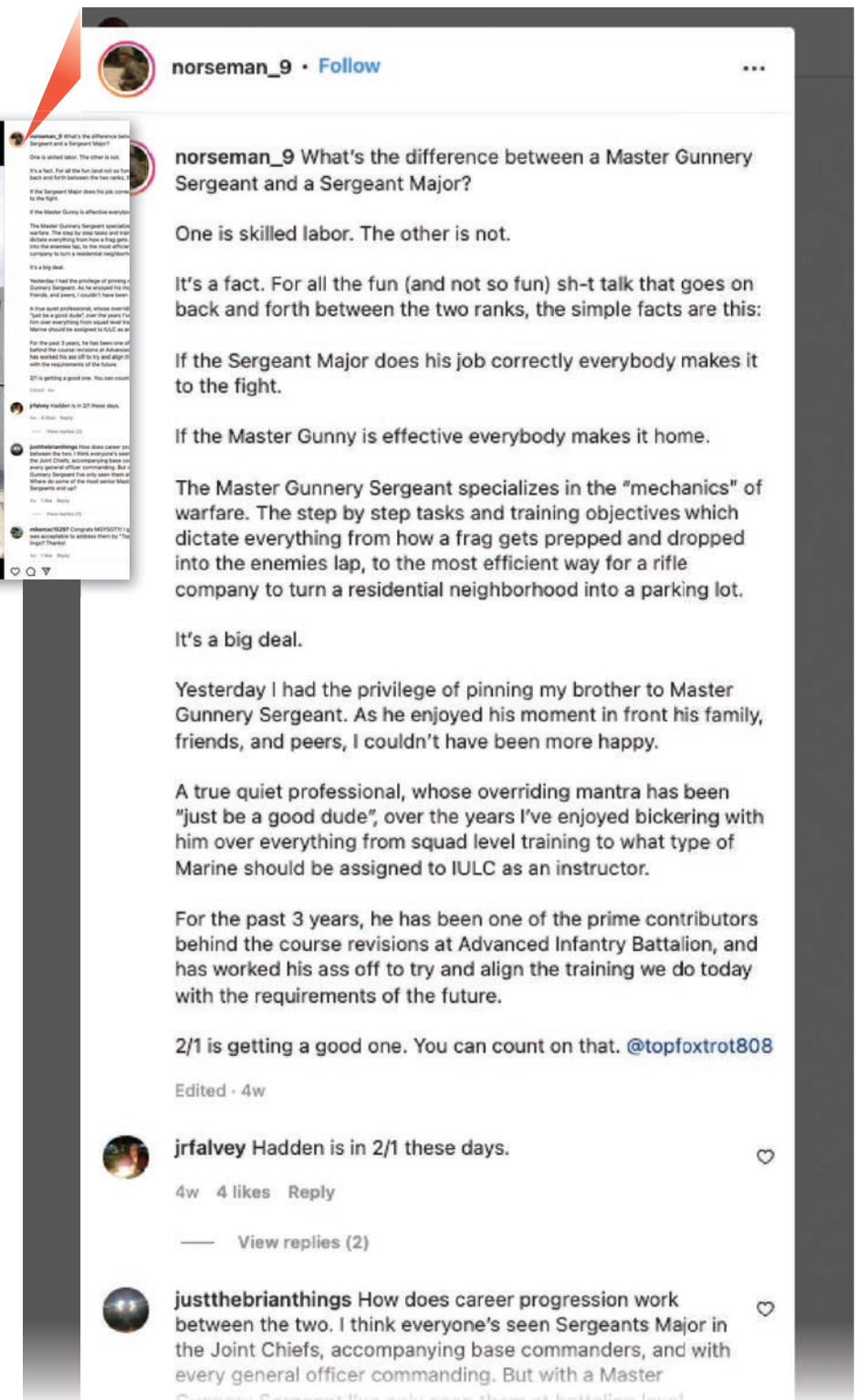
SgtMaj Reynolds (below, right)
IG: @norseman_9



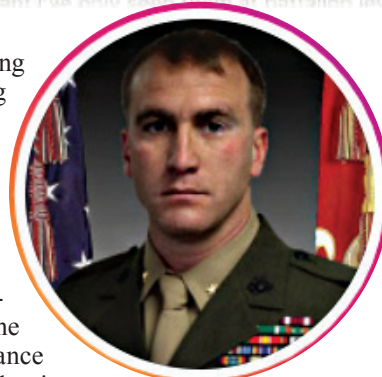
For many young Marines, the goal is to stay out of the spotlight of their first sergeant and sergeant major. Marines like Sergeant Major Reynolds (IG: @norseman_9), the Sergeant Major for 9th Marine Corps District, and First Sergeant Flynn (IG: @constellationgroup138) from 1st Battalion, 23rd Marines, flip that maxim on its head. The two Marines have nearly four decades of combined leadership, experience, and combat prowess. It is the approach that these two gentlemen have taken—using the platform the Marines of this generation subscribe to—that has aided their success in passing on their experiences and providing mentorship wholesale across the Corps. Visiting either of these Marines' pages, you will see that they are determined and unwavering in their pursuit of interacting with and engaging the minds of the Marines following them daily.

It's this next generation of young warriors, the leaders who are serving in the tactical levels of our ground forces all over the Marine Corps, that have found an insatiable hunger for the knowledge that is now being distributed en masse by the Corps' senior leadership, who earned their own experience on the battlefields of Sangin, Marjah and Fallujah. These individuals who have synthesized the trials and tribulations of their experiences as fireteam leaders, squad leaders, and platoon commanders in combat are now priming our current generation for the role of leadership as they are hungry to leave their mark on their Marines.

Setting aside two hours on a weeknight to conduct a voluntary tactical decision game or to discuss Marine Corps doctrinal publications may not sound like the type



of event that would have young adults, 17-21 years old, jumping online to attend, but that is exactly what happens when Maj Gray (IG: @justingray usmc) and Maj Hubert (IG: @cleveland_marines_co) host an Instagram live session. In a brilliantly crafted experience, these leaders dropped the Warning Order a week in advance to their online followers, allowing



Maj Hubert
IG: @cleveland_marines_co



1stSgt Flynn
IG: @constellationgroup138



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At first glance I wasn't s
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MARINE CORPS DOCTRINAL PUBLICATIN-1 — "WARFIGHTING"

MCDP 1

Warfighting



What's Inside:

Chapter 1: The Nature of War

"War is a complex endeavor. It is shaped by the human will. It is characterized by friction, uncertainty, fluidity, danger and disorder. While the nature of war is constant, it remains unpredictable, and is affected by a mix of physical, moral and mental factors. While war has the characteristics of both art and science, it is primarily shaped by human experience".

Chapter 2: The Theory of War

"All acts of war are political acts. Thus, war must

It is leaders like Maj Gray who have capitalized on the age of technology to transpose that crucial message to our young leaders in a manner that is digestible and engaging.

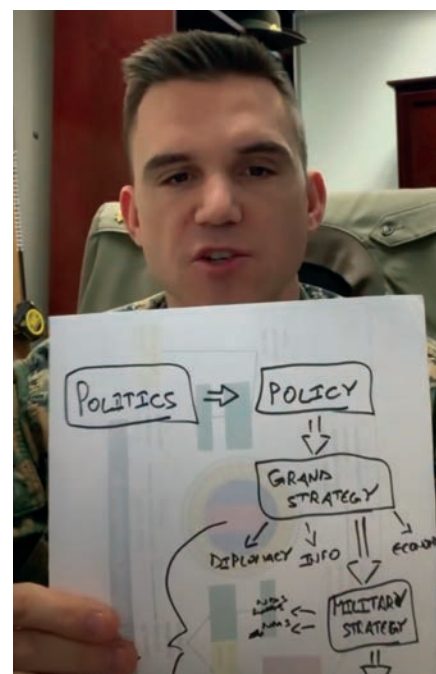
Marines and the poolees in their respective recruiting stations to work through the tactical decision games and develop their unique responses to the posed situation. The subsequent online live session that occurred saw Marines of varying ranks and poolees in attendance discussing the thoughts behind what led to their notional tactical decisions while being respectfully challenged by the two majors.

As a new instructor at the Staff Non-commissioned Officers Academy, the first class I was assigned to teach was Introduction to Warfighting Philosophy. It was in my own research to better understand our philosophy that I stumbled across Maj Gray on Instagram and his passion for the examination of our doctrine. He has been at the forefront of exploration into the warfighting philosophy that the

Marine Corps has prescribed to, MCDP-1 Warfighting. In a series of videos on Instagram, Gray dives into our philosophy and his analysis of how the principles within the doctrine apply in the actions we take as leaders within our organization.

The Marine Corps would love for its young leaders to pick up a hard copy of MCDP-1 and indoctrinate themselves in our philosophy, but the reality is that it is leaders like Maj Gray who have capitalized on the age of technology to transpose that crucial message to our young leaders in a manner that is digestible and engaging.

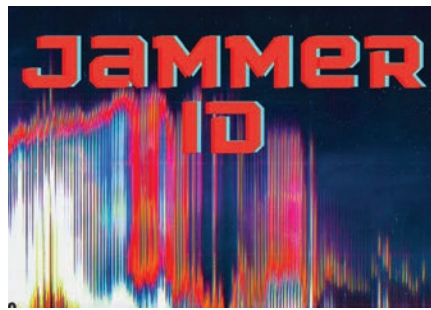
One of the key tenets of warfare discussed in Chapter One of "Warfighting" is fluidity. At its core, fluidity is the ability to adapt to the circumstances at hand. Truly, it is these leaders who have taken that tenet to heart by adapting to the ever-



Maj Gray, IG: @justingrayusmc

changing environment around them, and as a result, have influenced organizational growth within the confines of the modern landscape. Meeting this generation of Marines where they are socially has made for what I see as a turning point in the professional lives of tens of thousands of Marine leaders.

This rising online presence hasn't stopped with the aforementioned Marines and their resounding lessons on leadership. Every day new accounts focusing on different aspects of the profession of arms are being created and followed by Marines in their pursuit of improvement. Retired reconnaissance Marine Blake Flannery (IG: @blakewater0326) runs an account focused on the practicality of gear additions to a Marine's kit, as well as tactical lessons learned over a career of warfighting. For the 0600 communication field, The Communicator (IG: @the_communicator) is a page focused on the technical



The Communicator
IG: @the_communicator

Opening the app for many of us is now a way to keep a finger on the pulse of the Marine Corps as it stands today as well as shape our minds for what may be required of us tomorrow.

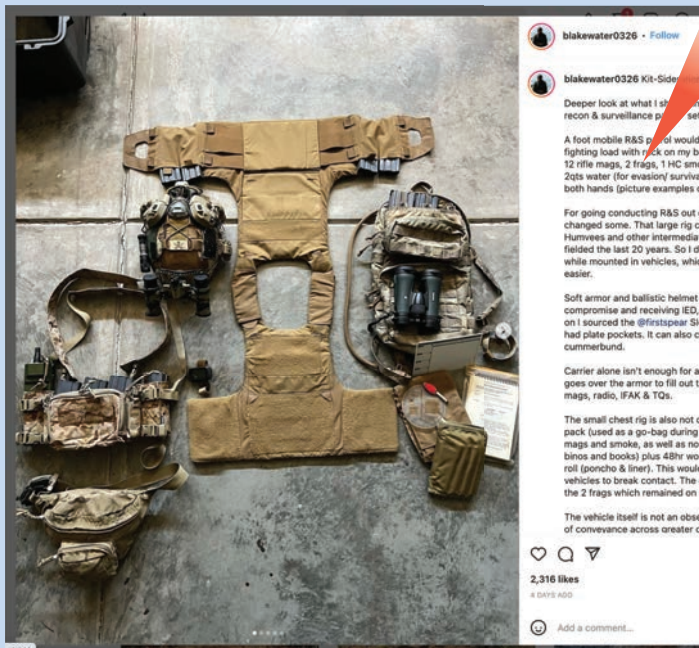
adaptation and education of the communicators training vigorously for our nation's next fight. Not solely for officers, HTBAGL (IG: @howtobeagood lieutenant) runs the gamut from lessons learned as a company executive officer to how to teach your Marines about personal finances.

It seems that this trend has not only caught on but is flourishing in a manner that has reshaped the purpose of social media platforms like Instagram for many Marines. No longer is this form of social media a place to resign the mind to aimlessly like photos of strangers. Opening the app for many of us is now a way to keep a finger on the pulse of the Marine Corps as it stands today as well as shape our minds for what may be required of us tomorrow.

The manifestation of the pages mentioned—and the many more not mentioned—has brought much-needed vigor back into the lives and aspirations



Blake Flannery, IG: @blakewater0326



blakewater0326 Kit-Siderations: Mission Dictates

Deeper look at what I shared in my stories about "motorized recon & surveillance patrol" setup.

A foot mobile R&S patrol would be my usual chest rig for my fighting load with ruck on my back and go-bag inside. That was 12 rifle mags, 2 frags, 1 HC smoke, 1 radio (PRC148 maritime), 2qts water (for evasion/ survival), IFAK & 2 TQs accessible by both hands (picture examples of that rig on last two slides).

For going conducting R&S out of trucks, or motorized, the setup changed some. That large rig could be very awkward to sit Humvees and other intermediate ground vehicles the USMC fielded the last 20 years. So I developed a secondary load for while mounted in vehicles, which made driving and gunning easier.

Soft armor and ballistic helmet due to increased risk of compromise and receiving IED, IDF, RPG, and small arms. Later on I sourced the @firstspear Sleeper that fit our armor cut and had plate pockets. It can also carry 4 rifle mags in the cummerbund.

Carrier alone isn't enough for a fighting load, so a small chest rig goes over the armor to fill out the fighting load. This carries 5 mags, radio, IFAK & TQs.

The small chest rig is also not quite a full load, so the assault pack (used as a go-bag during R&S) carries the remainder of mags and smoke, as well as normal equipment (represented by bins and books) plus 48hr worth of water and chow with ranger roll (poncho & liner). This would be grabbed if abandoning the vehicles to break contact. The only thing not repeated would be the 2 frags which remained on my normal rig most of the time.

The vehicle itself is not an observation platform, merely a means of conveyance across greater distances. The idea is conduct the

of the tens of thousands of Marines who follow them. Nowhere has this been more prominently on display than Goons Up (IG: @goons__up), a page dedicated to the accentuation of combat arms MOSs. On this page and the many other subpages run under similar monikers, Marines have found a home where they can be proud to display their technical proficiency and acumen in the profession of arms. This goal of recognizing the warfighters of today's Marine Corps for the consummate professionals they are came to fruition in true form last year with the inception of The Spirit of Basilone Award. The award created by this page is bestowed quarterly and aims to recognize the top machine gunners in the Marine Corps currently that exemplify the fighting tenacity and professional aptitude of the legendary John Basilone.

Whether seeking motivation, professional development, or personal growth, this new approach by leadership to have an active presence online has shown to be met with great esteem by the troops experiencing it. The belief that there is no room for leadership to form relationships on social media with the troops has been

IG: @howtobeagoodlieutenant



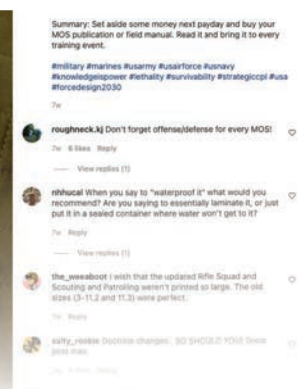
exposed for the flaws that it entailed. Through the maverick leadership that has taken the opportunity to come to the meeting place of this generation of Marines, we are experiencing a cultural shift that has battled back against the idea that these platforms could only be viewed as detrimental to our organization.

Author's bio: Gunnery Sergeant Chase McGroarty-Hunter is a cyber network chief by trade and is currently serving as a faculty advisor at the Staff Noncommissioned Officers Academy aboard Marine Corps Base Quantico. He recently served with 1st Battalion, 4th Marines where he deployed twice in support of the 31st and 15th MEUs.



Spirit of Basilone award by IG: @goons__up

COURTESY OF GYSGT CHASE MCGROARTY-HUNTER, USMC



howtobeagoodlieutenant · Follow

During my time as a Marine Infantry Platoon Commander, I have compiled a list of HQ sections and their responsibilities. This is a summary of what you need to know to be a good lieutenant.

S1 Administration: Handles all admin matters including but not limited to pay, awards, orders, travel/DTS, rosters, and accountability. The S1 will also track personnel from the Battalion COC utilizing mission cards. Treat your admin Marines, SNCOIC, & Adj right & they will help you out more than you know.

S2 Intelligence: Responsible for all-source intelligence collections, distribution, & intel support to planning. Trains & gives enlisted intel analysts to the companies. Manages Bn SUAS program, creates GRG's, & acquires, makes, and distributes maps. Need a map, GRG, or SUAS support? See them. Want to learn about the Regional Intelligence Training Center courses you can send you 03XX Marines to in order to develop your Company Level Intelligence Cell? Talk to them. Billet holders to know: Intel Chief, S2A, Scout Sniper Platoon Sergeant and Platoon Commander (if they fall under your S2 section and not the Weapons Co.)

S3 Operations: Plans & ensures support for all training. Sends Marines to schools & runs all required physical training events. Ensures annual training requirements are met. Billet holders to know: Ops Chief, Schools NCO, Battalion Gunner, CBRN WO, Assistant Operations Officer, Air Officer.

S4: Logistics: Responsible for supporting the entire battalion logistically. Sub sections include Motor T, Maintenance, Field Mess, Combat Engineer Platoon, Battalion Aid Station, Chaplain, Armory, Ammo, & Supply. Billet holders to know: S4 Chief, S4A, Motor T Chief & Platoon Commander, AMMO TEC, Engineer Plt Sgt & Platoon Commander, Maintenance Chief & Maintenance Management Officer, Field Mess Chief, BAS Chief/Independent Duty Corpsman, Chaps/Assistant, Armory Chief, & Supply

306 likes · December 17, 2020

Honoring Our Promise:

Toxic Exposure Victims Would Benefit From Bill Expanding VA Coverage

By Beth Brown

On March 3, House Resolution 3967 advanced through the U.S. House of Representatives with a vote of 256-174. This bill encompasses several major provisions including areas of burn pits exposure in Iraq, Agent Orange exposure in Vietnam, and contaminated water at Camp Lejeune, N.C., that would potentially allow veterans, civilians and family members who have experienced health effects from toxic exposure to file for relief from harm.

As part of the overall PACT Act, the provisions of the “Camp Lejeune Justice Act of 2021” are of particular interest to Marines and their family members who “resided, worked, or otherwise exposed (including in utero exposure) to water aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., from August 1, 1953, to December 31, 1987, for not less than 30 days.” Until now, laws particular to the state of North Carolina have prevented such motions.

All legal action undertaken by the bill’s proposed provisions must be qualified not only by the time period stated above, but with evidence that the individual is currently diagnosed with a health condition that was caused by exposure to the water; was associated with the exposure to the water; was linked to the exposure to the water; or the exposure to the water increased the likelihood of such harm.

The bill goes further into detail, stating that while the burden of proof for all claims is the responsibility of the petitioner, “studies conducted on humans or animals, or from an epidemiological study, which ruled out chance and bias with reasonable confidence and which concluded, with sufficient evidence, that exposure to the water described in subsection A is one possible cause of the harm, shall be sufficient to satisfy the burden of proof described.” The full text of the

bill is available at <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr2192/text>.

For the thousands of veterans and their loved ones who have been locked in a decades-long battle with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) regarding Camp Lejeune water contamination, the bill’s passage marks an important step in the fight for recognition of the suffering they and their family members have endured. Currently, veterans or dependents who may have water contamination-related claims are required to submit them through the VA Office for Health Care and Disability Benefits, depending on the severity of their illness.

