

MARCH 2018

MAGAZINE OF THE MARINES

Leatherneck

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MCA&F Recognizes III MEF Marine Of the Year

Seizing the Bridge At An Nasiriya

TBI: Know the Signs, Get Help Early

Camp Pendleton Played Key Role During WW II

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COVER: Cpl Nelfi Tineoferreiras, the NCO in charge of the Receiving Section, CLR-35, 3rd MLG, was recognized as the III MEF Marine of the Year for 2017 during a professional dinner at Camp Kinser, MCB Camp Butler, Okinawa, Japan, sponsored by MCA&F, Jan. 12. See story "MCA&F Recognizes III MEF Marine of the Year, on page 32. Photo by LCpl Joshua Pinkney. Copies of the cover may be obtained by sending \$2 (for mailing costs) to *Leatherneck Magazine*, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134-0775.

Letter of the Month

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

Recently I asked a member of a Marine Detachment if Marines are still issued mess kits when assigned to an FMF unit. He said, "No."

I joined the "Brown Shoe" Marine Corps in 1962 and everywhere I was stationed I was issued a mess kit as a 782 gear item. I used an M1 rifle, a BAR, a .30-caliber machine gun and a 1911 .45 Colt pistol and an 1897 Winchester pump shotgun as well as other weapons.

I also inquired if Marines still did mess duty. I pulled it during boot camp, ITR, when I was assigned to my parent command, and aboard ship when on deployment. He said, "No," again. I even went as far as asking if the mess sergeants utilized "leftovers" for noon or evening chow. They did wonders with leftovers back in the day; in fact, they were downright creative.

I know the Marine Corps has better gear than we ever had in the "old Corps" and I am glad for it; they can accomplish a better mission with the resources they now have. Back in the 1960s we did more with less, especially pay. We did not join the Corps for a large paycheck, but love of country. I know there are a lot of Marines out there who still join for that reason. But I will always remember standing in line with my mess kit to get a hot meal instead of "C-Rats," and then getting in another line to clean your mess kit after you finished your grub.

Back in the day when we pulled guard duty, mess duty, deck watch, etc., there was a lot of camaraderie between the Marines that were working these details. Marines today have many new assignments, and as usual, the Corps always has to adapt.

During my tour of duty I have met many legends of the Corps and had some good assignments. Gone are the good ole' days but not forgotten.

GySgt William F. "Bill" Pakinkis
USMC (Ret)
1962-1984
Tombstone, Ariz.

Hydraulic Bomb Loader

VMA(AW) 242 was the first Marine Corps Squadron to receive the A-6A Intruder in 1966. At the time we were



SSgt Lewis R. Souder operates a hydraulic bomb loader while moving a rack of 500-pound bombs under an A-6A Intruder.

deployed to Da Nang, Vietnam, and General Lewis W. Walt was commanding the I Corps.

In 1967, during one of his visits to our squadron, we put on a "dog and pony" show for him. We showed him how we loaded 500-pound bombs attached to the MER rack locking into the rack on the A6A Intruder using the SATS Loader, a hydraulic bomb loader.

Being the SATS driver, it was probably the best load I had ever done. The MER locked in with one click instead of two. Gen Walt was very impressed. As he approached me, he put his hand on my shoulder and said he was very proud to have a dedicated Marine like me in his Corps. He made me very proud to be a Marine. I will never forget him—he was the best.

GySgt Lewis R. Souder, USMC (Ret)
1956-1976
Sebastian, Fla.

Magenta Flashlights And Losing Stripes

I have two comments regarding letters in the December 2017 issue: Corporal Carl J. Steckler asked about a pink right-angled flashlight. I have one, but the color is more magenta than pink. These flashlights were designed for a specific purpose and have a clip on the back. In the base the flashlights have different lenses, red and

clear (diffused). They were intended to be hung on wire fencing strung along minefields to alert people of the existence of the minefield.

Some think alerting the enemy is stupid, but not so. If the enemy is stupid enough to enter a minefield, so be it. On the other hand, they will want to avoid it and thereby channel their movements into locations where they can more easily be eliminated.

Second comment: George Collias commented about being an E-3 corporal then losing a stripe to be a lance corporal. I was an engineer company commander when the two additional enlisted ranks were established. E-4 sergeants, for example, kept their three stripes but were identified as "acting sergeants." The joke was, "It's about time you started acting like a sergeant." Those in the acting ranks maintained their stripes until they were officially promoted to the next new rank; from E-4 sergeant to E-5 sergeant. At that time the new insignia bore the now famous crossed rifles. It is possible that a person failed for promotion from the acting ranks, and in such a case, might, as Collias infers, be required to go back to the new rank.