According to the VA, since 2011, just 17.3 percent of

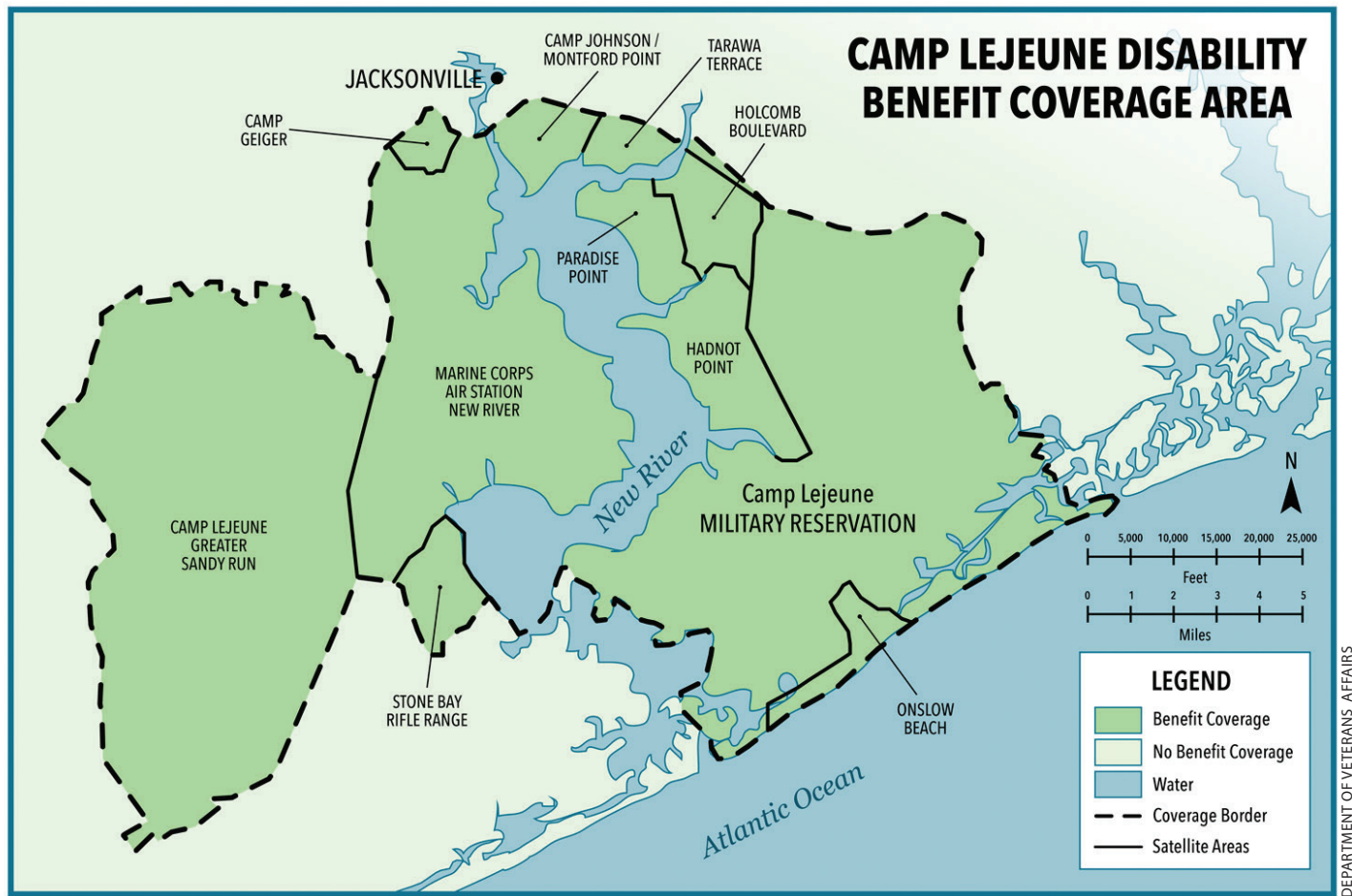


Tara Craver, left, visits her husband’s gravesite in 2017. Karle Craver, above, was diagnosed with esophageal cancer in 2014 after being exposed to toxic chemicals at Camp Lejeune decades earlier.

COURTESY OF BETH BROWN

USMC

For the thousands of veterans and their loved ones who have been locked in a decades-long battle with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) regarding Camp Lejeune water contamination, the bill’s passage marks an important step in the fight for recognition of the suffering they and their family members have endured.



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

disability claims submitted in response to water contamination at Camp Lejeune have been approved.

For Tara Craver, the bill means more than an opportunity for financial restitution. Her husband, Karle Craver, was a Marine veteran who had been stationed at Camp Lejeune. When he was diagnosed with esophageal cancer in 2014, it was the first time either of them became aware that he was potentially exposed to toxic chemicals while serving his country.

"It's not about me," said Tara Craver. "We didn't know. Karle didn't know. He brushed his symptoms off as heartburn."

Tara and Karle found out about Camp Lejeune contamination concerns when they went into a VA office to apply for benefit assistance for his healthcare shortly after diagnosis.

"There was a little sign on the desk that said something about Camp Lejeune. So, I asked, 'What's this about Camp Lejeune?' Someone came out of the office to talk to us. That's how we found out," Tara Craver recalled.

Esophageal cancer is one of the conditions considered eligible for care by the VA in regard to claims associated with Camp Lejeune. Due to this, Tara and Karle were told that his claim would be expedited for treatment. A month after registering, they received a letter stating he had been scheduled for a doctor's appointment a month away.

Sadly, Karle Craver lost his battle with cancer on the very day he was scheduled to attend that appointment. Tara, despite having no income, has dedicated her life to raising awareness of Camp Lejeune contamination. She has

participated in dozens of interviews, founded the Facebook Group "Camp Lejeune Victims 'The Faces,'" which now has more than 2,800 members, and embarked on a 10-state awareness campaign, standing outside VA hospitals with signs and information regarding the contamination.

After Karle's passing, Tara also found herself struggling to qualify for survivor benefits. After multiple denials, she was awarded benefits in 2017, deemed retroactive to 2014. While she very nearly lost everything, including her home, the money was of less importance to her than raising awareness to others. "If we didn't know," she says, "how many others didn't know? Money can't bring back what we lost."

For others, it's difficult to remember how their loved ones struggled with illness-related financial difficulty and not feel some measure of relief that compensation beyond medical care or disability might finally be available. Jill Dilgard, whose father, Larry Lee Steen, was a Marine veteran once stationed at Camp Lejeune, remembers her father's struggle to remain financially independent while battling multiple cancers and cardiovascular ailments. She was still a freshman in high school when her father had his first heart attack at the age of 45.

His three children all worked together to help their father despite his protests. Dilgard describes him as a proud and loving man, who, after winning his fight with prostate cancer, had a chemotherapy pump implanted



Larry Lee Steen

COURTESY OF BETH BROWN



The Camp Lejeune water contamination issue has become an area of focus for the VA and leaders of the North Carolina base, the headquarters of which is shown above. The issue became public in the mid-1980s when it became apparent that wells supplying water to the installation were polluted.

so that he could continue to work through treatment for prostate cancer, following treatment for aggressive bladder cancer. She describes him as a man who still embodied everything the Marine Corps stands for: loyalty, strength and determination. Despite his multiple diagnoses, he maintained a positive and capable mindset, making the decision to receive hospice care when it became clear his cancer had metastasized and was incurable.

Much like Tara and Karle Craver, Dilgard's father was unaware of his potential exposure until 2017, when a family friend brought it up in conversation. While he did apply for VA assistance, his application had not been approved before he died seven months later.

Dilgard supports financial recognition for affected veterans or their families beyond healthcare and disability if their claims are accepted. "They don't cover the devastating and catastrophic effects on the finances. You pay co-pays, medication; you're too sick to work. You have to go to specialized units for care. The cost of radiation and chemotherapy are extreme." She is currently a Facebook group administrator for "The Faces" and shared Tara's sentiments on awareness. "If we had known, he could have gotten preventative screenings. Maybe it would have been caught earlier."

Still others are living the reality of illnesses they believe are related to their time at Camp Lejeune. Sam Maynard, a Marine veteran who was stationed there for four months in 1986, is one such veteran. He volunteered for service at 19, he says, out of high school. He attended a seven-week school at Camp Lejeune, with an additional two months before and after his training began, before being stationed in Hawaii. He remembers that while in training to become an electrician, he became so dizzy he fell off a 30-foot training pole. He noticed a physical decline while there.

"I was in such good shape coming from boot, you couldn't stop me. By the time I left, I was a wreck," Maynard said, adding that while there, he developed skin boils and his 3-mile run time increased from 18 minutes to 24 minutes.

It wasn't until about 16 years later that Sam suffered a stroke that changed his life. He's hazy on the details, but his surgeon told him that he had a stroke during an operation, which led to partial paralysis. Today, he's lost one foot and is in a battle to keep his other while also experiencing neurological effects and recurring infections. While he does receive VA healthcare, his disability application has been rejected 10 times as his medical concerns do not meet any of the currently recognized Camp Lejeune water contamination-related conditions.

CAMP LEJEUNE JUSTICE ACT



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It's important for you to receive updates on the Camp Lejeune Justice Act, which was passed by the U.S. House of Representatives on March 2, 2022.

Visit our website at www.lejeuneclaims.com for more information and to receive updates on the Act as it passes through the U.S. Senate.

LINKED HEALTH CONDITIONS

- Esophageal cancer
- Breast cancer
- Kidney cancer
- Multiple myeloma
- Renal toxicity
- Female infertility
- Scleroderma
- Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma
- Lung cancer
- Bladder cancer
- Leukemia
- Myelodysplastic syndromes
- Hepatic steatosis
- Miscarriage
- Neurobehavioral effects



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The subject of the Camp Lejeune water contamination has been a focus for the VA since the mid-1980s, when it became apparent that wells supplying water to the installation were polluted. After investigation, it was concluded that there were two main sources for the pollution.

His only income is Social Security, which he says has affected his life profoundly. “I don’t want to be disabled,” he says. “Believe me, I would rather work. Before I got sick, I was making six figures. I’ve lost everything; I’ve sold everything. I didn’t even go to my daughter’s wedding because I feel like if I can’t even give her a gift, I shouldn’t go.” He said that he’s in danger of foreclosure on his home and can’t understand the situation he’s in today. “I signed on the dotted line that said they’d take care of me if anything happened to me. Not from what I’ve seen.”

The VA lists the following conditions as presumptive for healthcare eligibility in relation to the Camp Lejeune water contamination: bladder cancer, breast cancer, esophageal cancer, female infertility, hepatic steatosis, kidney cancer, leukemia, lung cancer, miscarriage, multiple myeloma, myelodysplastic syndromes, neurobehavioral effects, non-Hodgkin lymphoma, renal toxicity, and scleroderma.

The following conditions are also potentially eligible for disability for active duty, reserve and National Guard members who were potentially exposed: adult leukemia, aplastic anemia and other myelodysplastic syndrome, bladder cancer, kidney cancer, liver cancer, multiple myeloma, non-Hodgkin lymphoma and Parkinson’s disease.

The subject of the Camp Lejeune water contamination has been a focus for the VA since the mid-1980s, when it became apparent that wells supplying water to the installation were polluted. After investigation, it was concluded that there were two main sources for the pollution: an off-base dry cleaner which disposed of chemicals in a septic tank very near one of the well reservoirs, and a broken fuel tank.

Following an investigation, Camp Lejeune was listed as an Environmental Protection Agency Superfund site and has since undergone decades of remediation efforts.

In 1999, questionnaires were sent to former Camp Lejeune residents by the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), but it’s unknown how many of the estimated 1 million individuals who had potentially been exposed received this letter.

In 2018, the VA expanded its review of chemical exposure in relation to Camp Lejeune in an attempt to amend regulations and establish presumptions of service connection for certain conditions in addition to the 15 conditions already deemed eligible in connection with the ATSDR. At the time of press release, veterans with potential exposure were encouraged to contact their local VA healthcare facility or visit <https://publichealth.va.gov/exposures/camp-lejeune/> to learn more about the Camp Lejeune water issue and to sign up for email notifications of updates as they occur.



Despite facing health issues he believes are connected to the water contamination at Camp Lejeune, Sam Maynard takes great pride in having served in the Marines. A shadowbox of mementos from his time in service is displayed prominently in his home.

COURTESY OF BETH BROWN

ATSDR has also established a community assistance panel (CAP) for Camp Lejeune. Affected community members are encouraged to contact CAP with concerns regarding exposure. More information can be found at <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/sites/lejeune/capmeetings.html>.

Also known as the “Honoring Our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act,” H.R. 3967 carries significant importance to all who have served or currently are serving.

Also included in the bill are revised considerations for exposure to Agent Orange and burn pits, which would require the expansion of presumptive related illness from exposure to various toxins to 23 conditions. The bill would further require the VA to provide training and outreach operations to affected veterans, as well as DOD-based training to active-duty personnel on the dangers of exposure to per- and polyfluoroalkyl chemicals (PFAS) and increasing registration eligibility for PFAS-exposed veterans.

Another change proposed is an extension of VA medical care eligibility for post-9/11 veterans from the current five years to 10 years post-military separation, as well as a requirement for the VA to create a provision allowing presumption of exposure to radiation for veterans who participated in cleaning operations in Palomares, Spain, and Enewetak Atoll following nuclear accidents.

Author’s bio: Beth Brown is a writer who has worked both as a staff reporter and independently. She is the daughter of a Marine, a veteran of the USCG and the spouse of an active-duty Coast Guardsman. 🐾

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D-Day at BETIO:

Nov. 20, 1943

By Daniel Rogers

Editor's note: The following is an excerpt from "The Battle of Tarawa: Naval History Special Edition" by Daniel Rogers, Ph.D., a professor emeritus of history at the University of South Alabama, who has authored numerous books and articles on the Pacific theater during World War II.

RED BEACH 1 IN THE INITIAL ASSAULT

**3rd Battalion, 2nd Marines (3/2),
component of Combat Team 2**

CO: Major John Fred Schoettel

Time of Arrival: 0910

**Target/Goal: Large guns at northwest
tip of Betio, inland on western portion
of island.**

The honor of arriving on shore first at Betio fell to the 3rd Battalion, 2nd Marines (3/2) on Beach Red 1. The plan was for two of its companies to arrive in landing vehicles tracked (LVTs) and proceed inland past the beach before disembarking over the sides of the LVTs, which would return to the reef's edge to ferry in subsequent waves from the landing craft, vehicle, personnel (LCVPs) that might be stranded there by the low water.

Company I of 3/2 would land on the right (to the west) and seize the northwest tip of Betio (the Bird's Beak), including whatever remained of its largest naval guns. Co K of 3/2 had what appeared to be the most dangerous line of attack of any that morning: into the heart of a cove, or "re-entrant," the only concave section of the entire assault area, which potentially would expose Co K's Marines to fire from ahead and each side. Such fire did in fact occur, accompanied by machine-gun fire from the Saidu Maru, meaning Co K was being hit from four sides. Not surprisingly, it suffered severe casualties in the water and once ashore. According to the plan, Companies I and K were to link with each

other, while Co K was to establish contact with Marines from 2/2 to the east on Red 2. Co L of 3/2 was to arrive in the first waves of LCVPs immediately following I and K.

Nothing worked according to plan or anything close to it, and this approach to Betio proved so dangerous that it would not be used thereafter in the battle for any reinforcements or supplies. Co I landed more securely than K, but was pinned down behind an exceptionally high portion of the seawall, 5 feet tall in places, that often made it fatal for Marines trying to climb over with rifles or other weapons. LVTs could surmount the seawall neither here nor at lower points.

Co K's Marines on the left were either pinned on the beach or became casualties, except for the few who managed to penetrate inland on their own initiative. They had little central direction because 17 of the battalion's 37 officers became casualties on D-day. All of the assault engineers from the 18th Marines who had been detached to 3/2 became casualties in the water or else on the beach, thus making it impossible for Marines wishing to advance to surmount the pillboxes or other positions that required explosives or flamethrowers to overcome. All in all, the assault companies of 3/2 lost half their men, either killed or wounded, within the first two hours. Only when the succeeding waves of Co L began to wade ashore on the extreme right and attack on Green Beach would anything resembling progress begin.



The battalion commander, Major John Schoettel, at the reef's edge in an LCVP and unable to judge events ashore accurately, believed his battalion had been essentially wiped out while landing or wading in. The fierce Japanese resistance led him to stay in his boat in the lagoon for many hours.

Red Beach 1 Status at 1000: Marines pinned on beach in center of cove and at northwest tip. Scattered remnants find way to push as far as 50 yards inland before encountering emplacements thwarting any further advance.



Above: Aerial photograph of the northwestern end of Betio Island, Tarawa, Nov. 22, 1943, with Beach Red 1 on the left and Green Beach on the center and right. Several LVTs, coastal defense guns and a Japanese landing craft are visible on the beach. (Photo courtesy of Naval History and Heritage Command)

Right: Marines from 2/8 near their battalion's first command post on Red 3 between the seawall and the lagoon.



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RED 3 INITIAL ASSAULT WAVES

2nd Battalion, 8th Marines (2/8),

component of Combat Team 2

CO: Maj Henry Pierson Crowe

Time of Arrival: 0917

Target/Goal: Left (east) flank of U.S. positions, Burns Philp wharf, northeastern taxiway, junction of taxiways at top of airfield.

Of all the initial assault battalions, 2/8 arrived with the fewest casualties and the most cohesion. In part this was due to the suppressive naval gunfire of the preliminary bombardment, in part due to luck, and in part due to the crowding of the entire battalion into a far narrower portion of their assigned beach, Red 3, than had been planned.

Heavy fire from the eastern tip of Betio and from the area of the Burns Philp wharf drove units from 2/8 designated for the extreme left flank of the U.S. positions significantly to their right (west). Some of the most poignant early photographs taken during the battle show the intense crowding here at the seawall. Yet 2/8 suffered the fewest casualties of the three initial assault battalions: no more than 25 of 552 in the first three waves.

The plan called for Co F of 2/8 to be on the left and drive south and east upon landing. Company E was to move due south onto the airfield's northeastern taxiway and the junction of that taxiway with the northwestern one. Co G, arriving next via LCVPs, was to come into the center and help exploit the earliest gains.

Here as elsewhere, the seawall prevented the advance of LVTs. Only a few found a gap, most significantly the one carrying Lieutenant Aubrey Edmonds, Co E's executive officer. He drove through this gap and onto the airfield before ordering everyone out. Naturally assuming other Marines would be nearby, they instead were shocked to discover they were alone and vulnerable. They held their position for hours, but ultimately had to withdraw back to their battalion behind the seawall on Red 3. Edmonds was seriously wounded as he followed his men back. Sergeant Melvin McBride, taking charge of what was left of his platoon after both its leader and platoon sergeant fell, also led men over the wall early to stake out an isolated position, before they too were forced to withdraw some while later.

The battalion commander of 2/8, Maj

Henry P. Crowe, jumped into the water with his headquarters unit from their LCVP, carrying a shotgun and moving fast not only to avoid the Japanese fire but also to establish personal command. Crowe reached Red 3 only four minutes after his battalion's final LVTs. His battalion's radios were the only ones to arrive fully functional, and he would be a key link between all landed troops and the ships off Betio during the early portion of the battle. Crowe attempted to motivate his battalion to move over the wall and inland as planned, but while his Marines complied, many became casualties as they faced the most daunting emplacements on all of Betio—concrete reinforced “bombproofs”—and would find their progress hindered by them throughout the battle.

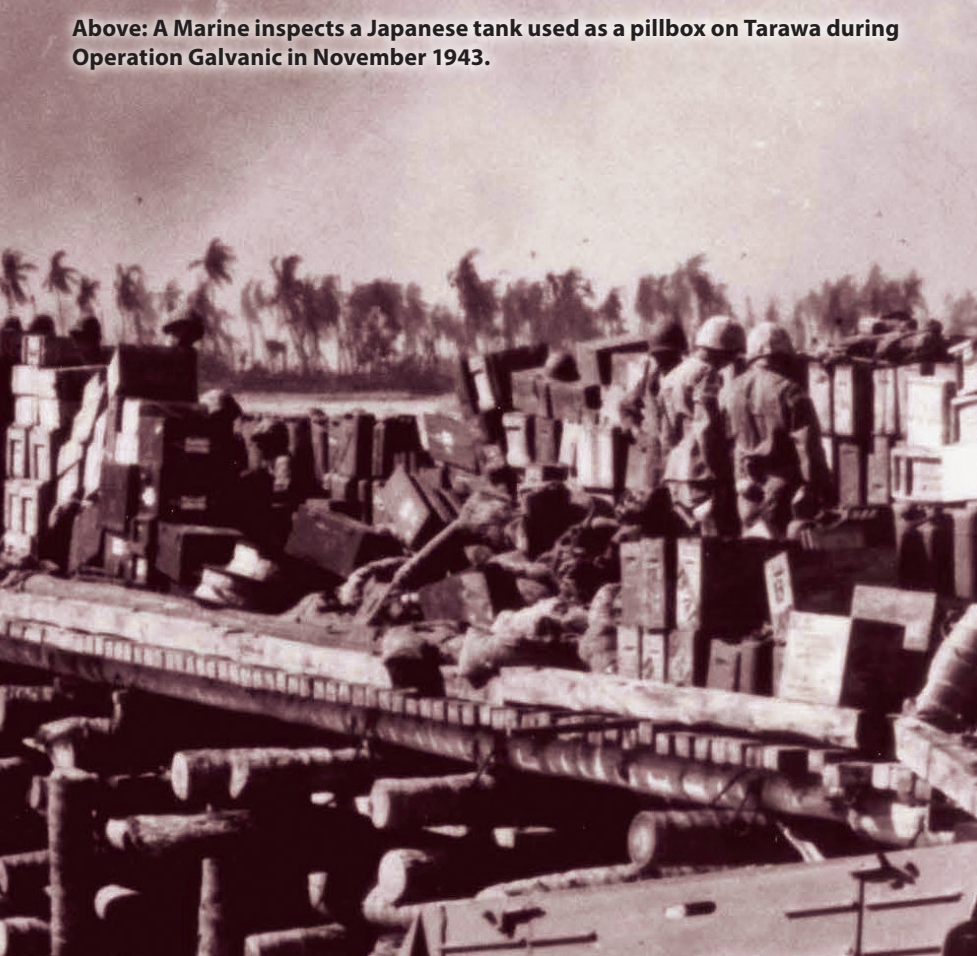
Status at 1000: Two significant but totally isolated advances onto the airfield. Heavy fire from east pins most of 2/8 into a narrow segment of Red 3 behind the seawall. Fortified positions prevent any major advances over the seawall. Crowe in full command with radio communications.



The central pier choked with supplies during the Battle of Tarawa.



Above: A Marine inspects a Japanese tank used as a pillbox on Tarawa during Operation Galvanic in November 1943.



RED BEACH 2 INITIAL ASSAULT WAVES

2nd Battalion, 2nd Marines (2/2),
component of Combat Team 2

CO: Lieutenant Colonel Herbert
Raudenbusch Amey Jr. (KIA)

Time of Arrival: 0922

Target/Goal: Center of U.S. lines,
northwest taxiway, site of CT 2
command post.

The most devastated of the three initial landing battalions was 2/2. In addition to Japanese fire, 2/2 faced barbed wire that slowed its LVTs and in some cases stopped them, despite training tests showing the LVTs could drive right through. Co E of 2/2 was to land on the right (west) and establish contact with Co K of 3/2 on Red 1, while Co F was to land on the left (east) closest to the pier. The battalion CO, LtCol Herbert Amey, put more of his rifle units in LVTs as opposed to heavy weapons units as the other battalion commanders had done, meaning Co G, a rifle company, would land in LVTs to assist and exploit gains by Companies E and F more quickly.

The heaviest and deadliest Japanese fire of the battle came from an area the Marines called the Pocket, at the boundary between Red 1 and Red 2. This fire played havoc with 2/2's arrival. Co E was practically destroyed; five of its six

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officers were killed on or in the water, or on the beach. One of its platoons, like others to follow, was driven to the right by the fire from the Pocket and ended up on Red 1, cut off from the rest of the battalion. One platoon of Co G landed all the way at the Bird's Beak. Those who made it ashore on Red 2 had to seek cover from murderous fire behind the seawall or in shell holes. Almost all the combat engineers had been killed. This meant any advances that small numbers of Marines might make inland could not be exploited past fortified emplacements that would have been silenced by explosives or flamethrowers. Only a few Marines made it as far as 50 yards inland in spots, but there was no coordinated advance along the whole beach.

The most grievous blow to 2/2 came as Amey approached Red 2. He transferred his headquarters unit from an LCM to a returning LVT. When the LVT became fouled on barbed wire, rather than wait for it to extract itself and find a better way to shore, Amey ordered everyone into the water for a short wade to the beach. Walking in beside Associated Press war correspondent William Hippel,

Amey was struck by machine-gun fire 50 yards from shore and killed instantly. His executive officer, Maj Howard Rice, in a separate boat for just such a contingency, could not land and ultimately only came ashore much later, well over to the west on Red 1. The senior officer present on Red 2 was LtCol Walter I. Jordan, an observer from the 4th Marine Division gaining experience for its upcoming first deployment. Jordan assumed command, as best he could, of men who did not know him and were so depleted as to be nonfunctional for the time being. In just the act of coming ashore, 2/2 had suffered 30 percent casualties.

The only bright spot for 2/2 and the entire 2nd Division was the discovery that the pier offered some limited protection to Marines wading in. Red 2 would thus be an arrival point for men and supplies throughout the remainder of the battle.

Status at 1000: Scattered elements as far as 50 yards inland. Most confined to seawall or shell holes. Command of battalion badly disrupted; CO dead. No contiguous line along the beach or inland, heavy opposition to any advance from the Pocket on the right.

HOLDING ON AND LANDING THE FIRST REINFORCEMENTS: D-DAY 0930-1200

1st Battalion, 2nd Marines (1/2), Combat Team 2 reserve

CO: Maj Wood Barbee Kyle

Time of Commitment: 1100

Target/Goal: Help establish beachhead on Red 2 by reinforcing badly depleted and disorganized remnants of 2/2.

3rd Battalion, 8th Marines (3/8), component of 2nd Marine Division reserve

CO: Maj Robert Henry Ruud

Time of Commitment: 1103

Target/Goal: Reinforce 2/8 on Red 3; establish contact with Marines on and behind the left edge of Red 2; help establish momentum toward east and south on the Marines' extreme left flank at the eastern edge of Red 3.

Waves four through six of the initial assault, carrying battalion command groups, medium tanks (M4A2, Sherman) on LCMs, follow-on rifle companies, and heavy weapons companies, were all boated in landing craft that could not clear the reef. There was no reliable, steady, consistent shuttle of returning LVTs from



Reinforcements en route to joining the Marines who had landed on Tarawa earlier. (USMC photo)



USMC

the first three waves to bring Marines in the later waves to the beach. Some did in fact make the transfer (such as LtCol Herbert Amey of 2/2, and, as recounted shortly, Col David Shoup).

If other Marines of these subsequent waves wished to join the first waves ashore, they had no choice but to wade in water 3 to 6 feet deep, and then steadily shallower as the reef sloped up to the beach. Here and there, potholes created by shell craters or natural formations could drop Marines in over their heads—dangerous or fatal if they were carrying so much equipment that they sank to the bottom. Due to the preliminary bombardment and movement of the LVTs on tracks, the lagoon waters over the reef had been churned a chalky white, often rendering the bottom invisible to the Marines. In many spots, barbed wire presented still another challenge.

Vastly more dangerous than the holes was the Japanese fire directed at the Marines. Every minute that had passed between the cessation of the preliminary bombardment at 0900 and the arrival of Marines was another minute the Japanese could gather themselves, remember their training and mission, and direct accurate

fire on boats and Marines in the water. These follow-on waves from LCVs and LCMs suffered high casualties and loss of cohesion. Flying above in a scout plane catapulted off the USS *Maryland*, Navy pilot Lieutenant Commander Robert A. MacPherson recorded in his log: “The water seemed never clear of tiny men, their rifles held over their heads, slowly wading beachward. I wanted to cry.”

Machine guns, rifles, and plunging fire from grenades picked many off in the water, where they fell below the surface, their wounds turning the milky waters pink. The larger Japanese guns, such as the 120 mm anti-boat guns on the eastern tip and 75 mm dual-purpose antiaircraft guns throughout the island, began to find the range of LCVs and LCMs on the reef’s edge, sometimes scoring direct hits that obliterated the boats and many of the men in them.

One such vehicle, an LVT, was carrying an engineering unit to Red 2 to support the efforts of 2/2 against fortified positions. The unit included Staff Sergeant William J. Bordelon. When the LVT was destroyed by Japanese fire, he was one of the few survivors. Bordelon led the others to the

Marines lying and squatting on a beach as they approach an unseen Japanese fortification in the Tarawa Atoll of the Gilbert Islands, Nov. 20, 1943. Thatched roofs can be seen in the background.

temporary shelter of the seawall and began to plan his efforts to silence the fire from pits and pillboxes so that those following could make it to the beach. Bordelon and another Marine from his unit quickly gathered their dynamite and fashioned four explosive charges. Bordelon exposed himself to Japanese fire as he threw the first of these charges into the nearest machine gun positions. He was successful in eliminating them but was wounded by Japanese fire and shrapnel. He then crawled inland to an enclosed position that had been especially effective against arriving Marines.

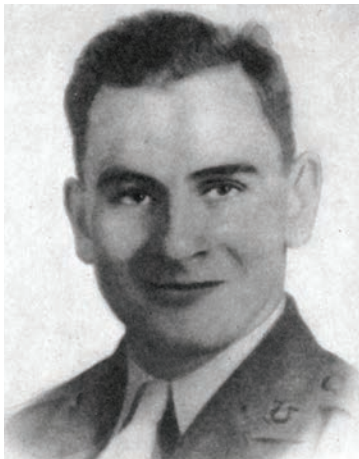
Bordelon pushed explosives through the firing slits and was shot in the arm again. His final explosive charge blew up as he was throwing it, wounding him further. He refused all treatment.

Before he could return to his demolition work, Bordelon noticed a wounded Marine in the water struggling to get to shore. He ran out to help, pulling the man to safety. As he and Sergeant Elden Beers went to work on yet another position, Beers was struck down by a grenade blast.



Col David Shoup

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**SSgt William J. Bordelon
Medal of Honor Recipient**

Bordelon pulled Beers to safety, before finding a grenade launcher with which to continue his attacks. He was wounded by small arms fire yet again but pulled a Marine with him to cover before trying to press on. When he raised himself to fire the grenade, he was shot dead. For his bravery, Bordelon would be recognized with the Medal of Honor, the first one earned in the Battle of Tarawa.

Despite his struggles and the threat to his radios from the water, Shoup was able to establish radio contact with his battalion commanders while he was next to the pier. Schoettel reported what appeared to be the total destruction of his battalion (3/2) to Shoup. At 1015, Shoup ordered Schoettel to land on Red 2 due to the apparent inability to put any Marines ashore on Red 1. At 1018, Schoettel responded, "We have nothing left to land."

Shoup turned his attention elsewhere as he had already decided to commit the reserve element under his direct control, 1st Battalion, 2nd Marines (1/2). He ordered Maj Wood Kyle's battalion to land on Red 2 to help establish momentum and rebuild cohesion among the Marines there. Kyle moved to the reef's edge, but found the low water blocking the way for his

LCVPs. He began to round up returning LVTs—which took time, and there were not enough for his entire battalion. By 1100 he had enough for his Companies A and B, while Company C would remain in their LCVPs pending arrival of more LVTs, which did not materialize until after 1300.

As they moved toward Red 2, Companies A and B faced the full fury of Japanese fire from that beach and the Pocket. Three boats were hit by shell fire during the transfer of men from LCVPs to LVTs. Many other LVTs were hit and disabled by shell fire and machine gun fire on the way in. Those LVTs to the right, most exposed of all to heavy fire, started drifting even farther rightward toward Red 1 as they avoided the most concentrated fire. Four officers and 110 men from 1/2 landed on Red 1 to be absorbed into the units from 2/2 and 3/2 that had already landed there, intentionally or not, and were now under the command of Maj Michael Ryan of 3/2 (more on whom follows).

On Red 2 (the intended destination of 1/2's Marines), no more than 400 men arrived fit to continue the assault. They had been picked off in the water and subjected to the same intense opposition on the beach as the initial assault waves. They were bunched up toward the left, or pier side, of Red 2 because they had discovered what Shoup and so many others had, that the pilings offered the only cover while wading ashore. While Kyle made it to Red 2 and a battalion on that beach now had a commander it knew, it was badly understrength and would not see all of its surviving units landed until the next day. For the moment, they could only hold on until Shoup gave them a mission.

Now it was time for Julian Smith to consider whether the Division reserve units still under his direct control should be committed. They consisted largely of the two infantry battalions from the 8th Marines that had not been attached to CT 2, 1/8 and 3/8, along with these battalions' reinforcing units such as engineers and artillery. Smith chose to work through the headquarters of the 8th Marines and its commanding officer, Colonel Elmer E. Hall. The general directed Hall to send 3/8 to the line of departure and to place it under Shoup's control.

Shoup received this charge at 1103 and immediately ordered 3/8 to land on Red 3, to aid 2/8 in its mission to hold the Marines' left flank and expand south and east. Shoup, still in the water by the pier, observed the carnage during 3/8's landing. Using LVTs here was out of the question,



as Kyle had commandeered all available ones and was using them on Red 2. So 3/8, under the command of Maj Robert Ruud, waded in from the edge of the reef, facing the same kind of deadly fire as Marines to their west. Only 100 Marines, about 30 percent of those who attempted to land in Ruud's first wave, survived. Shoup tried, with limited success, to gesture to subsequent waves from 3/8 to wade in his direction, toward the meager protection offered by the pier.

By the time Ruud saw his fourth wave attempt to reach shore, it was obvious that his battalion had been so depleted by the casualties coming ashore that it would be able to offer little assistance to efforts to establish momentum on Red 3. Regimental commander Col Hall could see this as well, and he ordered Ruud to stop trying until further notice. Only at the end of the afternoon would the remaining



Lt Alexander Bonnyman Jr., 4th from right, 2nd Bn Shore Party, 8th Marines, 2nd Marine Division and his assault party stormed a Japanese stronghold during the Battle of Tarawa, Nov. 1, 1943.

USMC

elements from 3/8 gather at the head of the pier and reach Red 3 by 1730. Ruud's surviving Marines from Co K had already been integrated fully into Crowe's 2/8 battalion; Ruud, on Shoup's orders, sent Marines from other companies to the right to help establish contact between 2/8 and 1/2 inland from the base of the pier.

On the extreme western portion of the island, 3/2's L Company commander, Maj Michael P. Ryan, was in an LCVP of the fourth wave. Mentally prepared for wading in by the knowledge that the water might be too low, Ryan and his men nonetheless had one of the longest wading experiences of the day, due to the length of the reef off Red 1: 700 yards. Ryan was originally designated to come ashore somewhere in the middle of Red 1, but as he saw the bloodbath developing ahead, he noticed off to his right a single Marine at the Bird's Beak climbing over the seawall. He de-

cided it was a sign that coming ashore there might meet with less opposition and directed his men far to the right. This would prove to be one of the single most important spontaneous decisions by a Marine during the entire battle.

Ryan's men landed not on the extreme right of Red 1; instead they proceeded past the northwest tip of the island altogether, and began to come ashore on the northern extremes of Green Beach, which had been named such but not designated for the initial assault. Ryan began reassembling whichever Marines were there into a more cohesive unit that could penetrate inland.

Soon he and the Marines with him would be joined by two medium tanks with 75 mm guns. These two tanks from Co C, 1 Marine Amphibious Corps, had proceeded from the dock landing ship USS *Ashland* (LSD-1) to the reef on LCMs. The tanks were deposited and

guided in by Marines on foot to help them steer clear of holes that might drown out their vulnerable electrical systems. After landing, Co C Commander, First Lieutenant Edward Bale, had not been able to proceed directly ahead from the middle of Red 1 in his tank "Cecilia" due to the intact seawall there. Wounded and dead Marines littered the beach in both directions, so in order to avoid running over them, Bale led the tanks with him back into the water to head west to look for a gap. Now without their guides, several of the tanks fell into holes that disabled them. Only Bale's Cecilia and another tank named "China Gal" emerged from the water on the northern edge of Green Beach. These two tanks were now perfectly positioned to help Ryan move past fortified positions and expand the area under his control all the way to the southern shore of Betio. 🇺🇸

FedEx Founder FREDERICK W. SMITH:



COURTESY OF FEDEX

Frederick W. Smith
CEO and Founder, Federal Express

“I Owe a Debt of Gratitude to the Marine Corps”

By Joel Searls

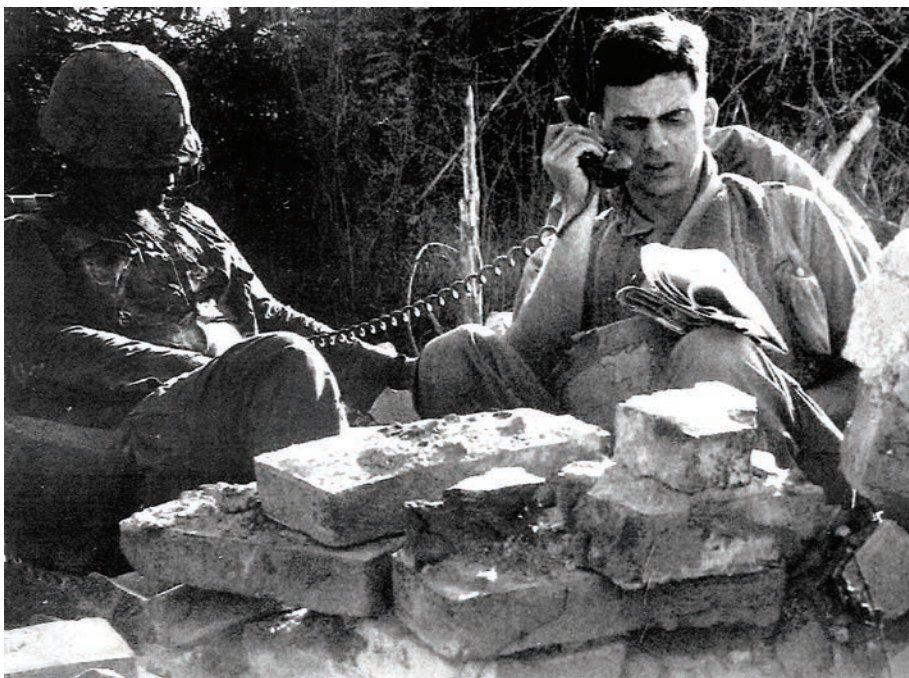
Frederick W. Smith has spent the majority of his lifetime in leadership, first in the Marine Corps during Vietnam, and then later as an entrepreneur in the founding and operating of Federal Express. After graduating from Yale in 1966, he served four years in the Corps, which included two tours of duty in Vietnam. He then launched the original air-ground Federal Express network which began operations in 1973 to serve the rapidly growing high-tech, high-value-added sectors of the economy Smith had predicted. The company has since grown into an \$84 billion global enterprise that serves more than 220 countries and territories.

Smith is responsible for providing strategic direction for all FedEx operating companies: FedEx Express, FedEx Ground, FedEx Freight, and FedEx Services, which includes FedEx Office, FedEx Logistics, and FedEx Dataworks. FedEx operations include 684 aircraft, more than 200,000 vehicles, and more than 5,000 operating facilities. Approximately 570,000 team members worldwide handle more than 19 million shipments each business day.

FedEx has been widely acknowledged for its commitment to total quality service. FedEx Express was the first service company to win the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, the nation's highest award for performance excellence, in 1990. FedEx has been recognized by *Time* magazine as one of the “Time 100 Most Influential Companies” and has consistently been ranked on *Fortune* magazine's industry lists, including “100 Best Companies to Work For” and “World's Most Admired Companies.”

Smith is a Trustee for the Center for Strategic and International Studies and a member of both the Business Council and Business Roundtable. He served as chairman of the U.S.-China Business Council and co-chair of the French-American Business Council. He has served

on the boards of several large public companies—Malone and Hyde (AutoZone), First Tennessee, Holiday Inns, EW Scripps, and General Mills—and charitable organizations including St. Jude Children's Research Hospital and the Mayo Foundation.



Smith served with 3/5 during one of his two tours in Vietnam.
(Photo courtesy of Frederick W. Smith)

He was formerly chairman of the Board of Governors for the International Air Transport Association and chaired the executive committee of the U.S. Air Transport Association. Smith served as co-chairman of the U.S. World War II Memorial project alongside Senator and World War II veteran Bob Dole, and then as the co-chairman of the campaign for the National Museum of the Marine Corps. He has received several honorary degrees and numerous civic, academic, and business awards including the Global Leadership Award from the U.S.-India Business Council; the George C. Marshall Foundation Award; the Atlantic Council's Distinguished Business Leadership Award; the Wright Brothers Memorial Trophy; and the Circle of Honor Award from the Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation. In addition, Smith is a member of the Aviation Hall of Fame and the Business Hall of Fame. He appeared on Forbes' "100 Greatest Living Business Minds" and has been named a top chief executive officer by both Barron's and Chief Executive magazines.

As a highly decorated Marine Corps infantry officer and forward air controller (FAC) in the jungles of Southeast Asia, he learned critical leadership lessons and had lifechanging experiences. Smith was awarded the Silver Star and Bronze Star. After leaving the Corps, he then pursued his entrepreneurial dream, which started as an urgent package delivery service.

Editor's note: The author recently conducted a virtual interview with Fred Smith, discussing everything from his service in the Corps to the future of FedEx.

What are the most important leadership traits you have utilized in the founding and operating of FedEx?

Well, I think if you were to go to a FedEx Leadership Institute class, and I would emphasize that our management school is called The Leadership Institute, so that should be a dead giveaway that the Marine Corps had a big emphasis in my life

because you have to be a great leader to be able to withdraw the discretionary effort out of people in the service industries. ... It's similar to athletics and the military where the leader's job is to get that discretionary effort, which in the military can be up to and including risking or losing one's life in furtherance of the mission. So, if you were to read the FedEx Manager's guide ... which I wrote the original version of it, or you read the FedEx Operating Manual you would find as an NCO or company grade officer in the Marine Corps the doctrine and basic tenets of leadership and management are straight out of what the Marine Corps teaches and had a very big influence on me. In 2008, I wrote a brief article in the Naval Institute *Proceedings* at the request of its editor

Bob Timberg, also a Vietnam Marine veteran, where I talked about how important my Marine Corps service was in all of the principles I used to found ... then continue to use to this day at FedEx even though it is a company approaching 750,000 people. Our philosophy, People Service Profit (PSP) goes right back to that core tenet that the Marine Corps teaches its young officers and NCOs, and that's take care of the troops. ... If you take care of the troops, they'll take care of, in our case, the customers or the mission and you'll achieve success. So, I cannot overemphasize

→ **Our philosophy, People Service Profit (PSP) goes right back to that core tenet that the Marine Corps teaches its young officers and NCOs and that's take care of the troops.**



Frederick W. Smith with FedEx's original DA-20 Falcon aircraft.

COURTESY OF FREDERICK W. SMITH

how important the Marine Corps was in my business career, more important than my formal education I might add. How to manage an organization and achieve goals and results really, mostly was from my Marine Corps experience and of course sports was important to me too ... my Marine Corps experience was the bedrock on which FedEx was formed.

We select, we just don't let anybody into our management ranks, and we have to evaluate you to see if you have the ability to lead people. ... The traits that a leader has, which are taught by the Marine Corps: keep your men informed, make clear the mission, look after your troops, all of those core bedrock principles of leadership are taught in our Leadership Institute. Now we also teach them ... the formal aspects of management which we call Quality Driven Management (QDM) which is usually with statistics and all kinds of what other companies would call Six Sigma ... quality management techniques to manage the enterprise. But since our product is a service, we don't make automobiles or food where you can just repeat the processes.

It's a new day every day when we put all of those tens and tens of thousands of vehicles on the street or fly all those planes, so you have to have great leadership at the first level of management to be able to accommodate all of the vagaries and vicissitudes ... the weather ... traffic and all the things we deal with every day. That's why we have leader managers and not just managers. ... The principles of the Marine Corps are as true today as they were

when I learned them some 50 some odd years ago and they're probably exactly the same thing as the Athenians and Spartans were teaching their troops 2,000 years ago.

How does your Marine training in troop welfare influence the culture of FedEx and how do you take care of your employees?

We do it in a lot of different ways. Praise in public and counsel in private. We have BZs, which everybody in the naval service knows which are the two the flags that the admiral puts up on the yard arm to mean "well done." ... So, I adopted that. If you've done an outstanding job, a manager can give someone a BZ voucher, dinner for two, an unexpected reward sticker ... on a memo, or a BZ lapel pin, it's straight out of Marine Corps leadership and the naval services.