When I have seen what other services have done to their insignia to accommodate these two new pay grades, I can only say that the Marine Corps got it right. Gunnery sergeant, sergeant major, master

gunnery sergeant—very well-established. Take a look around and I think you'll agree.

Maj James L. Murphy, USMC (Ret)
Los Osos, Calif.

Pin-Ups in *Leatherneck*

I have many *Leatherneck* magazines from the mid-1950. I noted the letters of the old pin-up girls in the "Sound Off" section [November 2017 issue]. After looking at them, I wondered if any of them are still living.

I have a photo taken of Marilyn Monroe in a red one-piece bathing suit taken in 1954. I wonder what this picture would be priced at today.

James V. Hamann
Dayton, Minn.

The Hook

My compliments to Major Allan Bevilacqua on his excellent article in the January issue, "Korea 1952: The Hook."

When the 1952 Hook battle took place, I was an enlisted Marine combat correspondent assigned to 1/7, and secondarily, a member of a 1/7 rapid reaction team made up of battalion headquarters personnel to be utilized in emergency situations. Because of the makeup of the unit (cooks, administrative personnel and

truck drivers), it was jokingly referred to as the "spoon platoon."

During the night of Oct. 26, after days of heavy artillery and mortar bombardment, the Chinese army launched a massive attack, swarming in under their own mortar fire, and overran a section of The Hook. I remember a whistle shrieking to signal the reaction force to mobilize. We grabbed helmets and M1s and moved up on-line to fill blocking positions on the MLR (main line of resistance) a few hundred yards to the rear of The Hook.

The 7th Marines fought through the night. It was totally dark and chaotic except for an occasional illumination flare and there was hand-to-hand combat. I vividly remember within the ear-splitting sounds of battle the babble of Chinese voices and later the close rattling of equipment and thumping of bouncing canteens as the regimental reserve counterattacked through our positions and of the sudden quiet as it became daylight, and I realized the Chinese had withdrawn leaving the area littered with hundreds of Chinese bodies.

As noted in the article, three Medals of Honor were later awarded to Marines for gallantry that night.

I devoted a chapter of a memoir: "Running All the Way: A Marine, a Runner, a

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President/CEO,
Marine Corps Association & Foundation
LtGen W. Mark Faulkner, USMC (Ret)

Vice President/COO,
Marine Corps Association & Foundation
Col Daniel P. O'Brien, USMC (Ret)

Publisher: Col Christopher Woodbridge, USMC (Ret)

Editor: Col Mary H. Reinwald, USMC (Ret)

Senior Editor: Nancy S. Lichtman

Copy Editor: Jessica B. Brown

Staff Writer: Sara W. Bock

Editorial/Production Coordinator
Patricia Everett

Art Director: Jason Monroe

Publisher's Advertising Representatives

James G. Elliott Co. Inc.
New York: (212) 588-9200
Chicago: (312) 236-4900
Los Angeles: (213) 624-0900

EDITORIAL OFFICES

Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134
Phone: (703) 640-6161, Ext. 115
Toll-Free: (800) 336-0291
Fax: (703) 630-9147

Email: leatherneck@mca-marines.org
Web page: www.mca-marines.org/leatherneck

TELEPHONE EXTENSIONS

Editorial Offices: 115 • Business Office: 121

MEMBER SERVICES

Phone: toll-free (866) 622-1775
Email: mca@mca-marines.org

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Journey through Life" to the experience.

Col Lawrence E. Dickerson, USMCR
(Ret)

Burke, Va.

I enjoyed the January issue of the *Leatherneck*, as usual, and was particularly drawn to Major Allan Bevilacqua's fine article on The Hook.

At some point following transfer of the division to the west sector, I served on The Hook but my memory is a bit hazy about the outposts existing at the time. I don't recall either outpost, Ronson or Seattle, mentioned in the article but instead outpost Irene that was situated in the direction of Ronson but perhaps closer to The Hook. It seemed close enough that some of our strong-armed mates could pitch grenades at the site when the Chinese were in possession. And I recall that possession was often exchanged.

I communicate with you primarily to attempt correction of what must be my flawed memory. I am 86 years old and victim of what physicians are repeatedly explaining is the "aging process."

Best wishes for continued success in 2018.

William F. Corvello
1stMarDiv, 1951-1952
Fort Monroe, Va.

• *Your memory isn't flawed. Outpost Irene was on the right of 1stMarDiv's line, in front of 5th Marines, when it was overrun by the Chinese in August 1952. "The Battles for Bunker Hill" from the August 1992 issue of Leatherneck details*

the efforts of the Marines of 2/5 to reach the outpost and the heroics of several leathernecks who subsequently were awarded the Medal of Honor and the Navy Cross. The article can be found in our archives at <https://www.mca-marines.org/leatherneck/archive>.—Editor

Anyone Remember?

I am interested in seeing if anyone remembers a day when a Cobra gunship destroyed, among other evil things, a Soviet Quad-23 run by the Chi-comms (Chinese Communists). I flew for the Special Operations Group, CCN-FOB3 Mailoc, a small compound not too far from "The Rock Pile."

On that day, I heard a distress call by a radio operator. I heard "Mayday. Mayday. Mayday. Are there gunships around?"

I instantly called him.

I told him to hold the FM microphone button down so I could radio-locate and follow the pointer to him. A few minutes later we popped over the top of a ridgeline and I instantly heard the sound of anti-aircraft radar sweeping in my helmet earphones. I saw green tracers moving toward us and told the guys in the other Cobra to break left and follow me.

I luckily located every location that was training machine-gun fire on us and ruined their day. I can remember and still picture most of it as it was rather intense.

I was wondering if anyone could describe the view from the ground. At a recent Special Operations reunion, I was video-interviewed as they are making a

[continued on page 66]



COURTESY OF ROBERT D. DENLINGER

Robert D. Denlinger stands in front of his Cobra gunship in a maintenance area near Hue Phu Bai, Vietnam. He flew with a special operations group near "The Rock Pile."

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In the Highest Tradition



LCPL JOSUE MARQUEZ, USMC

After the ceremony during which he was presented with the Navy and Marine Corps Medal, 1stLt Aaron Cranford meets with the divers he saved from a rip current, Justin Kinjo, center, and Yusuke Teruya, right, on Jan. 8, at Camp Schwab, Okinawa, Japan.

Off-Duty Marine Risks Life To Save Divers Caught in Riptide

 During a ceremony on Camp Schwab, Okinawa, Japan, Jan. 8, 2018, a Marine officer was awarded the nation's highest medal for non-combat heroism for his courageous actions off duty.

First Lieutenant Aaron Cranford, a supply officer with Headquarters and Service Company, 3rd Reconnaissance Battalion, 3rd Marine Division, was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Medal for saving four people who were caught in a rip current during a recreational dive at Mermaid's Grotto, Onna Point, Okinawa, Japan, on April 23, 2017.

Cranford and several other Marines surfaced from a 35-minute dive and noticed that the conditions had deteriorated. Cranford, the most experienced diver of his group, ensured the other Marines reached a safe point to exit the water and then turned his attention to three distressed divers caught in a surf zone about to be swept out to sea by a riptide.

Risking his own life, Cranford rescued the divers one by one.

"I could definitely tell that the divers were in distress," said Cranford, a native of Fort Worth, Texas. "Their gear was not the way it should have been and they were waving their arms back and forth trying to get people's attention."

One local Okinawan said he believes he wouldn't be alive today without Cranford's help. "I just knew I was going to die," said Okinawa City, Okinawa resident, Justin Kinjo. "My leg was stuck, I couldn't get any air and as soon as I reached the surface, the waves pushed me back in—knocking my [air] regulator out of my mouth."

For Cranford's courageous actions, General Robert B. Neller, 37th Commandant of the Marine Corps, awarded him the highest non-combat decoration for heroism.

"1stLt Cranford is a superb representative of the United States Marine Corps," said MajGen Craig Q. Timberlake, the commanding general for 3rdMarDiv. "His actions took a lot of guts and a lot of courage. He reflects a United States Marine doing what a United States Marine does."

LCpl Charles Plouffe, USMC



"My leg was stuck, I couldn't get any air and as soon as I reached the surface, the waves pushed me back in—knocking my [air] regulator out of my mouth."—Justin Kinjo

3rdMarDiv Renames Barracks After Navy Cross Recipient

LCpl Josue Marquez, USMC

Colonel Giles R. Boyce, the commanding officer for Headquarters Battalion, 3rd Marine Division, renamed the staff noncommissioned officer barracks on Camp Courtney, Okinawa, Japan, Dec. 22, 2017. The barracks were named in honor of Vietnam war hero, Staff Sergeant Claude H. Dorris, a former squad leader and advisor for Combined Action Platoon H-6, 3rd Combined Action Group, III Marine Amphibious Force, in the Republic of Vietnam.