I think probably the most important thing is we made a commitment to our folks that if they do well, they will have an opportunity to advance. ... If the company does well, we'll share the rewards with them so that is the bedrock of that PSP philosophy. ... In the military it's quite the norm that you go from lieutenant to captain to major and so forth. So, you promote from within by definition. In the business world that's a bit of an unknown thing in many organizations. You mean you

started off as a package handler and now you're a vice president at FedEx. We have platoons of them. That's why veterans find it such a familiar and friendly place to work because they're used

If they do a good job they can go as high in the organization as they want based on their abilities. ... it's very familiar to anybody that has been in the military service, particularly in the Marine Corps.



Frederick W. Smith, center right, is pictured here with senior officers from FedEx and the head of the New York Stock Exchange.



COURTESY OF FREDERICK W. SMITH

Above: Smith received two Purple Hearts during his tours as an infantry officer and forward air controller in Vietnam.

Right: Smith, second from left, in the field in Vietnam. The leadership lessons he learned during his service as a Marine are the basis for his leadership philosophy at FedEx.



COURTESY OF FREDERICK W. SMITH

to that extraction of discretionary effort, setting the example, keeping your troops informed. So, if they do a good job they can go as high in the organization as they want based on their abilities. ... it's very familiar to anybody that has been in the military service, particularly in the Marine Corps.

I invite anybody who has spent 35 years at FedEx to come by and see me when they retire. ... There's not a week that goes by that I don't have several people that are informing me [they] are retiring after 35 or 40 years. I don't know this for a fact, but I would bet that we have more long service employees at FedEx than any major company in America because that loyalty needs to go both ways and so that's the most important part of the PSP philosophy.

Our folks had really worked hard on the front lines of keeping the at-home, industrial and healthcare supply chains operating. Most people were doing remote work. Our people were out there delivering and flying planes, so we gave all of our front-line employees a very significant bonus in January 2021. It wasn't part of their regular pay package, but that reinforcement of focus on commitment to the mission and taking care of the customer in our particular case. It's worked very well for us for many years.

Yes, I think people relate to these principles because they're universal truths and they also relate to them in other parts of the world. You may have to modify it ... to the culture, but the golden rule is as true in the Middle East as it is Latin America or Micronesia. Again, you have to make sure you modify it for the local culture. So, our PSP philosophy has worked for us every place, and we serve 220 countries and territories.

Now some of them are agents who are licensed to be FedEx there, but those that are actually FedEx, which is the vast majority of our operations overseas, if you went to them and asked them about PSP or Quality Driven Management, they would know exactly what you're talking about. It's a lingua franca that goes throughout the FedEx organization around the globe

and again it all comes back from those basic leadership and managerial principles.

I mean I still use the Marine Corps method of laying out a strategic issue for our strategic management committee, Situation, Mission, Execution, Administration, Coordination and Communication; SMEAC. That's what I learned in The Basic School. It's pretty solid stuff.

What key components did you take from your service in the Corps and how has that evolved over time?

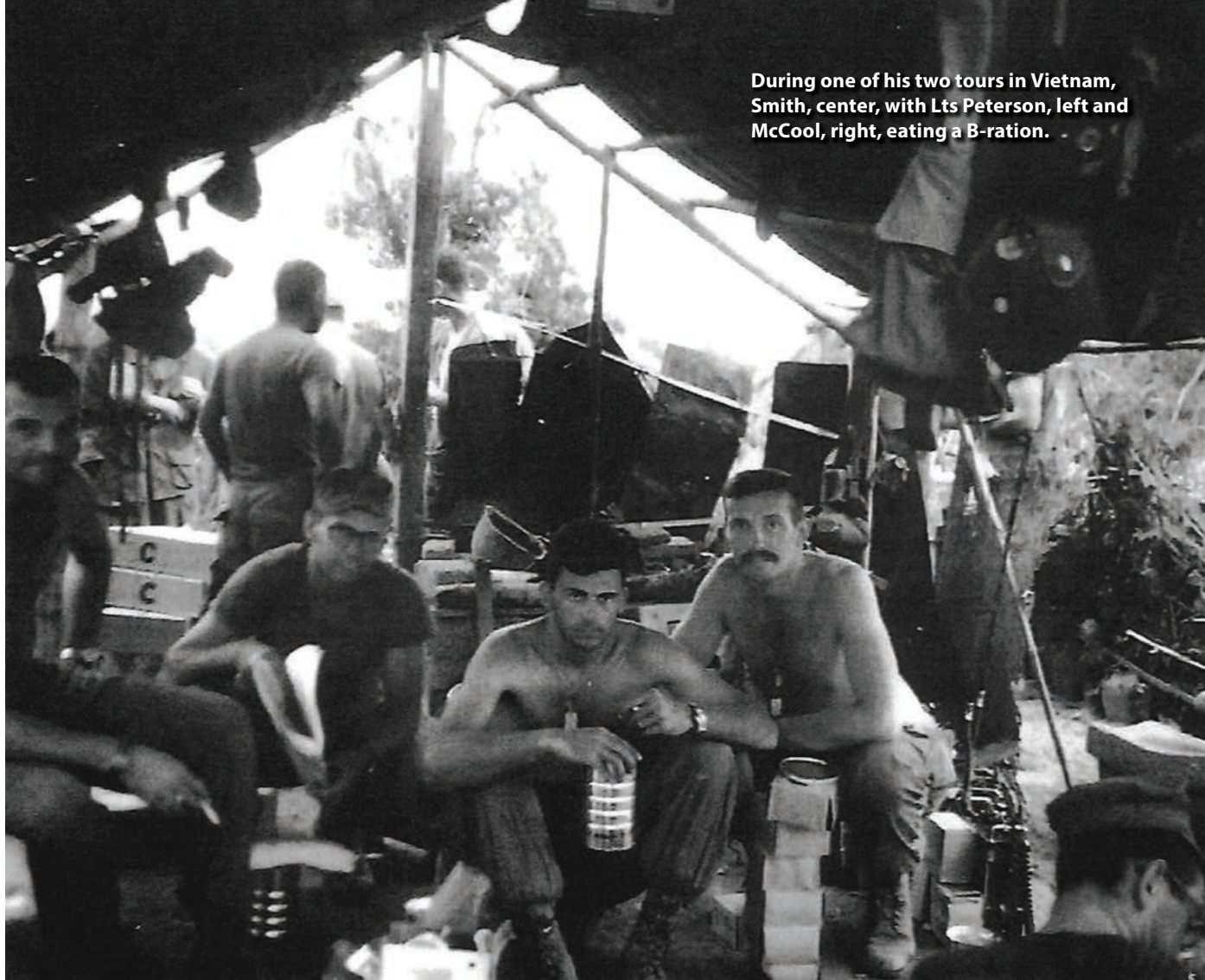
I think people are a bit more questioning today than they were in my era and would be even more so if you went back to the Korean and World War II generations. So, you probably have to put more effort into communication in the "why" rather than the "what," but that is a good thing, that's not a bad thing. I think communication is more intensive, particularly today with social media. You can have some incredible firestorm that erupts over some post or mistake. You see it every day in the business press. So, those communication skills are even more important, and we've had to get better and better at that. Biannually, I put out



COURTESY OF COMMERCIAL APPEAL

Frederick W. Smith, President of Federal Express, Sept. 25, 1976.

During one of his two tours in Vietnam, Smith, center, with Lts Peterson, left and McCool, right, eating a B-ration.



COURTESY OF FREDERICK W. SMITH

a letter to the entire organization to sort of set the stage as to what our board of directors is trying to do and the things we need to focus on.

For instance, two years ago I did a very extensive one on the changed world of cyber security. Your phone now is a way into your life and a potential weapon against you. Those communications as to what's going on and why we are putting restrictions on use of your phone and clicking on this or that in your [personal computer]. It's a more complex world and it's a world in which the average team member is much more informed, perhaps erroneously, but they have all kinds of information coming at them.

So, you have to put a lot of time and effort into the communication in an organization this size to make sure everybody understands what we are doing and not only what we are doing, but why we're doing it, and when something goes wrong, you know what we're doing to fix it. So, those are modifications I think brought by modern technology like we are using today doing an interview 1,500 miles apart and it's like we are sitting here in the same room.

Outside of "Devotion," what are your favorite films to have produced (financed) and why?

Well, there have been a lot of them. I guess one of them that comes to mind is "The Blind Side." That was a famous story

about left tackle Michael Oher who was written about by Michael Lewis, one of our great authors of the day. He [Oher] was adopted by a family in Memphis. He came from a rough situation and went on to be a great football player. So, my daughter Molly found that script and we knew the family and in fact my youngest son is

married to the Collins, the real Collins, who is in the movie. "The Blind Side," I believe is the highest-grossing sports movie of all time, so obviously that's a favorite for a lot of reasons.

The initial movie that I financed for Alcon Entertainment is still one of my favorites. It's called "My Dog Skip" and it has Diane Lane and Kevin Bacon in it. If you watch "My Dog Skip" and you don't have a tear in your eye in the last frame of that movie, you're not human. ... It's based on a Willie Morris novel. Willie Morris was a great Southern writer ...

of the Faulkner tradition ... he was the editor of *Harper's*. "My Dog Skip" remains a favorite, but there's so many of them.

Then my daughter Molly, who was an NYU film school graduate, and then worked for Alcon, the original film company I backed with these two young men that went to Princeton together, she started her own company called Black Label Media. She's done a number of them that are favorites of mine. "Sicario," about the drug trade and "Soldado" ["Sicario: Day of the Soldado"]. If you watch those two movies, they were several years in advance of exactly what you're seeing on the border. They were very

I funded "Devotion" because the story of these two men deserves to be told. It's incredible to me that it never was told before now.

prescient. Benicio Del Toro, Josh Brolin, Emily Blunt. Those were great films.

“Only the Brave,” Josh Brolin was also in that one and Miles Teller and Jennifer Connelly . . . about the hotshot firefighters that saved Prescott, Ariz., and unfortunately lost their lives. It didn’t do great financially, but it’s a wonderful movie. In the military genre, “12 Strong” which was about ODA 595, the first Special Forces Group that went into Afghanistan after 9/11, it’s a remarkable story, very well received commercially. Molly was an executive producer, she’s a working producer, but she was an executive producer and helped to fund “La La Land,” which was a huge success. Of course, more recently they’ve just finished in Black Label Media two films, one of them for Netflix called “Reptile,” which is a detective story with Benicio Del Toro and Justin Timberlake.

“Devotion” is a story that is close to your heart, and you have produced (financed) the film which is due out in theaters next year. Why did you choose to back the film, what do you like most about it, and what do you want audiences to take away from their experience?

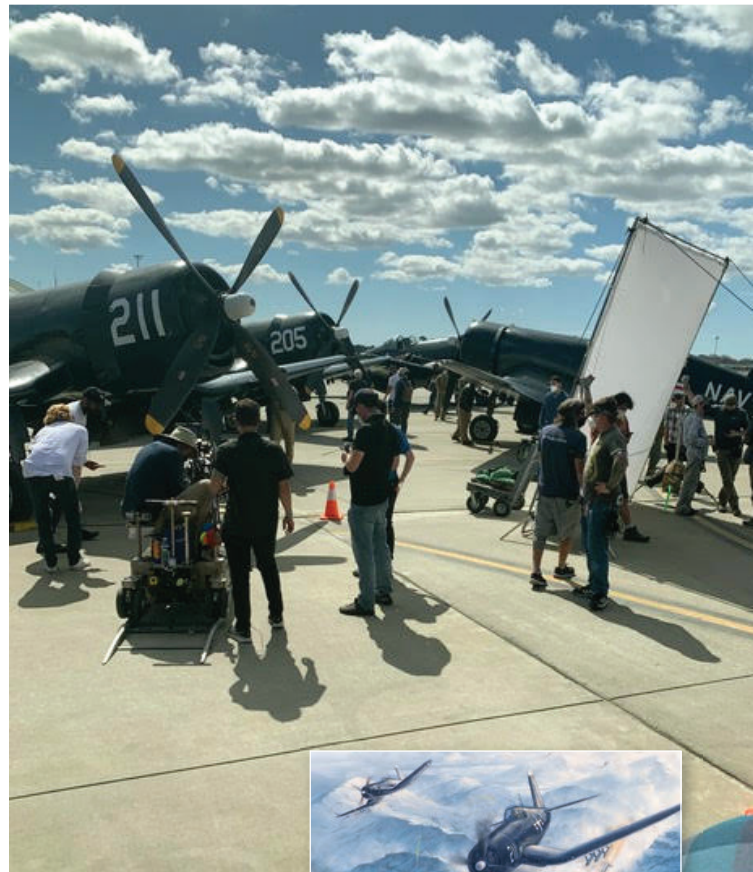
Then close to my heart and to anybody that has been in the naval service and the Marine Corps is the movie adaptation of the *New York Times* best seller by Adam Makos called “Devotion.” It’s about Jesse Brown, the first African-American naval aviator and his wingman Tom Hudner flying Corsairs in support of the Marines surrounded at the Chosin Reservoir in North Korea in late fall 1950. The film tells the incredible set of circumstances which led to Brown being shot down and Hudner deliberately crash landing his plane in 15 degree below zero weather to try to save Jesse Brown, which unfortunately was unsuccessful.

That movie comes out this summer and it’s shot with real airplanes. They’re not CGI airplanes, they’re real Corsairs, and Sky Raiders and Bearcats which they were flying up at Quonset before they transitioned to the Corsairs on the USS *Leyte*. . . It’s a fantastic film and it’ll be out in late summer so I can guarantee you that is going to be a favorite of mine, and I think its [going to] be a favorite of any Marine or Sailor that watches it too.

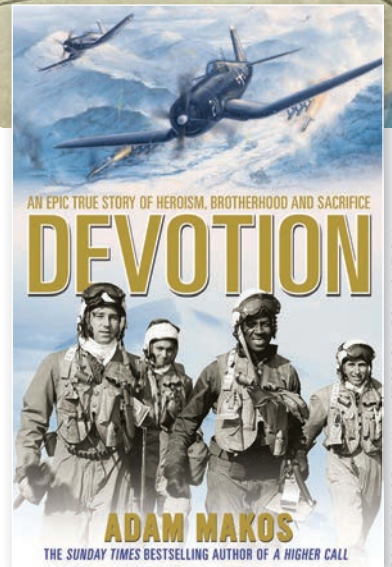
Well, I funded “Devotion” because the story of these two men deserves to be told. It’s incredible to me that it never was told before now and again it’s because Adam Makos wrote this wonderful book about these two men largely unknown. People in the Navy know about Brown and Hudner, and Hudner thought he was going to be court martialed when he deliberately crash landed his plane, but he wasn’t; he received the Medal of Honor. So, he’s quite well-known in naval aviation circles, but among the general public these two men are not known. Jesse Brown was to naval aviation what Jackie Robinson was to baseball or the Tuskegee Airmen were to Air Force aviation.

In fact, President Reagan gave the commencement address at Tuskegee in 1987 and he talks at the end of his commencement address for about ten minutes about Jesse Brown and says just what I said. Everybody knows about the Tuskegee Airmen, but nobody knows about Jesse Brown who broke the color barrier in naval aviation. There wasn’t a single (African-American) naval aviator during World War II. Then in 1948, he went to Ohio State and went through all kinds of prejudice and got his wings and then ended

Right: LT Thomas J. Hudner, USN, is congratulated by Mrs. Daisy P. Brown, widow of ENS Jesse L. Brown, after receiving the Medal of Honor from President Truman at the White House, April 13, 1951.



Behind the scenes of “Devotion,” a movie based on the story of Navy pilots, LT Thomas Hudner and ENS Jesse L. Brown, during the Korean War. Smith financed the production, adapted from the book “Devotion,” believing the story of the two friends deserved to be told. (Photo courtesy of Black Label Media)



COURTESY OF NAVAL HISTORICAL FOUNDATION



USN

Frederick W. Smith with Senator Elizabeth Dole, head of the American Red Cross, during the announcement of FedEx's support for worldwide disaster relief. (Photo courtesy of Frederick W. Smith)

up giving his life getting the Marines out of the Chosin Reservoir cauldron and for the United States.

It's just a message I think getting to what I hope people will take away from the film about two men. They couldn't be from anymore disparate backgrounds, one a sharecropper's son from Mississippi and one from a well-to-do family in Boston who broke ranks from going to Harvard and went to the Naval Academy, and they come together. They become devoted to one another, hence the name of the movie. It's a great example of what Dr. King said about judging somebody by the content of their character than by the color of their skin. That's the message I think that is so needed today. I hope "Devotion" gets that message across and I think people are going to like the film.

The majority of the film's proceeds go to the Brown-Hudner Scholarship Fund managed by the Marine Corps Scholarship Foundation so there is a double benefit of seeing the film because it's going to educate a lot of legacy Navy and Marine Corps children.

What are your thoughts regarding nostalgia and what are your future projects and plans?

I'm so interested in everything that is going on today. That's just been the way I choose to live life. So, it's not that I don't think about the past. I think about Vietnam and a lot of my friends almost every day. I certainly think about my oldest daughter



who we lost. So, I think about the past, but I'm fascinated with the future, you know drone airplanes and autonomous vehicles, robots, and these incredible genetic medicines that are coming online.

We're very proud at FedEx for instance. We distributed hundreds of millions of doses of the Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson and Johnson vaccines not just in the United States, but around the world. So, think about that this pandemic happens and these incredible scientists been working on it for 20 years come out with this miracle vaccine and then because of FedEx and UPS and others, but we certainly were either the biggest or we and UPS were the biggest in distributing these things.

It's not that I don't take great pride in the past and don't think about the past, but I'm still actively interested in the future. I



1stLt Frederick W. Smith, second from right, CO, "Kilo" Co, 3rd Bn, 5th Marines, with platoon leaders, left to right, Lts Jack Hewitt, Joe Campbell (KIA), Jack Ruggles (KIA), and SSgt Dave Danford in the Tam Ky area of South Vietnam in the autumn of 1967.

think as you get older, and I'm 77, if you don't do that, you tend to maybe concentrate a bit too much on the rear-view mirror and not enough on things to be active and involved.

I think that FedEx which is now an enormous operation as I told you, almost 700 planes, 200,000 vehicles, 5,000 facilities, and 700,000 people in our system around the world. It's a lot of fun for me to come to work every day and still be active in the management of the company. Now, make sure you and everybody ... understands, just like any great organization it's run by a team. And we have a fabulous president and great executives in marketing and sales.

The CEOs of our operating companies of which we have three major operating companies and three smaller ones, so, [we've got to] come together every month as a team and I enjoy the synthesis of ideas, strategies and programs with my business partners. It's very stimulating and it's a lot of fun because we are in the center of everything. Everything. Medicine, we're in the middle of that, computers, production of almost anything that you can think of that is manufactured, we're right in the middle of that. If you want talk about European politics, Chinese politics, Australian politics, Brazilian politics, we're in the midst of all of it because we serve all of those countries.

It's something that I enjoy and this team that's running this place when I go over the side, as we say in the naval service, it won't miss a beat because the people that make up that strategic management team are just terrific. I can promise you I learned a

long time ago as a very young man as a platoon leader that you want to make sure you have a good succession plan because in those days people often had to call on them. So, we have great management depth and great management training, so I think your readers need to understand ... I'm just a representative of that managerial team.

One of my roommates at language school when they sent us out to learn Vietnamese in a compressed curricula in 1967 was General Carl Fulford, and I always tell Carl that he drove me out of the Marine Corps because you could tell he was going to be a general and I was not. ... All kidding aside, I have maintained many friends in the Marine Corps throughout the years with Carl, Sen. Jim Webb, LtGen Ron Christmas, I could keep going on and on about all my buddies from the Marine Corps. I've always been extremely grateful for what the Marine Corps taught me. A lot of my service was not pleasant, but it shaped who I am, and I owe a debt of gratitude to the Marine Corps,

and I was glad to come to this interview and tell you that.

Editor's note: Effective June 1, Smith will step down as chairman and CEO of FedEx and will assume the duties of executive chairman.

Author's bio: Joel Searls is a creative and business professional in the entertainment industry. He writes for We Are The Mighty. He serves in the USMCR and enjoys time with his family and friends. 🇺🇸

➡ **I learned a long time ago as a very young man as a platoon leader that you want to make sure you have a good succession plan because in those days people often had to call on them.**



Frederick W. Smith with FedEx's first DC-10 widebody aircraft.

COURTESY OF FREDERICK W. SMITH

“The Voice” Plays Integral Behind-the-Scenes Role

If you’ve ever graduated from Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C., attended a graduation ceremony there or even watched a livestream of the ceremony, you’ve likely heard “the Voice.”

The Voice is the term used for the Marine who narrates the ceremonies held on the depot. But for the Marines who have held the billet, it is so much more than that.

Staff Sergeant Christopher Davis, who has been assigned to MCRD Parris Island since 2019, most recently held the narrator billet for a year. He was the narrator for every graduation ceremony in 2021 as well as for countless retirement and change of command ceremonies.

“This job is more than just talking into a microphone,” Davis said. “Ten percent of the Voice is the mic and the other 90 percent is assisting the drill masters or battalions with anything they may need for ceremonies.”

A drill instructor on a break from training cycles is chosen to be the Voice through an audition process after each training battalion nominates a candidate. The candidates read from different scripts to get a sense of how well they can articulate and deliver different types of speech. The Marine with the clearest and most commanding voice is selected.

SSgt Mark Gulotta is the newest drill instructor selected. He trained under Davis for a few weeks and fully took over the role on Feb. 25.

“I tried to do an announcer-type thing,” said Gulotta. “The drill master corrected me and suggested I just try my normal voice, and sure enough, it sounded a million times better.”

Around the depot, other Marines become so familiar with the sound of the Voice that they recognize it when they hear it off-microphone.