Dorris, a native of Louisville, Ky., was one of the many Marines who was killed in action against the Viet Cong; he unhesitatingly exposed himself to ensure his Marines would have enough time to get in positions to defend their village outpost. Despite his exposed position during the Jan. 7, 1968, firefight, Dorris administered first aid to an injured Vietnamese boy who ran into the area. Shortly after, Dorris was killed by an enemy rocket round. He was posthumously awarded the Navy Cross for his heroic actions that day.

Eric Schregardus, Dorris' son, said his father was a courageous man who took every opportunity to help the Vietnamese people.

"He never forgot that we were in Vietnam to help the South Vietnamese and had actually written to my mom about how hard it was to see villagers treated badly," Schregardus said. "So, when the chance to work in close concert with the Vietnamese, teaching them to protect their own village, came up, he jumped at the chance."

Not only did Dorris fight for people overseas, he fought to save lives in his hometown, too.

"He once stopped on the way home from work at a car accident and helped render first aid before the ambulance arrived, resulting in quite a shock to my mom when he came home covered in blood," Schregardus said.



USMC

SSgt Claude H. Dorris, a Navy Cross recipient, was killed by an enemy rocket on Jan. 7, 1968, in Thua Thien Province, Vietnam.



LCPL JOSUE MARQUEZ, USMC

Col Giles R. "Russ" Boyce, far right, CO, Headquarters Battalion, 3rdMarDiv, stands with Marines, Okinawan guests, and members of the Dorris family in front of Dorris Hall, Camp Courtney, Okinawa, Japan. Camp Courtney's staff noncommissioned barracks were recently renamed to honor Navy Cross recipient SSgt Claude H. Dorris.

Col Boyce decided to rename the barracks after Dorris because of the heroic Marine's initiative and complete devotion to saving people, on and off duty. The barracks will ensure Dorris' courageous actions in Vietnam will not be forgotten—something that Schregardus said he finds important.

"I am sad to have lost my father at such a young age, but proud of the sacrifice he made for the men in his unit and the village boy he saved," Schregardus said. "So, in the simplest terms, I am glad that somewhere that sacrifice will be memorialized." 🇺🇸

In Every Clime and Place

Compiled by Sara W. Bock



SRA ERIN PIAZZA, USAF

DJIBOUTI

Marines, French Troops Partner in Alligator Dagger

The French Navy's *Mistral* class amphibious assault ship LHD *Tonnerre*, with embarked U.S. Marines and Sailors from the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit and Naval Amphibious Force, Task Force 51/5th Marine Expeditionary Brigade and USS *Lewis B. Puller* (ESB-3), rehearsed amphibious operations and combat sustainment in Djibouti during Alligator Dagger, Dec. 12-21, 2017.

This iteration of Alligator Dagger marked the first time that the recurring U.S. training exercise was expanded to include French military partners participating in evolutions at sea and ashore.

Approximately 1,000 U.S. and French troops trained together during the exercise to hone critical skills that are essential to ensuring regional stability, freedom of navigation and the free flow of commerce in a dynamic and challenging environment. The exercise continued the close cooperation between the U.S. and French forces deployed on *Tonnerre*

Above: U.S. Marines and French forces conduct a search-and-rescue exercise during Alligator Dagger, a dedicated, bilateral combat rehearsal in Djibouti, Dec. 20, 2017.

Below: Marines with the 15th MEU take aim at a target during Alligator Dagger, a rehearsal led by Naval Amphibious Force, TF 51/5th Marine Expeditionary Brigade in Djibouti. It allowed U.S. and French forces to practice, rehearse and exercise integrated capabilities available to U.S. Central Command afloat and ashore.



SSGT VITALIY RUSANSKIY, USMC

and allowed for rehearsal of possible contingency operations to provide a ready and capable force for crisis response and combat operations.

“As the only standing forward deployed and fully integrated Navy/Marine Corps command, TF 51/5 prides itself in its ability to synchronize forces afloat and ashore to provide immediate and robust crisis response options to the U.S. Central Command and the National Command Authority,” said Colonel Howard Hall, the director of operations for TF 51/5. “While naval integration is the foundation of TF 51/5’s effectiveness and success, partnering with French land and maritime forces in Alligator Dagger represents both a manifestation and expansion of naval integration to include our partners and allies. Combating trans-regional threats requires multi-domain and multinational solutions.”

The bilateral engagements focused on noncombatant evacuation operations; amphibious assaults; helicopter-borne raids; visit, board, search and seizure operations; air strikes; defense of the amphibious task force; integrated ground-and-air fires; tactical recovery of personnel; ground reconnaissance; medical casualty evacuations; combat marksmanship and quick reaction force and casualty evacuation rehearsals.

Alligator Dagger is the largest regional amphibious exercise to integrate and synchronize TF 51/5’s warfighting capabilities with those of adjacent U.S. Naval Forces Special Operations Forces units to ensure they are postured and prepared to execute operations at sea, from the sea and ashore. The two-week combat rehearsal, launched from international waters off the coast of Djibouti and executed on land in the vicinity of Arta Beach, was synchronized with the entry of each subordinate vessel of TF 51/5 into the U.S. 5th Fleet.

LCDR Sandra Arnold, USN

MIDDLE EAST

SecDef: Operations Against ISIS Will Change in 2018

The destruction of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria’s physical caliphate will change the way the coalition will go after the terror group, retired Marine general and Defense Secretary James N. Mattis told a group of reporters at the Pentagon, Dec. 29, 2017.

“We sit here today at the end of 2017, the caliphate is on the run—we’re breaking them,” he said.

At the time of the press event, some ISIS terrorists recently had escaped the encirclement of Raqqa into the Middle Euphrates River Valley. “We are in



Cpl Matthew Lecompte and LCpl Dulton James with 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment run toward simulated casualties while training in the Middle East, Oct. 10, 2017. U.S. military efforts in Iraq and Syria will focus on stabilization in 2018 according to Defense Secretary James Mattis. (Photo by Cpl Jocelyn Ontiveros, USMC)

the process of crushing the life out of caliphate there while trying to keep the innocent people safe—which is very hard with this group,” Mattis said.

The demarcation line between the Assad regime and its ally Russia, and the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and the coalition has held up well, according to Mattis, and communications between Russian and coalition forces continue.

The ISIS fighters that escaped into the valley “will have to be hunted down,” Mattis said during the briefing.

ISIS operatives who move into the region controlled by the regime of Syrian President Bashar Assad and the Russians are another matter. The SDF and the coalition will not launch attacks past the demarcation line, said the secretary. Having the terrorists in their area is not in Assad’s or the Russians’ best interests. The United States “tipping off” Russia of a potential ISIS attack in St. Petersburg is an example of ways the countries can work together against the group.

Mattis stressed that the battle against ISIS is not over. While the group has been shattered, its survivors are looking for ways and places to reconstitute.

“It’s only a safe haven if people give them one,” said Mattis.

In Iraq, the coalition will continue to work with the Iraqi government to train troops and police and develop the intelligence needed to find and take down terrorists trying to launch attacks.

“We need to drive this down to the point where it can be handled by local authorities—police,” said Mattis. “But right now, it is still very much a military intelligence type of operation as the police try to set up local operations. Eventually, it will be rule of law and local security forces.”

Hunting ISIS down is not over. “Am I worried about it? Not in the least,” Mattis said. “These guys have not proven they can stand against the Iraqi security forces [or] the SDF. They are best against unarmed men, women and children.”

Moving forward in Syria involves ensuring diplomats have what they need to solve this civil war.

Looking to 2018, Mattis sees ISIS as being a “brand” for terrorists. “It can inspire lone wolf attacks; it can inspire other groups,” he said. “But it is less inspirational when they have lost their physical caliphate; it is less inspirational as the stories of what it was like living under their rule come out. I think it is a brand with diminishing appeal.”

In both Iraq and Syria, U.S. troops will be shifting from an offensive terrain-seizing approach to a stabilizing effort focused on supporting the diplomatic approach, the secretary said. This will include clearing areas of improvised explosive devices, helping civil authorities set up water and electrical systems, helping reopen schools and working with police.

Jim Garamone, DOD



LtCol Michael Keane, the commanding officer of MACS-4, and his Marines disembark a KC-130J Hercules on Ie Jima Island, Okinawa, Japan, Dec. 15, 2017. While on the island, the squadron's Marines were evaluated on their ability to complete MMT mission-essential tasks as part of the Marine Corps Combat Readiness Evaluation for Exercise Voodoo Magic. (Photo by LCpl Alexia Lythos, USMC)

OKINAWA, JAPAN

MACS-4 Marines Build Expeditionary Airfield

Marine Air Control Squadron 4, Marine Air Control Group 18, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, traveled to Ie Jima, Okinawa, Japan, to conduct Marine Corps Air Traffic Control Mobile Team (MMT) mission-essential tasks during Exercise Voodoo Magic, Dec. 4-15, 2017.