“No one refers to you as SSgt Davis or SSgt Gulotta—they refer to you as ‘Voice,’” Davis said with a laugh. “Going through the gate, ‘How are you, Voice?’ ‘Voice, when are you going back to work?’ It’s always just ‘Voice.’ It eventually hits you that maybe you’re doing something impactful, and that people care about what you do.”

As for the sound itself, there isn’t a class or lesson Marines can attend; it’s something that is based on being able to speak clearly and articulate as you read.



LCPL MICHELLE BRUDNICKI, USMC



LCPL MICHELLE BRUDNICKI, USMC

SSgt Christopher Davis and SSgt Mark Gulotta, drill instructors with Recruit Training Regiment, are pictured in the above photo on the Peatross Parade Deck at MCRD Parris Island, S.C., Feb. 25. Gulotta, pictured in the photo on the left, recently took over the billet of the Voice aboard the recruit depot after training under Davis, who previously held the billet.

“The sound comes down to the individual. My voice is rather nasally, and SSgt Gulotta’s voice is naturally deeper. Any voice can accomplish the same goal, it’s just a matter of being clear and concise with your sound.”

When he is not on the microphone, the

Voice is commonly found acting as the right-hand man to the regimental drill master. Both are experts in the conduct and execution of ceremonies.

“I bounce off the drill master, and he bounces off of me,” said Davis. “Everything he knows, I know. When he’s not

here, I can fill in and be where he needs me to be.”

Duty as the Voice spans one year, and it’s a very unique experience for those who hold the billet.

“There’s only one Voice,” Gulotta said. “There’s a million chiefs, a million senior drill instructors, drill instructors—but there’s only one Voice.”

The recitation of Marine Corps history, a Marine’s accolades, or awards remain the focus, rather than the individual speaking.

“The goal of the Voice is to be heard, but never noticed,” Davis said. “You’re not a distraction, you’re simply adding to the ceremony.”

Though visitors may only hear the Voice announcing their son or daughter’s platoon number on graduation day, the billet is extremely meaningful to those who have the privilege of holding it. According to Davis, being The Voice has allowed him to be there for Marines from the nation’s newest Marines to the Corps’ most seasoned, on their special day.

“As the Voice, you are integral to

someone’s last day,” Davis said. “Whether that’s the last day here on Parris Island, the last day being the command sergeant major, or the last day being in the Marine Corps for them [...] You give a sense of pride and a feeling of recognition that perhaps they haven’t previously experienced a day in their career.”

LCpl Michelle Brudnicki, USMC

Corps Receives First Mobile, Solar-Powered EV Chargers

In 2021, the Marine Corps acquired 21 electric vehicle (EV) chargers and distributed them among 14 installations to continue the modernization of the Marine Corps through energy savings and implementation of emerging technology on installations.

The chargers help to implement the Jan. 27, 2021, Executive Order, “Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad,” which directed the development of a national plan mandating all federal fleets acquire clean and zero-emission vehicles by 2035. This directive generated derivative requirements for charging infra-

structure on Marine Corps installations.

On Nov. 8, 2021, Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif., became the first Marine Corps installation to receive two Beam EV ARC 2020 chargers for their government fleet with Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., following the next month when it received two more chargers on Dec. 16, 2021.

“We are excited to have the Beam chargers on Quantico for the means of having the capability to support electric vehicles,” said Master Gunnery Sergeant Ramiro Quintero, transportation branch chief at MCB Quantico. “Knowing that we’re able to support the [EV] effort is enough for the mission and for what we do and how we support that aboard the base.”

Obtaining electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE), the infrastructure to charge electric vehicles, is crucial to executing the order. However, there are several challenges to installing permanent EVSE due to requirements like identifying locations to put the chargers, conducting land surveys to assess environmental concerns, and digging to lay electrical work.



A driver at MCB Quantico, Va., charges a government fleet vehicle using the Beam EV ARC 2020 solar-powered charger, Feb. 8. The base is one of 14 installations who have received or will soon receive the chargers as the Corps seeks to implement energy-saving measures across the fleet.

To overcome these challenges, the Marine Corps selected the Beam EV ARC 2020, a non-permanent charging station that is solar-powered and can be moved to various locations based on the needs of the installation. The charging station also has the ability to connect to auxiliary equipment that provides backup power generation during an outage or power mobile health clinics.

“The main benefit of this particular system is that it is mobile, so it doesn’t require the lengthy timing associated with installation, such as the preparatory work of trenching, modifying power distribution boxes, and tying into the grid that would be required of a traditional in-the-ground electric vehicle supply equipment,” said James Gough, transportation services director at Headquarters Marine Corps.

“We are putting the supply equipment in first because we need the support infrastructure in place before we provide the vehicles,” said Gough. “This effort will save us significant infrastructure and installation costs associated with the charging equipment itself.”

As of March 24, there were 118 permanent charging ports across Marine Corps installations with 109 of those belonging to Marine Corps Installations West and nine to Marine Corps Installations National Capital Region. To support the Marine Corps’ conversion to electric vehicles, the Beam EV chargers will supplement the traditional charges while permanent infrastructure is installed.

Marine Corps Installations Command

MAI Course Tests Marines’ Mental, Physical Limits

Sweat and sand trickled into the eyes of Marines as they trudged forward in formation on a long-distance run with their packs filled to the brim with gear and extra weight. The sun peeked around the clouds at the bottom of the horizon, but these Marines had been training since long before sunrise. They veered off to the side of the road and dropped their packs, but not to take a break. They knelt in a circle and waited to begin grappling their opponents.

The Marines were participating in the

culminating event of the final day of the Martial Arts Instructor (MAI) course at Camp Schwab, Marine Corps Base Camp Smedley D. Butler, Okinawa, Japan, March 17.

“Whenever I felt like quitting, the Marines to the left and right of me would not let me,” said Corporal Marlene RomeroMejia, a food service specialist with 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division. “I gave it my all, took everything day by day, and never gave up.”

Every part of the final day of the course required teamwork and support from the Marines. Combat conditioning exercises such as buddy crawls and obstacle courses required Marines to work together as a unit, and during the final event, they sparred with their final opponents and finally earned their belts with the coveted MAI tab.

“I felt a massive sense of pride swell in me when I grabbed my belt and officially earned the title of MAI,” said RomeroMejia. “I graduated this course to better myself and other Marines, and I



CPL ALEX FAIRCHILD, USMC

Marines with 2/7, 1stMarDiv, grapple in the sand during the culminating event of an MAI course on Camp Schwab, Okinawa, Japan, March 17. The three-week course included hand-to-hand combat, warrior ethos instruction, grappling and weapons sparring.



CPL ALEX FAIRCHILD, USMC

Above: Cpl Marlene RomeroMejia, a food service specialist with 2/7, 1stMarDiv, conducts a tire flip during the final portion of the MAI course in Okinawa, Japan, March 17.

Below: Marines participating in the MAI course ascend and descend ropes on Camp Schwab, Okinawa, Japan, March 17. The course certifies Marines to train and test other Marines in various belt levels of MCMAP.



CPL ALEX FAIRCHILD, USMC



CPL ALEX FAIRCHILD, USMC

Left: During the culminating event of an MAI course on Camp Schwab, Okinawa, Japan, Marines with 2/7 spar with weapons as they work to earn the coveted MAI tab at the completion of the course.

did something not every Marine can say they have done.”

For three weeks, the Marines underwent the rigorous course, which entailed hand-to-hand combat, warrior ethos instruction, grappling, Marine Corps Martial Arts Program syllabus memorization, and weapons sparring training. The Marine Corps MAI course certified its participants to train and test other Marines in various belt levels of MCMAP and to increase the physical capabilities and readiness of the Marines they will train.

“Not every Marine makes it through,” said Staff Sergeant Tyler Thomas, a weapons platoon sergeant with 2/7. “Every day we make the training to become an MAI as realistic as possible. The mental and physical strength it requires to become

an MAI is something not everyone has.”

The newly minted MAIs returned to their units better equipped to train and test their Marines in martial arts and increase mission readiness.

Cpl Alex Fairchild, USMC

Cryptologic Linguist Proves Vital to Efforts of I MIG

In January 2019, the 37th Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Robert B. Neller, established “information” as the seventh warfighting function. This provides the Marine Corps with the ability to modernize by utilizing friendly information while combatting misinformation. I Marine Expeditionary Force Information Group (MIG) was established as a solution to fighting the information war.

Corporal Cassidy Kauranen, a cryptologic linguist with 1st Radio Battalion, fills a vital role within I MIG by working diligently to implement her knowledge of the Levantine Arabic language.

“The mission of a cryptologic linguist is to exploit enemy communications with a foreign language specialty,” said Kauranen. “I am a Levantine Arabic linguist. The Levantine dialect is spoken in countries such as Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, and Jordan.”

The job requires Marines to attend the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, Calif., which offers instruction in 15 different languages.

“The assets a cryptologic linguist can provide to a unit varies from someone collecting signals intelligence, intercepting enemy communications or analyzing enemy intelligence,” said Kauranen. “This added capability to 1st Radio Battalion plays a vital role in fighting the information war.”

I MIG is comprised of several major supporting elements which provide unique mission capabilities. The 1st Radio Bn is comprised of Marines from a variety of military occupational specialty (MOS) fields who provide signals intelligence, electronic warfare and computer network exploitation capabilities. It is their job to monitor, transcript and translate intercepted target communications. This mission is accomplished diligently by Kauranen and her peers, who support the mission of I MIG: to coordinate, integrate and employ capabilities for information environment operations in order to ensure the Marine air ground task force commander’s ability to facilitate friendly forces maneuver and deny the enemy freedom of action in the information environment.

The Marines of I MIG provide communications, intelligence and supporting arms liaison in support of MAGTF operations. These operations rely on the capabilities of cryptologic linguists like Kauranen who collect, translate, and analyze intelligence that comes in many different languages. The MOS proves a crucial asset in the ever-changing information environment and will continue to be an in-demand occupation.

Cpl Austin Gilliam, USMC



Cpl Cassidy Kauranen, a cryptologic linguist with 1st Radio Bn, I MIG, participates in an 8-mile hike with the Electronic Warfare Plt at MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif., Jan. 28. Kauranen utilizes her knowledge of the Levantine Arabic dialect to support intelligence operations.



CPL AUSTIN GILLIAM, USMC



A Phantom II returned to its home base at Chu Lai after completing a mission. Its tailhook was used to catch an arresting cable, much the same way a plane lands aboard an aircraft carrier.

Tigers in the Sky

By Maj Harvey D. Bradshaw, USMC
Photos by Capt J.A. Marshall, USMC

*Place: Chu Lai, Republic of Vietnam.
Unit: Marine Fighter/Attack Squadron
(VMFA) 542 (the "Tigers"). Mission: To
provide close air support to Marines on
Hill 881. Equipment: The F-4B Phantom
II supersonic jet fighter-bomber.*

Lance Corporal Roger Finnigan, plane captain, dropped the nose gear tire he was inflating and raced for the flight line as the "scramble" horn sounded in the line shack.

Corporal Frederick A. Pierce, armament control systems technician, grabbed his voltmeter and followed, knowing that the rocket pods on the waiting F-4s had to be checked for stray voltage before the planes left the flight line.

Staff Sergeant Al Alfaro, ordnance loading crew leader, left his men at work testing a missile system and ran to pull the bomb safety pins on the two Phantoms on "hot pad alert."

Two pilots, wearing dark green flight suits and bulky survival vests, burst from the door of the alert shack beside

the hangar, dashed across the ramp, and climbed into the open cockpits. Their helmets hung ready from the canopies and their oxygen masks were already plugged in.

In less than 30 seconds after the "scramble" began, Finnigan was helping strap Captain James P. Faulkner, a veteran of more than 150 missions, into the lead aircraft. The plane crouched low under the weight of 12 "snake eye" bombs weighing 500 pounds each. On its nose the number "13" stood in black numerals

**Marine "Phantoms," on the prowl
in Vietnam, are quick as a cat—
and twice as deadly. When they pick up
"Charlie's" scent, he's a short-timer!**

edged in yellow, while on the tail the bold letters "WH" revealed that this Phantom belonged to VMFA-542, the "Tigers." From the fuselage above the wing the painted snarling face of a tiger, 30 inches high, seemed almost alive. On the intake ramp in front of the left engine, Finnigan had painted, in old English lettering, the words "My Sopwith Camel" instead of his name.

In the second plane, Lieutenant John R. "Jason" McCord, a 100-mission professional at 23, ran rapidly through his pre-start cockpit checks. By the time he was finished, his plane captain, LCpl Carl S. Meador, pulled the last safety pin on the ejection seat, dropped to the concrete ramp, and slammed the boarding ladder upward to the stowed position.

From underneath the gray belly of the Phantom, Cpl John Waddell completed his final inspection of the two Zuni rocket pods beneath each wing and the Mark 4 20 mm gun pod hung on the centerline rack. Each Zuni pod housed four of the deadly accurate five-inch air-to-ground rockets, making a total of 16 on board. The gun pod, with "Miss Gloria" painted on its gleaming white side and a neatly drawn tiger's

tail hanging from a rear access door, was set to fire at the rate of 4,000 rounds per minute, or 65-70 rounds per second. Tucked in cavities beneath the fuselage were Sparrow III air-to-air missiles, just in case the MIGs came.

Exactly one minute after the alert sounded, Capt Faulkner, in WH-13, raised his left hand and spun two fingers in a horizontal circle—the signal to start

the right engine. Instantly compressed air began to flow from the square yellow starting unit beside his plane to the engines. Even as the turbines began to spin, the Radar Intercept Operator (RIO), Capt Paul A. Fratarcangelo, having stayed in the alert shack to copy down vital mission information on his kneeboard, jumped into the rear cockpit and strapped in. By the time both engines reached idle RPM, he had his navigation equipment set and the radios on and warmed up.

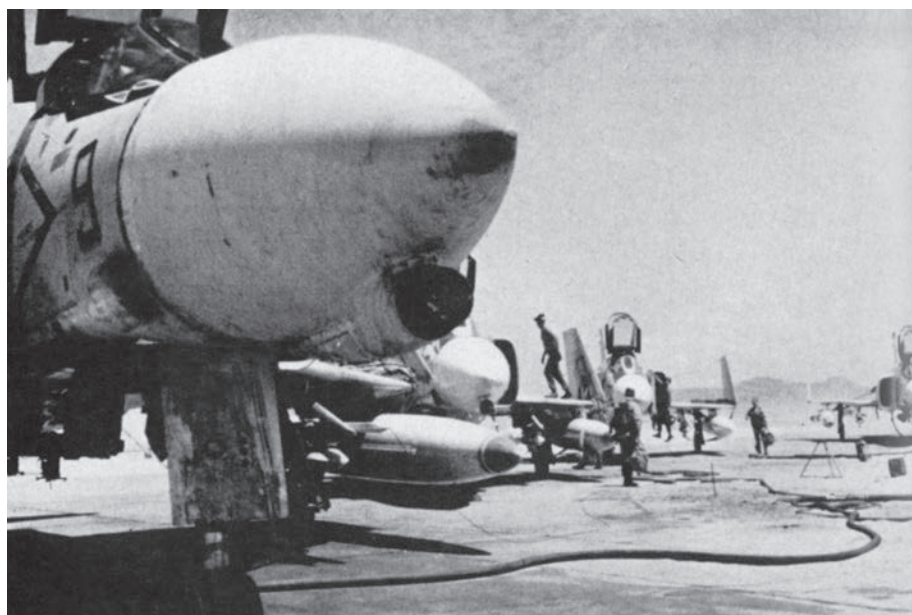
“Don’t waste any time,” he said over the intercom to the pilot, “they’re waiting for us at Khe Sanh—Hill 881. We’re cleared

to taxi, and the duty runway is one-four, taking off to the south. Our number two plane is ready to go.”

The “scramble” was three minutes old when LCpl Finnigan, 50 feet in front of WH-13, with both hands raised, gave the pilot the signal to add power. Twenty-eight tons of titanium and steel eased forward in response to a gentle nudge on the throttles, and the Phantom turned down the row of protective revetments toward the taxiway. The plane captain trotted alongside until his plane cleared the revetments, then checked his wings to be sure they had locked properly as they were unfolded.



Above: Pilots from VMFA-542 raced from the squadron’s ready room when a “scramble” was sounded. It took only seven minutes from the time the horn blew until they were airborne.



A Phantom II needed 2,500 gallons of fuel for its tanks, and the fuel pits at Chu Lai were busy as soon as the “Tigers” returned from a mission, ensuring the planes were ready for the next mission.

Giving a final “thumbs up—all OK” signal to the pilot, he watched as his plane taxied to the end of the runway, followed by the second aircraft.

Finnigan waited as an ordnance man armed the bombs, rockets and missiles. Then the canopies closed and both planes moved into takeoff position on the runway. Black smoke poured from the tailpipes as the engines were run up to full power and checked, one by one. He saw the flaps come down and knew they were ready. The lead aircraft began to roll, picking up speed slowly, grudgingly. Then the muffled explosive sound of the afterburners reached his ears, and the first Phantom lunged past him and rose smoothly into the air, vapor trails arcing from each wingtip and wheels swiftly retracting.

“Seven minutes and thirty-five seconds from alert to takeoff,” LCpl Finnigan said as he looked at his watch and smiled. He watched the second plane follow the first. It turned quickly, cut inside the smoke trail marking the leader’s path and joined up in tactical formation as the flight turned north over the South China Sea. The two planes moved as one, climbing steeply, the thunder of their engines now a muted roar in the distance. In a few seconds they were gone. Finnigan settled down to wait for WH-13 to come home.

Place: Khe Sanh, remote Marine outpost near the point on the map where South Vietnam, North Vietnam, and Laos meet. Time: 0720. Unit: VMFA-542 (call sign—Castor Oil) Flight 060. Mission: To destroy enemy bunkers stopping the Marine advance up Hill 881. Equipment: Two Phantoms, 12 bombs, 16 rockets, one gun pod with 750 rounds of 20 mm.

Eighteen minutes after takeoff and 160 miles north of Chu Lai, the two Phantoms sliced downward from 20,000 feet. Pilots and radar operators searched for a hole in the thick layer of clouds covering Khe Sanh. Finding the nearest hole 20 miles south of the outpost, they spiraled down there and swept northward up a river valley, jungle-covered ridges rising into the overcast on either side. From the slopes of Hill 881 an urgent voice spoke in their earphones.

“Castor Oil Flight 060, this is Dragonfly. Your target is a line of fortified bunkers on the 330 radial, four nautical miles from the Khe Sanh TACAN. I will have the mortars mark the target with white phosphorous. Use a run-in heading of east to west, pull out right. Friendly troops will be 200 meters south, over.”

“Roger, Dragonfly, this is Castor Oil

060, a flight of two F-4s with 12 snaked 500-pounders, 16 Zunis, and a pistol. We should be able to work beneath this cloud layer. Go ahead and mark the target and tell the Marines to keep their heads down—this is going to be close work for 500-pounders.”

The “Willie Peter” marking round exploded in a bold white splash against the green hillside as the Phantoms rolled in on target, one at a time. In the lead aircraft Capt Fratarcangelo kept up a steady stream of information to the pilot from his back seat post.

“We’re rolling in on our first run, 90 degrees of turn to go, all armament switches on, 117 mils on the sight, on altitude—2,200 feet—and on speed ... Dive angle now 10 degrees, on run-in heading, passing 1,500 feet, on airspeed ... Looking good, passing 1,000 feet ... 600 ... stand by ... MARK!”

At 400 feet above the hill, Capt Faulkner pushed the red bomb “pickle” button with his thumb and pulled the Phantom out of its dive. Two bombs dropped away. Instantly their “snake eye” fins sprang open, slowing their flight while the plane streaked out of danger. Less than three seconds later, twin explosions rocked the hillside. On the ground, Marines cheered as debris from smashed enemy emplacements fell to earth around them.

Even as dust from the bomb blast was still rising, a tremendous rushing sound, something like a freight train, came from the sky above. A pair of Zuni rockets

lanced downward, moving faster than the eye could follow, trailed by streaks of flame and that thunderous noise. One plunged into the earth beside a bunker dug in under 12 layers of logs and dirt. The second went through the open firing port of the bunker and detonated deep inside.

For run after run the radio conversation between the controller and the airmen

At 400 feet above the hill, Capt Faulkner pushed the red bomb “pickle” button with his thumb and pulled the Phantom out of its dive. Two bombs dropped away.

continued, adjusting the impact of bombs and rockets on individual targets. When the Zunis were expended, the second aircraft opened up with the gun pod. It fired with a sound like tearing canvas, and the entire length of an enemy trench line seemed to erupt from the fusillade. The ground Marines cheered again and watched the snarling tiger’s head outlined in yellow and black flash by as the Phantom pulled off target. They had seen this squadron in action many times before, but never at a more welcome moment. All enemy activity in the vicinity had ceased. Helicopters could now pick up the Marines who had been previously wounded, and the next 200 meters ahead were clear.

In six minutes the strike was over,

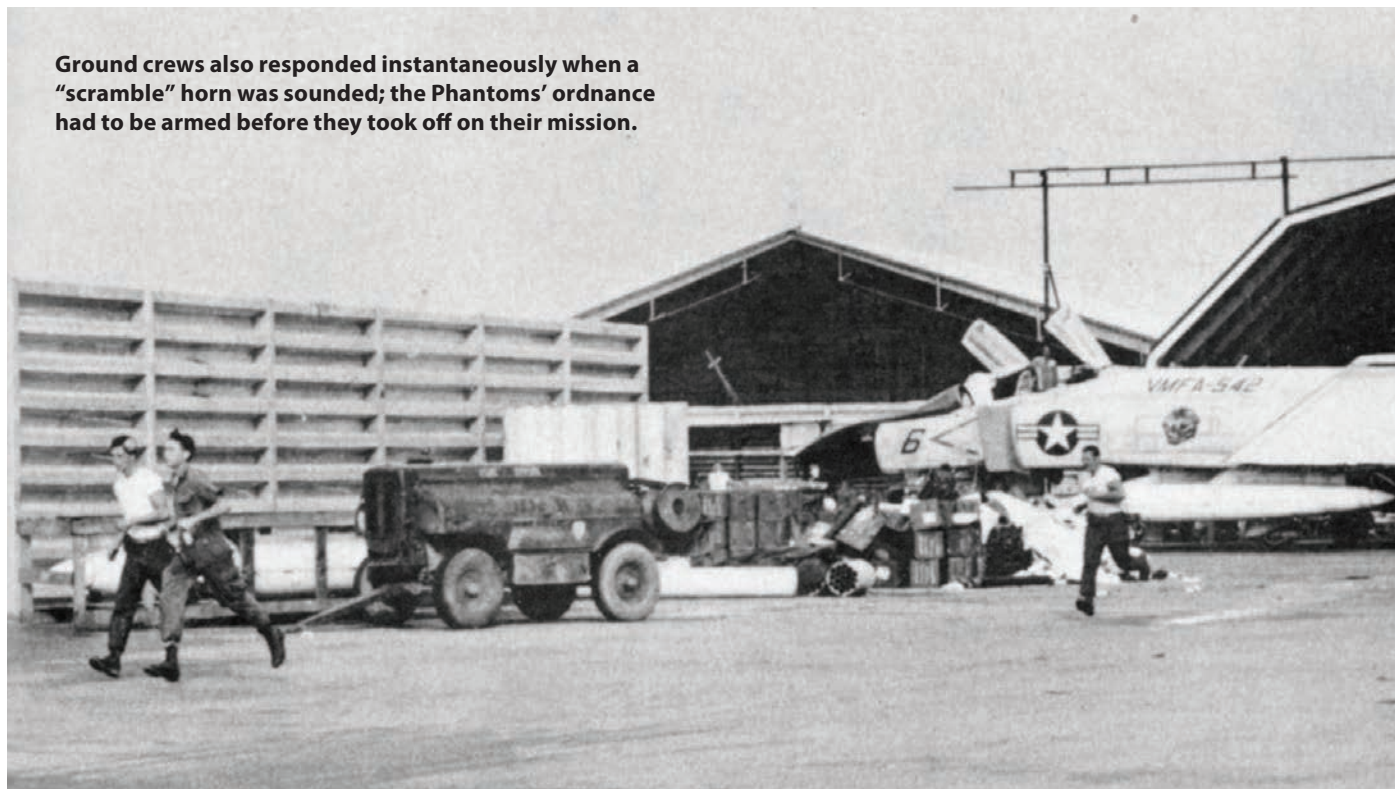
and the flight was heading south down the valley, bomb racks and rocket tubes empty. The controller gave his parting message on the radio.

“Castor Oil 060, you had 100 percent of your ordnance on target, 100 percent target coverage; 18 fortified bunkers and 12 fighting holes destroyed, as well as 75 meters of trench line. We’ll forward a complete report when we take this position. That was beautiful work; it’s a pleasure to do business with professionals.”

At 0748 LCpl Finnigan, his eyes searching the sky to the north of Chu Lai, saw a tiny dark trail of smoke moving south behind a black speck. The speck grew larger and split into two planes, flying close parade formation. They streaked over the field, wingtips overlapping, the sound of their wings whistling in the air. The early morning sunlight glinted from their canopies as they snapped into a vertical bank over the runway.

He saw the tiger on the side of the leader and the black tip on the vertical stabilizer and knew that his plane was back. Up and down the revetments other plane captains waited for other Phantoms with different markings—the coiled diamondback of VMFA-323, the “Death Rattlers,” the visored helmet and red lance of VMFA-314, the “Black Knights,” and the spread wing and red, white and blue stripes of VMFA-115, the “Silver Eagles.” All were sister squadrons of VMFA-542 and assigned to MAG-13, whose scarlet and

**Ground crews also responded instantaneously when a
“scramble” horn was sounded; the Phantoms’ ordnance
had to be armed before they took off on their mission.**



gold sign proudly proclaimed—"Welcome to Fightertown."

Finnigan's practiced eyes detected the speed brakes open beneath the wings of his "Sopwith Camel," and the big fighter quickly slowed to landing gear extension speed—250 knots. The wheels came down abeam the end of the runway, followed by the flaps. Then he heard the peculiar high-pitched moan of the twin J-79 engines, a sound unlike any other in Marine aviation, as WH-13 began its approach. Just before touchdown he saw the amber light flashing from the nose-wheel door, indicating that the plane was exactly on speed for its landing weight—some 35,000 pounds. Puffs of blue smoke rose from the main gear tires as they gently touched the runway. The drag chute blossomed from the tail, slowing the Phantom to 90 knots by the 5,000-foot runway marker.

Four minutes later Finnigan met his plane as it turned off the taxiway, quickly checking it for hot brakes before it entered the refueling area. Then he dashed through the hot engine exhaust, grabbed the billowing drag chute, and tossed it over one wing. He directed WH-13 into the fuel pits, chocked the wheels, gave the pilot the signal to refuel all tanks, and finally, the quick slash of hand across throat that meant "cut the engines."

Before the engines of WH-13 had wound down to a stop, Cpl Richard Hawryla had parked the number two aircraft and the first of 2,500 gallons of jet fuel were already flowing into the lead plane. At the same time, an ordnance crew under the supervision of Gunnery Sergeant John B. Harris checked the bomb racks in preparation for the next flight, while plane captains and various shop personnel inspected all systems and components.

Suddenly, excitement broke out around WH-13. LCpl James E. Swett Jr. (son of World War II Marine ace and Medal of Honor recipient James E. Swett Sr.) found gaping holes in the centerline rack, left by enemy 57 mm anti-aircraft fire. Sergeant William Betts, NCOIC of the Metal Shop at 21, hurried out with his best men to check the damage. Within minutes he had determined that no critical structural members had been hit and that the metalwork could be repaired, and the rack replaced. By the time the refueling was completed and the plane was towed into the line, SSgt Jim Dillon's ordnance crew was there with a new rack, ready to be mounted. Two hours later the metalwork

was repaired, 12 more bombs had been loaded, and WH-13 sat once more on the "hot pad," ready to go.

LCpl Finnigan finished cleaning the canopies and used the last bit of compound on his cloth to shine the letters of "My Sopwith Camel" that gleamed on the jet intake. Then he ran half a mile through deep Chu Lai sand to early chow, so that he could be back over the noon hour, just in case the "scramble" horn sounded again. On the way he stopped by the squadron office and checked with Sgt J.W. Mabe,



SSgt John B. Harris, left, and his crew loaded conical-finned 500-pound bombs by hand.

the administrative chief, to make sure that his six-month overseas extension had been approved and that his 30-day leave would start in July.

Meanwhile, back in the alert shack, the new aircrews coming on duty at noon asked the morning crews how things were going at Khe Sanh.

"Two more days and Hill 881 will have to be redesignated Hill 831," came the reply, "for the top 50 feet will be blown off!"

Three days later the Marines took Hill 881. Credit for 648 out of 654 enemy bunkers destroyed in the operation went to Marine air. It was too far inland for Naval gunfire, artillery could not reach down beneath the 10-12 layers of logs and fortifications, and savage enemy fire

kept the engineers and their demolitions away. Marine Phantoms, Skyhawks and Crusaders, with delay fuses on 750-, 1,000-, and 2,000-pound bombs, carried the brunt of the load.

VMFA is proud of their record month when they broke every Phantom record in MAG-13 while supporting the Khe Sanh campaign. The "Tigers" flew over 750 missions, logged nearly 1,000 hours, and delivered 1,448 tons of ordnance on target. Major General Louis B. Robertshaw, commanding general of the First Marine Aircraft Wing, sent a letter of appreciation, which said in part: "... In meeting the requirements which generated these new and phenomenal records, flight personnel and wing ground personnel alike have performed magnificently, sometimes beyond any reasonable degree of expectation"

Place: The Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). Unit: VMFA-542. Mission: To provide emergency close air support to a Marine company surrounded by two battalions of North Vietnamese. Equipment: Phantoms, bombs, and napalm.

"You've got to be absolutely on target," the calm, businesslike voice of the Tactical Air Controller (Airborne) (TACA) said from his light O-1C Bird Dog spotter plane. He spoke to Maj John Hubner and Capt Richard C. "Skip" Martinsen, two "Tiger" Phantom pilots, as they roared over Dong Ha at low altitude and headed north toward the DMZ.

"The enemy troops are firing from the cover of a ravine and have the Marine company pinned down, some only 20 meters away. Make your run-in heading 240 degrees, pull out left. Do not, repeat, DO NOT drop south of the ravine. If you can keep them down for ten minutes, our tanks will be there to evacuate the wounded and give fire support. Drop one bomb on your first pass and I will adjust. Hold the napalm until I call for it."

The first snake eye 250-pound bomb, delivered by Capt Martinsen, a former infantry platoon commander with more than 200 Phantom missions to his credit, exploded at the bottom of the ravine, showering friendly troops with dirt and bits of shrapnel. As he pulled up, he could see the tanks churning up red dust as they advanced from 400 meters south.

"Hold high and dry while I check with the ground commander," the TACA

ordered. Then ... “He wants you to move the bombs over to the north bank of the ravine to ensure that his men will not pick up any fragments. Try to seal off the entrances to the ravine on the north side. Number two, we want your napalm right down in the ravine, one can at a time.”

Capt Martinsen then dropped his bombs, two per run, on the north side of the small canyon. Maj “Big John” Hubner, a former test pilot with more than 4,400 hours in the air, including test flights in the F-111, followed each bombing run with his napalm. The two aircraft maintained a tight pattern and from below it seemed that there was always a menacing, drooped Phantom nose pointed at the enemy and coming at close to 600 miles per hour.

“When you see the napalm come off my plane,” Maj Hubner advised the TACA, “tell the company commander to have his troops hold their breath. Oxygen will be scarce down there for a few seconds after the explosion, working this close.”

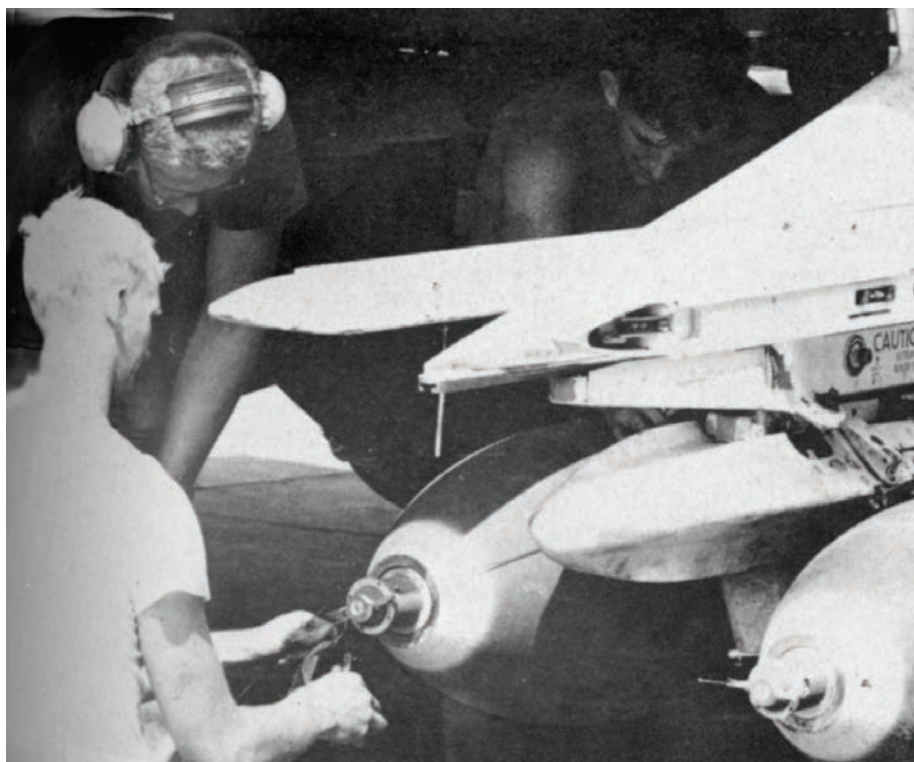
For 15 minutes the two planes kept the pressure on the enemy, and when their ordnance was expended, another section of Phantoms took over. Not a Marine on the ground was injured, though they felt the searing heat of the napalm time after time as they held their breath. Spent shrapnel from the bomb blasts fell harmlessly in the dust about them.

By mid-morning, aided by the tanks and flight after flight of Phantoms, the company had evacuated the wounded, consolidated its position, and was out of trouble. The fire from the two enemy battalions had been silenced, and the remnants of the shattered units waited for nightfall to retreat northward. Seven Marine Phantoms had been hit by ground fire. One did not return.

Place: VMFA-542 hangar and flight line. Unit: Maintenance Department, “Tiger Squadron.” Mission: Keep the Phantoms in the air.

Early last fall, enemy artillery and rockets were pounding the Marine outpost at Con Thien with more than 1,000 rounds per day. Fuel storage areas had been ignited and burned out, and many installations had been hit. Leading national magazines called it the “cone of fire.” It was the hottest spot in the Vietnam War.

Marine aviation prepared an all-out effort to relieve the pressure on Con Thien. The main runway at Chu Lai, home of the Phantoms of MAG-13 and the Skyhawks and Intruders of MAG-12, was undergoing temporary repairs. The Phantoms were forced to use the taxiway for takeoffs



An ordnanceman armed one of the 500-pound bombs used to blast VC bunkers on Hill 881.

and a temporary crosswind runway for landings; the latter was not equipped for night operations, and the Tigers were restricted to emergency missions only from sunset until dawn. Even these had to land at Da Nang and return home during daylight hours.

Nevertheless, in response to the Con Thien effort (called Operation Neutralize), the VMFA-542 Aircraft Maintenance Department rose to new heights. On September 9, Cpl Timothy S. Douglas, maintenance control messenger, stayed on his bicycle for 18 consecutive hours, riding between the hangar, flight line, fuel pits, avionics shops, and ordnance shack—passing the word verbally in the absence of other communications.

Cpl Richard C. Glazar and his fellow “supersonic propulsion maintenance specialists” in the engine shop removed an engine damaged by an enemy round

causes in hydraulic systems) changed two main pumps and associated components in one hour flat, usually a five-hour task. SSgt Tom Wells’ day crew of eight plane captains launched, recovered, refueled, and re-launched eight aircraft on 34 missions during the day—more than four per aircraft, and all within 11 hours.

During this same 11-hour period, SSgt Alfaro’s ordnance crew of six men loaded 172,000 pounds of explosives—86 tons. When the mechanical loaders broke down, they loaded by hand. Early in the afternoon, with the temperature climbing well past 100 degrees, they loaded 12 bombs by hand in three minutes and 37 seconds to get an emergency mission off on time.

Within a few days, the incoming rounds on Con Thien had been cut to a trickle. Operation Neutralize was a success.

The average age of the enlisted men in VMFA-542 at this time was 19 years.

Their spirit was best described in the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing’s Certificate of Commendation to the Tiger Squadron” which stated in part: “... The outstanding close air support provided by members of this squadron is highly commendable. The aggressive spirit which pervades this organization reflects the professionalism, initiative, self-sacrifice, and devotion to duty that exists throughout ...”

Charlie Cong may have worried about tigers in his back yard for years, but this was the first time he had to worry about them flying over it! 🐅

In response to the Con Thien effort (called Operation Neutralize), the VMFA-542 Aircraft Maintenance Department rose to new heights.

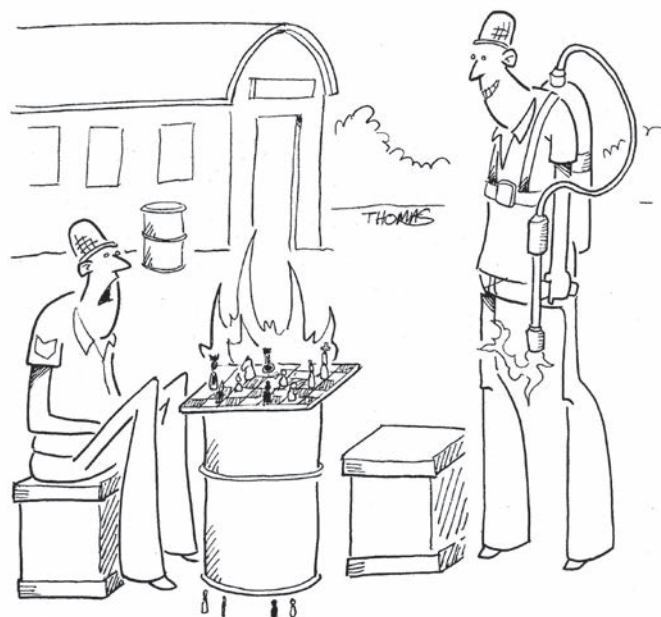
in less than three hours. A new engine was installed, and the aircraft flew in mid-afternoon. This job normally takes two days.

SSgt Clark D. Whitlow’s hydraulics men (known as the “world’s greatest bubble chasers” because of the trouble air

Leatherneck Laffs



"This is the Marine Corps. We don't hand out participation awards for finishing the 'O' Course."



"I didn't see that move coming."



"He's the new hand-to-hand combat instructor."



"There's only 30 Marines stationed here, but thanks to Photoshop the enemy will never know that."

Marine talk through the years

World War II

"Let's hit the beach!"



Korean War

"Let's take that hill!"



Vietnam War

"Let's hit that ville!"



Global War on COVID

"Let's flatten the curve!"



"OK, all you trees that aren't trees, fall out!"



"I actually don't issue orders to Twentynine Palms, Corporal."



No Better Friend

Animals are Companions to Marines Serving in Every Clime

Compiled by Patricia Everett

Marines are often known for their toughness and resolve, but there's nothing like an animal to bring out the softer side of even the most battle-hardened of all. From dogs and cats to monkeys and ducks, animals have brought comfort and joy to Marines in war zones, on deployments, or during difficult situations and have helped lower stress and anxiety and even ease loneliness. They provide emotional support and companionship to leathernecks far from home, and some have even made their way from across the world to the U.S., where they've become cherished four-legged family members of Marines and their loved ones.

Leatherneck has gathered these heart-warming photos of Marines and the animals they have befriended in combat, during training exercises, or in other lucky encounters.



LCpl Kowshon Ye, a combat videographer with 1st Bn, 5th Marines, Regimental Combat Team 8, befriended this kitten after conducting a raid in the village of Sareagar in Sangin, Afghanistan, Aug. 13, 2011.
(Photo by SN Jordan Baker, USN)

PFC Jordan Mills, a 1/3 combat engineer, works with the mule he trained with at the Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center in Bridgeport, Calif., Sept. 23, 2005. Most of the Marines in the battalion were not used to being around animals. LCpl James Bragg, a 1/3 tow gunner said, "I was scared to death they were going to stomp on me or attack me or something," but by the end of training the fear had turned to respect. (Photo by LCpl Stephen Kwietniak, USMC)





Cpl Kyle Click, an improvised explosive device detection dog handler with "Kilo" Co, 3rd Bn, 3rd Marine Regiment, pets his dog, Windy, while waiting to resume a security patrol in Garmsir District, Helmand Province, Afghanistan, Feb. 27, 2012. (Photo by Cpl Reece Lodder, USMC)



A small puppy wandered up to Marines of "Alpha" Co, 1st Bn, 6th Marines, in Marjah, Afghanistan, Jan. 6, 2009. After the puppy followed the Marines for many miles, a soft-hearted leatherneck picked it up and carried it in his drop pouch. (Photo by Cpl Charles T. Mabry II, USMC)



Sgt Frank Praytor cared for "Miss Hap" since she was two weeks old. Praytor first came to the rescue of the little ball of fur after its mother was killed by a mortar barrage near Bunker Hill in Korea. In the early stages of adoption, he fed the kitten with canned milk from a medicine dropper. The sergeant named the animal Miss Hap because, "She was born at the wrong time and the wrong place." (USMC photo)



Lt John Chizzini gets expert advice on "gorilla" warfare from LCpl Just-in Case, the mammalian mascot of several Marine helicopter squadrons based at Da Nang airfield during the Vietnam War. (USMC photo)



A Marine with 1st Bn, 6th Marines passes time by playing with a puppy that wandered up to resting leathernecks on March 22, 2010, in Marjah, Afghanistan. Marines nicknamed the puppy "Gile" and kept him around for a few days before having to push out farther into Marjah. (Photo by Cpl Charles T. Mabry II, USMC)



LCpl Chesty XV, left, the outgoing official Marine Corps mascot, Recruit Chesty XVI, the incoming official Marine Corps mascot, and SSgt Tate M. McDonald, mascot handler, at Marine Barracks Washington, D.C., pose for a photo on Jan. 19. The English Bulldog became the official mascot of the Marine Corps after World War I, when the Marines at Belleau Wood were referred to as "Devil Dogs." (Photo by Cpl Mark A. Morales, USMC)



Siwash the duck followed Marines of A/1/10 on amphibious landings at Tarawa, Saipan and Tinian. The battalion commander, LtCol Presley M. Rixey, presented Siwash with a Purple Heart and a commendation for courageous action and wounds received on Tarawa in 1943. Legend has it that Siwash was particularly fond of drinking beer and on Saturday nights he would get drunk but was up in time for reveille on Sunday mornings. (Photo courtesy of National Museum of the Pacific War)

SSgt Norm T. Hatch gives a drink of water to a thirsty kitten during the Battle of Tarawa in 1943. The kitten had survived despite the thousands of tons of explosives that hit Betio. It was reluctant to leave the protection of the damaged Japanese tank, but the water finally enticed it out. (Photo courtesy of Maj Norm T. Hatch, USMC (Ret))



LCpl Matthew Scofield, left, and LCpl Jarrett Hatley, in the blanket, slumber alongside Hatley's improvised explosive device detection dog, Blue. The three got some shut eye after clearing compounds with Afghan National Security Forces soldiers during Operation Tagueer Shamal (Shifting Winds), Jan. 4, 2012, in the central Helmand River Valley. The trio were members of "Lima" Co, 3rd Bn, 3rd Marine Regiment. (Photo by Cpl Reece Lodder, USMC)

This photo of Cpl Ed Burckhardt, assigned to 5th Joint Assault Signal Co, 2/28, and the kitten was published in the May 1995 issue of *Leatherneck*.

After *Leatherneck*'s longtime production coordinator, Patty Everett, mentioned how much she enjoyed the photo, then-Managing Editor, Tom Bartlett, contacted Cpl Burckhardt and asked for a copy. Not only did Cpl Burckhardt send an autographed copy of the photo, but he also wrote a letter about that particular day. The letter reads:

"I was a corporal at the time we landed on Iwo Jima @ 0930, February 19, 1945. On February 23, 1945, the day after we secured Mt. Suribachi, I saw this kitten roaming around. I fixed some food from my 'C' rations and condensed milk for the kitten.

It was about this time that Joe Rosenthal, (who took the famous flag raising picture) was taking many pictures ... including the one of me with the kitten. I remember him asking if I had a name for the kitten. I said, 'No,' and he said, 'How does Suribachi Sue sound?' I said, 'That is as good as any.'" (Photo by Joe Rosenthal)



1stSgt Neil I. Shober shares bananas with a native goat, one of the few animals to survive the terrific naval and air bombardment prior to Marines hitting the beach on the island of Saipan. (Photo courtesy of National Museum of the Pacific War)

SEA STORY OF THE MONTH

Odd Last Names

In 1972 I was assigned to the minefield maintenance team at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. The team was composed of an officer in charge (OIC) who was a limited duty officer captain, a gunnery sergeant, two staff sergeants and approximately 10 sergeants. All of us were Vietnam veterans and had various experience working with demolitions and conducting mine and booby trap sweeps. This was the tightest group of Marines I have ever had the privilege of working with. We worked hard and we played hard.

I was there about a month when I was instructed by our OIC to visit the Navy photo unit along with six other sergeants to have our pictures taken for the Staff Sergeant Promotion Board. It was strange but at the time, all of the sergeants had odd last names.

We donned our class "C" uniforms and boarded our assigned minefield maintenance vehicle. Arriving at the photo unit we all checked in with a female Navy petty officer second class. She told us all to get in line, then come to her desk and state our last name. I was the first in line and as I approached her, she asked, "Last name?" I sounded off and said, "Wing." She then said, "Next" and Sergeant Coke sounded off. She paused and gave us a strange look. Next up was Sgt Silva. He sounded off, "Silva" and she gave us another look and took a deep breath. Then came Sgt Angel. He sounded off "Angel." Her look was priceless. Next up was Sgt Marine. He stepped forward

and sounded off, "Marine." The petty officer said, "I know you are a Marine, but I want your last name." "Marine," Sgt Marine repeated. She responded with, "OK, all of you show me your ID cards." She looked at our IDs, turned a couple shades of pale, and shook her head. The last sergeant's name was Malone.

This is a true story, and we all had many laughs. The Navy WAVE is probably still talking about it.

CWO-3 Jack Wing, USMC
(Ret)
Apopka, Fla.

Feasting in the Field

I was in Korea assigned to F/2/12 but attached to K/3/9 as a forward observer for Operation Team Spirit in 1978. One Sunday we went to the mountains north of Pohang for an extended field exercise. We were told to take two days of C-rats since we would be resupplied by helicopter. The C-rats we had were dated from the 1950s and I rarely ate the canned meat, usually only the fruit and crackers. For some reason the only fruit in this particular lot was applesauce. I had eaten applesauce the previous weeks and now I had

applesauce for this week as well.

Monday afternoon it started snowing and the clouds covered the hills, so no helicopters were coming for resupply. The bad weather continued into Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday with no food. Finally, the weather cleared, and the helicopters hovered and dropped cases of C-rats off the ramp; brand new

We had all started eating our meals when we received a call on the radio that someone had gotten sick from the new food, and we needed to turn it back in.

C-rats with peaches, pears, and fruit cocktail! We had all started eating our meals when we received a call on the radio that someone had gotten sick from the new food, and we needed to turn it back in. We each tossed the unopened cans into a pile.

Throwing out such good fruit seemed like a waste to

me, so I decided to take a chance. I figured that some of the meat was probably bad, but I couldn't be sure. I collected some of the new fruit cans and put them in my pack and then asked the Marines around me if they had eaten any of the new food. I found someone who had eaten peaches, someone who had eaten pears, and someone who had eaten fruit cocktail. I watched them for a day to see if they got sick and when they didn't, I ate the new fruit. Later we found out it had been the meat that was spoiled; meanwhile I was feasting in the field.

Capt Steve Schenk
USMC, 1976-1985
Dayton, Ohio

The Last Laugh

Shortly after arriving in Japan in the spring of 1957, I learned that my battalion, 3rd Battalion, 9th Marines, had recently completed a training exercise which involved climbing Mount Fujiyama. Disappointed that I had missed out on the climb, I let it be known that I would like to take a group of Marines who, like me, had missed out. I found out that there were nine others so I requested permission to do the climb the following weekend. The battalion arranged to get us a vehicle for the trip to the launching point on Mount Fuji and gave us permission to wear utilities for the climb.

We reached the staging area for the start of the climb about 2 p.m. on Saturday. While waiting to begin the climb, we saw an old papasan who was nearly bent under the load of two cases of Nippon Beer. We were told that he was going to carry the beer to the top of Mount Fuji which had an elevation of 12,395 feet. As



1stLt Steve Schenk, XO, Fox Battery, 2nd Bn, 12th Marines, poses next to a Howitzer on Okinawa during the summer of 1978.

COURTESY OF CAPT STEVE SCHENK

we walked by the papasan, I said, "We'll wait for you at the top, papasan." He smiled although I didn't know if he understood what I had said.

As we began our climb, we soon discovered that there were several stations where we could get a brand burned onto our Fuji sticks indicating that we had reached each level. We also learned that we could buy refreshments (beer). Needless to say, we indulged at each station.

When we reached the summit, it was getting dark and we saw the old papasan relieved of his burden who appeared to be waiting for us. He smiled from ear to ear as he saw us arriving, suggesting that he knew what I had said to him about us beating him to the top. The last laugh was on us.

SSgt Paul E. Gill
USMC, 1954-1966
Shippensburg, Pa.

Extra Training Didn't Work

We had completed the first phase of our boot camp training and prepared to move to the rifle range for the second phase. The drill instructors (DIs) were teaching us recruits proper etiquette for passing Marines on the left by requesting, "By your leave." I had been on the DIs' radar since receiving and received extra training from DI Sgt Burns.

Sgt Burns was standing outside the head supervising recruits cleaning their weapons. As I came out of the head and passed by Sgt Burns, I requested, "By your *sleeve*, Sir." "STOP worm!" bellowed DI Burns. "What did you say to me?" I repeated what I had said and again received extra training. The platoon heard our exchange and I committed myself to doing better in the future.

Cpl R.C. McNally Jr.
USMC, 1976-1980
Walla Walla, Wash.

Encounter With The Blue Angels

It was June 1958. My reserve rifle company out of Charleston, S.C., flew to Naval Air Station Corpus Christi, Texas for annual field training. We were flown from Charleston in two antiquated C-119s scheduled for scrapping. After we arrived, the planes were ordered to support the Marines landing in Lebanon, so they were reassembled and active-duty Marines from the air station, including those from the base guard mount, were deployed. Our company's schedule was changed as we filled gaps left by the deployment.

Our weekend in Texas was open liberty from noon on Saturday. I planned to leave at noon but a few minutes before 12 p.m., First Sergeant Rhodes announced that I had guard duty. I had to go to an aircraft hangar

**I walked the hangar
and studied the
Blue Angel planes.
I had been on guard
for 40 minutes when
a couple with a
young Naval officer ...
appeared.**

and report to a major. Uniform was utilities, cartridge belt and M1.

At the hangar, the major sat alone in a jeep waiting for me. "Private Whitten?" he asked. "Yes, Sir!" I answered while offering a rifle salute. I had the M1 at sling arms. He returned the salute. "I know you were ready for liberty and I'm sorry to have to call on you for help, but my guard mount was reduced to nearly zero with the deployment. I'm corporal of the guard because there is no one else to do it. I'm guarding this

hangar. The planes the Blue Angels will fly in today's air show are housed here until show time. I have to check the other mounts, and someone has to watch these planes. You know I am desperate if I have to ask the first sergeant of the reserve company training here for help." "Yes, Sir. I'm glad to help. What are my orders?" "Allow no one entry, no one. If President Eisenhower shows up, keep him out but call the corporal of the guard." He handed me a World War II-era walkie talkie. "Use your judgment. Call me if you think it necessary. Got it?" "Yes, Sir!" He smiled, cranked the engine, and drove away.

I walked the hangar and studied the Blue Angel planes. I had been on guard for 40 minutes when a couple with a young Naval officer, a lieutenant junior grade, appeared at the entrance to the hangar. The wings pinned onto his shirt told me he was probably one of the Angels. "Can I help you?" I asked as I saluted.

The officer returned the salute and said, "I want to show my parents my plane. Can I do that?" I replied, "I'm not allowed to let anyone into this hangar but I'm sure the major who is in charge here will open it to you. I'll call him and he'll be here in a few minutes."

I stepped away and called the corporal of the guard and gave him a run down. He said he was on the way. I took that news to the family. "Is that rifle loaded?" the lady asked. "No, ma'am. The Marines would never trust an unsupervised private first class with a loaded weapon. The walkie talkie is my only weapon." They laughed and the major arrived. I stepped away and he talked with the visitors. When they disappeared into the hangar, the major approached me. "Well done, Whitten. You handled that well. When I asked your first sergeant for help, I told him I needed a

man with a brain, and he said he only had one."

My company had a man with a brain? I wondered who it was and why Sgt Rhodes sent me rather than him.

Dr. David O. Whitten
USMCR, 1957-1963
Sullivan's Island, S.C.

I Was Determined to Get That Pot of Gold

In March of 1983, I was a month and a half away from graduation and my platoon was at the rifle range at Camp Pendleton, Calif. As we marched back from the range, it was raining and our drill instructor, Cpl Painovich, halted the platoon and yelled, "Recruit Johnson!" I immediately got out of the platoon, double-timed it in front of my drill instructor and reported, "Recruit Johnson, Sir!" Cpl Painovich then told me, "About face! Johnson, do you see the rainbow?" "Sir, yes, Sir!" I replied. "Good," he said. "Now. Go get me the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow!"

I took off not knowing how far I was going to go or what was happening. I just ran to the rainbow. It seemed like forever and then I heard the platoon yell, "Recruit Johnson."

I ran back to Cpl Painovich. "Sir, Recruit Johnson reporting as ordered!" "Get back in the platoon," he said. Surely a test. I still laugh at this.

Cpl Jeffrey Johnson
Riverside, Calif.

Do you have any interesting stories 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 membership for the "Sea Story of the Month." 🦁

In Memoriam

Compiled by Nancy S. Lichtman
and Col Mary H. Reinwald, USMC (Ret)



COURTESY OF LTCOL DAVID L. ALTHOFF, USMC (RET)

LtCol David L. Althoff, 89, of Sun Lakes, Ariz. He enlisted in the Navy as a Naval Aviation Cadet and was later commissioned a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps. He retired after 20 years of service, during which he flew dozens of different types of aircraft. As a CH-46 helicopter pilot in Vietnam, he flew more than 1,000 combat missions and was shot down four times. His personal awards include three Silver Stars, four Distinguished Flying Crosses, the Bronze Star with combat "V" and 54 Air Medals. According to his Silver Star citation, on Feb. 2, 1968, while on a mission to extract an eight-man reconnaissance team in adverse weather conditions and facing heavy enemy fire, he "landed near the Marines. As the team moved to board his aircraft, Major Althoff directed the delivery of accurate suppressive fire ... enabling the Marines to safely embark ... he was able to lift out of the hazardous zone" but received increasing enemy fire which damaged the helicopter. "Despite the severe battle damage, he skillfully maneuvered the aircraft to Dong Ha," the citation reads. He was the first helicopter pilot to receive the Alfred A. Cunningham Award as the Marine Aviator of the Year in 1968. To read more about LtCol Althoff's career, see "An Incredible Tale of Bravery Under Fire" in the January 2014 issue of *Leatherneck* in our archives.

Col Robert E. "Bob" Barde, 97, of Mount Dora, Fla. The son of a Marine, he was commissioned during World War II. He later commanded a battalion commander and served in Vietnam. An

expert marksman, he wrote the book "History of Marine Corps Competitive Marksmanship." He retired after 28 years of service and began a career in academia.

Russell H. Barker, 88, of French-Lomas, Neb. He served from 1953-1955, to include a tour in Korea.

MSgt Russell E. Booker, 69, of Cape Girardeau, Mo. His more than 20 years of service included tours in Adak, Alaska, and on the drill field at MCRD San Diego. He also served in Washington, D.C.

Thomas R. Bougher, 72, of Hoquiam, Wash. He served as a Marine for seven years including a tour in Vietnam. After working as a metal fabricator, he worked for the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs. He was a member of the DAV, VFW and Vietnam Veterans of America.

Ronald E. Boyd, 81, of Winter Springs, Fla. He enlisted in the Marine Corps and had a long career in the computer industry. He volunteered with the Winter Springs Police Department and Seminole County Sheriff's Office after retiring.

Darrell R. Breider, 89, in Ro Rancho, N.M. He received three Purple Hearts during his tour in Korea.

Cpl Eugene P. Christie, 98, of Bradenton, Fla. He was raised in an orphanage, leaving when he was old enough to enlist in the Marine Corps. During WW II he saw action on Iwo Jima while assigned to the 28th Marines, 5thMarDiv.

MGySgt Lawrence E. DeYott, 57, in Fredericksburg, Va. He retired after a 33-year career as an infantry Marine. He was

an instructor at the School of Infantry-West and deployed multiple times in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. Other assignments included detachment commander for the Marine Security Detachment in UAE and Botswana. He was the senior enlisted advisor at Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory. His awards include the Legion of Merit, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (fourth award) and Combat Action Ribbon.

SSgt Kenneth E. Dower, 94, of San Diego, Calif. He enlisted in the Navy during WW II at the age of 17. In 1948, he joined the Marine Corps and served from 1948-1952. He was assigned to Hqtrs Bn, 1stMarDiv during the Korean War and saw action at the Chosin Reservoir. He later had a 35-year career as a federal employee in military intelligence. After his retirement from civil service, he worked in the Space Systems Division of General Dynamics.

GySgt Robert E. Goetz, 95, of San Luis Obispo, Calif. A World War II Marine, he served on Saipan and Okinawa and with the occupation troops in Nagasaki. He also served in Korea and Cuba. His Marine Corps career spanned two wars and included service in four Marine Divisions.

Kenneth L. Holland, 64, of Hamilton, Ohio. After serving in the Marine Corps, he spent a career as a firefighter with the Hamilton Fire Department.

Andrew "Chico" Jeffers Jr., 68, of Paducah, Ky. He was a Marine who served in Vietnam and later as an iron worker. He was a member of the MCL.

Col Kenneth "Ken" Jordan, 83, of San Diego, Calif. He began his 27-year career in 1961 after graduating from Sam Houston State University where he was captain of the track and field team.

He completed two tours in Vietnam with 3rd Force Recon Co, 3rdMarDiv. He was the recipient of the Silver Star for his actions on Jan. 13, 1967, while leading an 11-man reconnaissance patrol in a remote jungle area in enemy territory. The team was inserted by helicopter to locate a Viet Cong prisoner of war camp where it was reported that four American servicemen were being held captive. After avoiding contact with the enemy for several days as they moved through thick jungle area, the patrol reached the suspected POW camp only to find it had recently been abandoned.

According to the award citation, “while members of the patrol prepared to photograph the camp site, an undetermined number of Viet Cong attempted to penetrate the unit’s perimeter security force. Reacting instantly and aggressively, the enemy was taken under fire and killed as they approached to within 10 meters of the security elements. Quickly organizing his unit for a rapid withdrawal ... Captain Jordan prepared fake trails, waded in streams and utilized other ruses in an attempt to mislead and confuse any enemy forces that might have been alerted to their presence by the rifle and small arms fire.”

Then-Capt Jordan and his Marines were safely extracted from the area by helicopter.

After his 1988 retirement, he worked for 15 years in human resources. He was a member of the MCA, MOAA and the USMC Force Recon Association.

Sgt Keith R. Koepke, 66, of Wickliffe, Ohio. He was assigned to 3rd Marine Air Wing in El Toro, Calif., and Iwakuni, Japan. He was a member and past commandant of the MCL Pvt Henry Kalinowski Detachment.

Bruce J. Madrid, 66, of Albuquerque, N.M. He served in the Marine Corps for four years.

PFC Wendell Perkins, 97, of Lodi, Calif. He was a machine gunner assigned to Co A, 1st Bn, 6th Marines, 2ndMarDiv and saw action during the Battle of Tarawa. He was featured in the November 2020 issue of *Leatherneck* in the article “Until They All Come Home: History Flight is Dedicated to Locating, Excavating Remains of Missing Marines.” Perkins was an avid supporter of the History Flight mission to recover the missing remains of the Marines who fought alongside him on Betio.

Donna C. Pettengill, 64, in Lake Havasu City, Ariz. Her career as a financial analyst included service in both the Marine Corps and the Defense Finance and Accounting Service.

Cpl Ronald G. Pittenger, 75, of Melbourne, Fla. He completed boot camp at Parris Island in 1964 and then trained as a radio repairman. He served a tour in Vietnam. He later had a career in retail management and enjoyed writing and publishing short stories.

Sgt Alan “Buddy” Roddick III, 91, of Salinas, Calif. He served as a machine gunner and later had a career in law enforcement.

Ronald B. “Ron” Schlotfeldt, 75, of Hillsdale, Ill. He served in Vietnam and retired from Rock Island Arsenal.

Nicholas J. “Nick” Shannon Sr., 91, of Bentonville, Va. He enlisted when he was 18 and served in the Korean War. He saw action at the Chosin Reservoir and was the recipient of the Bronze Star with combat “V.” He later had a career in law enforcement.

Mark J. Stallsmith, 67, of Green Bay, Wis. He was a trumpet player in the 1stMarDiv band at MCB Camp Pendleton.

LCpl Gary D. Strege, 72, of Green Bay, Wis. He enlisted after high school and later had a career in the paper industry.

Thelma K. Tryon, 99, of Spokane, Wash. She served in the Women’s Reserve during World War II as an aviation technician at Camp Lejeune, N.C. She later worked at IBM.

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, n.lichtman@mca-marines.org.



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Passing the Word

Compiled by Sara W. Bock

Make the Connection: Online Resource Aims to Reach Struggling Veterans

June is Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Awareness Month, but for those active-duty and veteran servicemembers who deal with invisible wounds caused by traumatic brain injuries or stressful events, the need for support and resources exists year-round.

In response to this need, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) developed “Make the Connection,” a national public awareness campaign rooted in the idea that hearing the personal stories of fellow veterans who have navigated similar struggles may be one of the best ways to encourage at-risk individuals to seek help. The resource itself is simple yet profound, featuring a growing compilation of video narratives in which veterans candidly share their own personal mental health journeys.

“Our hope is that these stories can show other veterans who may be struggling that they are not alone—and knowing that they are not alone will give them the ‘nudge’ to seek mental health treatment,” said Marine veteran Hana Romer, who works as an outreach consultant for the program.

Make the Connection, which can be accessed at www.maketheconnection.net, is a searchable database through which veterans can narrow down these personal stories based on service era, branch, gender and combat experience, allowing them to easily locate videos of others with similar experiences. The interactive site also makes it easy for veterans and their families to connect with information and mental health resources available to them. For more information, visit www.maketheconnection.net.



Sara W. Bock

Commissaries and Exchanges Honor Vietnam Veterans

Numerous commissaries and exchanges worldwide conducted recognition events for Vietnam War Veterans Day, March 29, to honor veterans, surviving spouses and their families. Vietnam-era veterans who served from Nov. 1, 1955, to May 15, 1975, and attended the events received commemorative lapel pins.

At the commissary aboard Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., Colonel Michael L. Brooks, the base commander,

gave remarks and visited with the Vietnam veterans in attendance.

According to Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA) Director and CEO Bill Moore, it is only right that commissaries join the nation in recognizing the service and sacrifice of Vietnam War-era veterans and their families.

“When our nation called, they answered,” Moore said. “We at DeCA are privileged to acknowledge their proud legacy of service. We also want to continue welcoming the millions of eligible veterans and their caregivers who are now authorized to shop on base.”

Approximately 9 million U.S. servicemembers served on active duty during the Vietnam War era. Out of the 2.7 million U.S. servicemembers who served in Vietnam, more than 58,000 were killed and more than 304,000 were wounded.

Vietnam Veterans Day was established by presidential proclamation in 2012, which led to the start of annual observance events in 2014. The Vietnam War Veterans Recognition Act of 2017 further established the events as a national observance to recognize Vietnam-era veterans for their service.

At DeCA, supporting the military is

part of the DNA of its workforce with more than 65 percent of commissary employees having a direct connection to the military as a veteran, retiree, military family member or reservist.

“We appreciate the opportunity to serve our military veterans because we’re in essence, honoring family. My dad was a Vietnam combat vet, so this is personal for me. He became disabled as a result of his service like so many of his fellow Vietnam veterans. They deserve the honor and respect of our nation for their selfless service and sacrifice in that war,” Moore said. “On this special day, March 29, we are taking the time out to honor our Vietnam War-era veterans [...] And for any of those vets who are disabled and can shop in our stores, we want to reach out to them and let them know the commissary is here to deliver savings on their grocery bill.”

Kevin Robinson

DOD: Wearable Sensors May Be Future Option for Assessing Exposure to Toxins

The Defense Department, military services and Department of Veterans Affairs are taking measures to assess the effects of airborne hazards, including



CPL ERIC HUYNH, USMC

Col Michael L. Brooks, the commanding officer of MCB Quantico, Va., shakes hands with retired Marine MGySgt Jeremiah Burns, a Vietnam War veteran, at the base commissary, March 29. In recognition of National Vietnam War Veterans Day, commissaries and exchanges on military installations across the globe hosted special events and ceremonies.



CPL ALFRED V. LOPEZ, USMC

Marines dispose of trash in a burn pit in the Khan Neshin District of Afghanistan in March 2012. Recognizing the dangerous effects of airborne hazards, including open burn pits, the DOD is exploring the possibility of using wearable sensors to evaluate an individual servicemember's exposure to toxins.

open burn pits, on the health of current and veteran servicemembers who may have been exposed while deployed overseas in places like Iraq and Afghanistan.

In March, Capitol Hill lawmakers expressed interest in an idea that military services might one day evaluate an individual servicemember's exposure to toxins using wearable sensors rather than with the kinds of static sensors being used today.

"We're very interested in wearables," said Dr. Terry Rauch, the acting deputy assistant secretary of defense for health readiness policy and oversight. "The reason is because our emphasis, our focus really needs to be on individual exposure monitoring."

Speaking before the Senate Armed Services Committee's subcommittee on personnel, Rauch said wearable technology may allow the department to one day more closely monitor an individual's precise exposure to health-affecting toxins in a way that's not currently possible.

"If we can't figure out what the dose of the exposure was and what they were

exposed to, then it's very difficult to capture their response," he said.

Captain Brian L. Feldman, USN, the commander of the Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center, told lawmakers the Navy is already looking at such wearable technology for use on submarines.

"One unique thing that Navy medicine is doing with research and development [is that] we've got some very robust submarine atmospheric monitoring, quite a robust and safe program. And R&D [research and development] is looking at silicone bands—wearables—so that you can get individual-level exposure data on a submarine," Feldman said.

When it comes to better understanding how servicemembers will react to exposure to toxins, such as those produced by exposure to burn pits, fuels, solvents or even dust and sand, Rauch said it's also important for the services to know how an individual servicemember's personal health habits and history might affect his or her response.

"In addition to wearables, we need to understand more about how the individual

responds to environmental exposures," Rauch said. "What risks do they bring [and] other background lifestyle factors, such as smoking a pack a day before you deploy, [as well as] other lifestyle factors or even what genetic background individuals bring. We need to understand those because they're going to have an impact, and science isn't there, yet, but we're pursuing it."

Rauch also said the DOD is working with the VA on a variety of tools to better inform health care providers about what a servicemember's past exposure to toxins might be.

One such tool—the Individual Longitudinal Exposure Record—is expected to reach full operational capability in 2023. It allows medical professionals to match an individual servicemember's or veteran's location data, such as where and when they were deployed, against existing databases that document exposure risks so doctors can get a better picture of what a patient might have been exposed to.

"The department remains committed to continually improving our understanding

of exposures of concern and potential health effects in order to prevent and mitigate exposures and clinically assess, treat and care for our servicemembers and veterans,” Rauch said.

C. Todd Lopez

Convenience: TRICARE Pharmacy Offers Home Delivery Option

Are you regularly filling a prescription for a medical condition? If you are, choosing the right pharmacy option can save you a great deal of time and money. For many TRICARE beneficiaries, the cheapest, most convenient option is TRICARE Pharmacy Home Delivery.

“Home delivery is a smart option for people who take maintenance drugs,” said Lieutenant Colonel Melissa Yates, USAF, a pharmacist with the Defense Health Agency’s Pharmacy Operations Division. “Maintenance medications are drugs you take regularly for chronic conditions, like high blood pressure. Other short-term use drugs should be obtained from a military or retail network pharmacy. This way, you can begin therapy as soon as possible.”

Yates said patients may want to think about switching to home delivery because it is safe and reliable.

TRICARE Pharmacy Home Delivery will ship to any address in the U.S. or



JASON BORTZ

TRICARE Pharmacy Home Delivery is the cheapest, most convenient pharmacy option for beneficiaries who take maintenance drugs for chronic conditions.

U.S. territories, including APO/FPO addresses. Express Scripts, the TRICARE pharmacy contractor, ships millions of prescriptions each year with greater than 99.99% accuracy. Your prescription will arrive in tamper-evident, weatherproof packages.

Home delivery is the least expensive TRICARE pharmacy option after military pharmacies, and standard shipping is free. Home delivery also offers up to a 90-day supply for a single copayment. At retail network pharmacies, three copayments

are required to get a 90-day supply.

As outlined in the TRICARE Pharmacy Program Handbook, all beneficiaries in the U.S. must get certain maintenance drugs filled through home delivery or at a military pharmacy. If you fill these maintenance drugs at a retail pharmacy, the pharmacy will only fill your prescription twice at the TRICARE copayment rate. After that, you’ll pay 100 percent of the cost.

Another perk is that pharmacists are always available to help, Yates said.

Have questions about your prescription? At Express Scripts, a team of pharmacists is available 24/7 through your online account or the Express Scripts mobile app. They can answer questions about possible side effects, dosages and more.

Eligible prescriptions can be enrolled or disenrolled in automatic refills at any time. Express Scripts will ask you to provide your consent to continue receiving automatic refills.

If you’re filling a prescription drug regularly, see if you can have it delivered right to your door with home delivery. To learn more, visit <https://www.tricare.mil/homedelivery>.

TRICARE



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- no private mortgage insurance required
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Learn more at navyfederal.org/valoan, call us at 888-842-6328 or stop by our local branch.

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FEDERAL**
Credit Union



Insured by NCUA. Product features subject to approval. Available for purchase loans only. Loans are subject to an additional funding fee, which may be financed up the max loan amount. ¹The cash-back bonus is offered in most states and is available for individual sales and purchases of property; offer limited to one cash-back bonus per property with no limit on the amount of times you may use the program. In some states, a gift card or commission credit at closing may be provided in lieu of the cash-back bonus. The program is not available in IA or outside the U.S. Cash-back bonus is not available in AK or OK. In KS and TN, a gift card with preloaded points that are ready for spending at specified retail establishments after closing will be issued. State regulations in KS limit the dollar amounts and the type of incentive. In MS, NJ, and OR, a commission reduction may be available at closing. Please check with the program coordinator for details. This is not a solicitation if you are already represented by a real estate broker. The cash-back bonus is only available with the purchase or sale of your home through the use of a program-referred and -approved real estate agent. The size of your cash-back award depends on the value of the property you are buying or selling. Obtaining the full \$9,000 cash-back award requires transacting in a property valued at \$3 million or greater. To calculate the size of your potential cash back, please visit the RealtyPlus website: <https://realestateperk.com/RealtyPlus/>. All real estate transactions are negotiable. Contact RealtyPlus for terms and conditions. Standard listing fees apply. The program award is not available in certain transactions with restricted agent commissions (including many new construction, For Sale by Owner, or For Sale by iBuyer transactions). Your assigned agent can help you identify any transactions where the award would not be available. This program is offered, in part, by Realego Lead Management Services, Inc. d/b/a Realego Leads Group (RLG). RLG may receive a co-operative brokerage fee as a result of a referral to the real estate companies listed above. Program terms and conditions are subject to change at any time without notice. Additional terms, conditions, and restrictions apply.

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Reunions

• **1stMarDiv Assn. (75th annual reunion)**, Aug. 13-20, Washington, D.C. Contact June Cormier, (760) 763-3268, june.oldbreed@fmدا.us.

• **USMC Vietnam Tankers Assn.**, Sept. 17-20, Dubois, Wyo. Contact John Wear, (719) 495-5998, johnwear2@verizon.net.

• **Marine Corps Engineer Assn.**, Sept. 26-29, Las Vegas. Contact LtCol George Carlson, USMC (Ret), (931) 307-9094, treasurer@marcorengasn.org, www.marcorengasn.org.

• **National Montford Point Marine Assn.**, July 12-16, Shreveport, La. Contact Ronald Johnson, (504) 202-8552, vice_president@montfordpointmarines.org.

• **USMC Weather Service**, June 19-24, Overland Park, Kan. Contact Kathy Donham, (252) 342-8459, kathy.donham@hotmail.com, or Dave Englert, engertd@psci.net.

• **11th Marine Regiment, OIF (20th anniversary)**, March 31-April 1, 2023, Camp Pendleton, Calif. Contact Casey Harsh, casey.harsh@gmail.com. Facebook group: The Cannon Cockers of OIF-1 (20-Year Reunion 2023 Group).

• **7th Engineer Bn Vietnam Veterans Assn.**, Sept. 25-28, Colorado Springs, Colo. Contact Norbert Johnson, (810) 300-0782, nwgj@outlook.com.

• **4th LAR (OEF, 2009)**, July 14-16, Reno, Nev. Contact Pat Garrahan, (209) 256-4989, pdgarrahan@gmail.com, www.4thlarreunion.com.

• **1/27**, Sept. 28-Oct. 1, San Antonio. Contact Felix Salmeron, (469) 583-0191, mar463@aol.com.

• **3/4**, Aug. 17-20, Lisle/Naperville, Ill. Contact Travis Fryzowicz, (732) 251-5518, travisjfry@gmail.com.

• **Battery Adjust, 3/11**, Sept. 20-25, Kansas City, Mo. Contact Brian Seals, (765) 580-2734, bseals2013@gmail.com.

• **C/1/12 (RVN)**, Sept. 20-25, Kansas City, Mo. Contact Woody Hall, (931) 242-8432, hwoodrow@charter.net.

• **G/2/7 (RVN)**, Sept. 14-18, San Antonio. Contact Lamont Taylor, (518) 249-7009, cinemscreenad@yahoo.com.

• **Marine Security Forces, NWS Earle**, Oct. 7-10, Colts Neck, N.J. Contact Dusty Wright, (618) 553-2205, slickstuff@nwcable.net.

• **Marine Detachment, U.S. Naval Disciplinary Command Portsmouth, N.H.**, Sept. 12-17, Charleston, S.C. Contact Don Ferry, (972) 334-0609, don.ferry1942@gmail.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, or Col Bob Donaghue, USMCR (Ret), (617) 840-0267, ip350haven@comcast.net.

• **Plt 2064, San Diego, 1965**, is planning a reunion. Contact Gary A. Gruenwald, (434) 609-3433, usmcgman74@aol.com.

• **USS Hornet (CV-8, CV/CVA/CVS-12) and USS Constellation (CVA/CV-64)**, Sept. 12-17, Buffalo, N.Y. Contact Sandy Burket, P.O. Box 108, Roaring Spring, PA 16673, (814) 224-5063, (814) 312-4976, hornetcv12@aol.com, or Richard Swain, (432) 694-0227, membership@ussconstellation.org.

• **LPH Iwo Jima Class: USS Iwo Jima (LPH-2), USS Okinawa (LPH-3), USS Guadalcanal (LPH-7), USS Guam (LPH-9), USS Tripoli (LPH-10), USS New Orleans (LPH-11)**, Sept. 28-Oct. 2, Warwick, R.I. Contact Dena Rice, (615) 585-2088, denaiphone@bellsouth.net.

Mail Call

• William E. Travis, 7501 Lead Mine Rd., Raleigh, NC 27615, (984) 291-2179, travis.we@gmail.com, to hear from or about **SSgt DUMPHY, Sgt BENTLY, Sgt HAZARD**, or any members of **Plt 212, Parris Island, 1958**. He also would like any photos or information about the platoon.

Wanted

Readers should be cautious about sending money without confirming authenticity and availability of products offered.

• David F. Stockwell, djstockwell@reagan.com, wants a **recruit graduation book for Plt 238, San Diego, 1955**.

Sales, Trades and Giveaways

• Larry R. Gies, 2074 Kenneth Dr., Bay City, MI 48706, (989) 412-3341, duck6cms@aol.com, has copies of the following publications he will send to anyone who is interested: **The Chevron, MCRD San Diego**, 5/6/66, 5/13/66, 5/27/66, 6/3/66, 6/10/66; **Pendleton Scout**, 7/15/66, 7/29/66, 8/5/66, 8/12/66, 9/16/66; **Sea Tiger**, 5/12/67, 6/23/67, 6/30/67, 8/25/67, 5/3/68. He also has **recruit graduation books for Plt 2065, San Diego, 1989, and Plt 1088, 1089, 1090, San Diego, 2003**.

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, or write to Reader Assistance Editor, *Leatherneck* Magazine, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134. 📧



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If you have already included MCA in your will or estate plan, please let us know. We want to thank you for your commitment to our Marines.

SOUND OFF
[continued from page 7]

go on to star in more than 20 movies after the war.

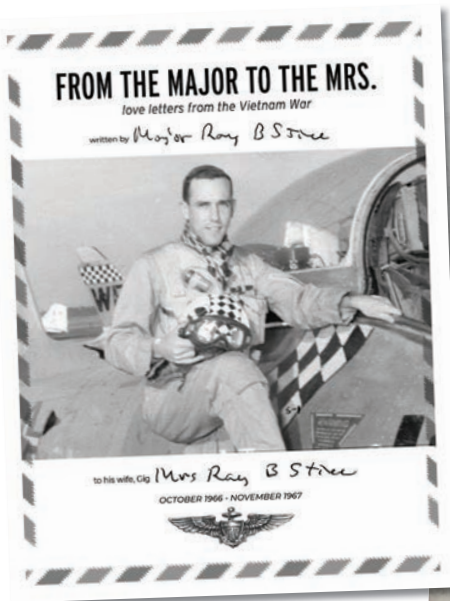
Maj Power remained in the Marine Corps Reserve until his sudden death from a heart attack on Nov. 15, 1958, at the age of 44. He was buried with full military honors at Hollywood Forever Cemetery in Los Angeles, Calif.

Bil Pederson
USMC, 1963-1966
Mauston, Wis.

**Chu Lai Fighter Pilot Mentioned
Leatherneck in Letter Home**

My father, Maj Ray Stice, USMC (Ret), who was a fighter pilot flying F-4s during his tour in Vietnam from 1966 to 1967, wrote 173 letters home to our family in Austin, Texas. I recently found the letters hidden inside an old ammo box in a dilapidated leather briefcase while cleaning out my garage. One letter dated Feb. 2, 1967, mentions *Leatherneck* magazine.

I thought it would be so special if you could find a way to include it in one of your issues. My father wrote, "One of these days the enlisted magazine *Leatherneck* will run an article on Marine close air support here at Chu Lai." That was 55



get to that close air support
days ago - had a real good close
and I do mean close - air support
of troops on the ground and
lots of fire.
We got you air - sent
me the bill for the car just
when I'm thinking in terms
of her deal of dollars and
you send me that poultry \$5
bill - not a pineapple on a
pumpkin. Good timing old
Miss.
One of these days the
enlisted Magazine *Leatherneck*
will run an article on Marine
close air support here at Chu Lai

Maj Ray Stice poses with his F-4 Phantom in Chu Lai, Vietnam, sometime between 1966 and 1967. While there, Maj Ray Stice wrote many letters home and one in particular mentioned *Leatherneck* magazine. (Photos courtesy of Robin Stice Maroney)

years ago. My father tragically passed away 44 years ago, but he was such a proud Marine officer.

Robin Stice Maroney
Austin, Texas

• Your timing couldn't be better. We're running the article, "Tigers in the Sky,"

from the *Leatherneck* archives, on page 49 in this issue. The article describes the use of F-4s at Chu Lai and originally appeared in our May 1968 issue, just over a year after your dad made his prediction.— Editor

ARE YOU UP FOR THE CHALLENGE?

REGISTER NOW TO PARTICIPATE IN OUR UPCOMING VIRTUAL CHALLENGES.



July 22, 2022
In memory of LtCol Mario "Sugar Bear" Carazo.
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September 12, 2022
Workout of the Day.
Workout includes 3 rounds for time, Sprint of 200 meters, 18 Burpees, Sprint 200 meters and 47 crunches.



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-CHALLENGES**

TO LEARN MORE OR
REGISTER



Those Left Behind

I am submitting this poem for publication in *Leatherneck*. I thoroughly enjoy the magazine. Keep up the great work.

My brothers call to me,
From where I am not certain.
But their voices I hear more, and louder,
As they speak to me, these brothers.

I hear their pain,
I hear their calls.
“Why, why were we abandoned?” they ask.

Why were we left to suffer in the distant land?

How many are there I wonder?
1,742, likely there are more.
We fly the flag of white on black for them,
But how many will never be brought back?

We have a national organization for them,
We have a national day to remember them.
But still the voices of my brothers call to me,
“Why did you leave us here?”

Tortured in their cells and cages,
Worked like oxen in their captors’ fields.
They were strong and healthy when captured,
But how many now survive?

They ask if they were just pawns of the politics,
They ask how our leaders could turn their backs.

Why did we not come for them long, long ago?

Do we not feel the shame of this, our disgrace?

These brothers of mine they call to me,
I know not how to answer them.
I feel the shame for my nation.
I fly the flag for them, for all to see.

It has been too long now,
Captured or missing in Vietnam.
POW and MIA, they call to me,
And I know not what to say.

Cpl S.A. Reed, USMC (Ret)
Tacoma, Wash.

Reminiscing Prompted Poem

I was reminiscing about things from my Marine Corps days and the following poem popped into my head. Here’s hoping that this rings true for other vets.

Keep up the outstanding work *Leatherneck*.

We took a ride the other day,
To check on vets I’d known.
So off to Arlington we went,
To find their names in stone.

We looked and found some names I’d known,

With some written on the Wall.
They gave their all to keep us free,
Now this is the place to take that knee.

Sgt Lee K. Boothby, USMC (Ret)
Davenport, Fla.

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 🇺🇸

Are You Ready?



Angela Maness
Sr Vice Commandant
Sooner Detachment #559
Oklahoma City, OK



Laura Brown
Adjutant / Paymaster
Alamo Detachment #315
San Antonio, TX

Toys For Tots

Preserve Traditions

Young Marines

Funeral Honors

Color Guard

MCLMembershipCommittee@mcleague.org



COURTESY OF MARINE CORPS ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

GOING TO THE CHAPEL—Wedding bells were in the air on June 30, 1905, when, at the age of 23, Captain Smedley Darlington Butler married Ethel Conway Peters at her family's summer home in Bay Head on the New Jersey shore. Ethel, or "Bunny," as Butler affectionately called her, came from one of Philadelphia society's most distinguished families, and the two became acquainted when Butler was assigned to the Philadelphia Navy Yard. The happy couple is pictured in the above photo, far right, alongside family members in attendance.

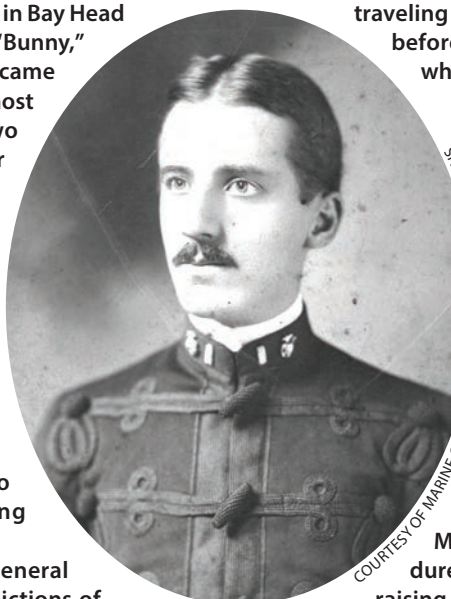
Acting as Butler's best man was Marine Lieutenant Colonel Littleton T. Waller, who had served as his commanding officer in China during the Boxer Rebellion five years earlier. Despite the difference in rank, the two developed a close and enduring friendship.

In his book "Maverick Marine: General Smedley D. Butler and the Contradictions of American Military History," Hans Schmidt describes Ethel Butler, writing, "A resolute and self-possessed woman in her own right, she loyally stood by him through the erratic convulsions of what would be a stormy career. Their engagement was celebrated in

the local press as a storybook romance joining gallant young hero and society belle." According to Schmidt, the newlyweds had a somewhat unconventional honeymoon, traveling through Europe, India and Singapore before arriving at Cavité in the Philippines, where Butler had been assigned.

Though the young Marine officer had already proven himself formidable in combat near Tientsin, China, in 1900, when he was promoted to captain by brevet, the true tests were to come: commanding Marines at Vera Cruz, Mexico, in 1914, and on Fort Riviere, Haiti, in 1915, each of which spurred actions that earned him the Medal of Honor. Butler later commanded the 13th Regiment in France during World War I and retired as a major general in 1931.

As the spouse of one of history's most highly decorated and revered Marines, Ethel Butler undoubtedly endured the accompanying tumult while also raising the couple's three children: two sons, Smedley Jr. and Thomas, and a daughter, Ethel, who would one day become the wife of a Marine herself, marrying Lieutenant John Wehle in 1932.



Smedley Butler, 1898

COURTESY OF MARINE CORPS ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS



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who serve, USAA will be
there to serve them.



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