Voodoo Magic is a 12-day exercise that allows the MMTs to gain experience, practice constructing an airfield and complete training and readiness requirements.

"MACS-4 showed great strengths in the abilities to rapidly establish air traffic control and set up communications architecture," said First Lieutenant Chris Danforth, an air traffic control officer. "They were able to set up appropriate marking patterns to receive various types of aircraft."

An MMT consists of six to eight Marines operating in a 72-hour environment by themselves without support. Capabilities such as this are used in either

field environments where there isn't an established airfield or when taking over an existing one.

During combat, MMT makes it possible to establish an expeditionary runway to allow aircraft to land and refuel in order to keep Marines in the fight without having to build permanent structures. The Marines of MACS-2 were tasked with taking all their training and employing it

in an expeditionary environment to test their skills and capabilities.

"In all the prerequisites and everything required of them, MACS-4 accomplished everything," said Danforth. "The training that they've done prior to this shows that they were prepared for it, and they showed true proficiency in all of their required skill sets."

Every two years, each deployable unit

Cpl Daniel McGinness, an air traffic controller with MACS-4, aligns panels that notify an aircraft where to land during Exercise Voodoo Magic on Ie Jima, Okinawa, Japan, Dec. 15, 2017.



LCPL ALEXIA LYTHOS, USMC

in the Marine Corps' active duty component is required to conduct a qualification called the Marine Corps Combat Readiness Evaluation. Exercise Voodoo Magic was the first time MACS-4 has been evaluated.

"Some of these Marines have been in this [military occupational specialty] for 12 years or more, and they still study the 7110 air traffic control procedures," said Danforth. "This exercise gives all the Marines out here the opportunity to prove their [skills], show their knowledge and be able to put foot to pavement to make things happen. I feel proud to be able to serve them."

LCpl Alexia Lythos, USMC

INDIAN OCEAN

15th MEU Marines Have "Shocking" Experience

Marines from the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit completed a three-day non-lethal weapons course while at sea in the Indian Ocean in December 2017.

"This course teaches Marines how to properly implement the weapon systems," said Corporal Cade Sullinger, a non-lethal weapons instructor with the 15th MEU's Law Enforcement Detachment. "It also serves to provide the Marines with the confidence and knowledge to push through the effects of the non-lethal weapons."

The course included the use of the HEMI/X-26E Taser and type MK-4 Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) spray, also known as pepper spray. These weapons are effective and reliable, said Sullinger, and it's important the Marines know how and when to use them.

The Taser is a 5,000-volt, gas-powered, reloadable projectile used for close-quarters situations when dealing with a non-compliant aggressor. It has a maximum effective range of 25 feet and when implemented requires both pronged projectiles to make contact with the aggressor's skin.

The Taser uses neuromuscular incapacitation, working the aggressor's own central nervous system against itself. The shock forces cause severe pain, disabling the aggressor. For an effective result, direct contact with skin is required; thick coats, phones, wallets, belt and other objects can reduce effectiveness.

"The Taser portion of the class was very interesting," said Corporal Frank Delacruz, a student in the non-lethal weapons course. "But the real test of strength for me came from the OC practical application of the class, which taught us to stay focused and fight the pain to overcome your challenges."

The class began with learning the history of OC spray and its evolution into



Above: LCpl Cody Losse, a rifleman with 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, 15th MEU, prepares to be shot with a Taser during a three-day Non-Lethal Weapons Course aboard USS *America*, Dec. 20, 2017. (Photo by Sgt Hannah Perkins, USMC)

Below: Cpl Reed Jones, a squad leader with 1/5, 15th MEU, endures the pain of the HEMI/X-26E Taser aboard USS *America*, Dec. 20, 2017. The course helped Marines learn how to properly implement the weapons and also how to endure being on the receiving end. (Photo by Sgt Hannah Perkins, USMC)



modern usage, and from there covered both its disabling capabilities and its shortfalls. The spray has three different methods of dispersion—a continuous shot spread out as a stream; a fog, comparable to an aerosol-like dispersion; and a thick solution, similar to a fire extinguisher. OC is effective at upsetting an assailant's ability to breathe properly and open their eyes.

After the instructors taught the class

how to effectively operate the weapon systems and covered their limitations and drawbacks, the students were required to execute the practical application of the weapons systems under the supervision of trained professionals in a controlled environment, providing firsthand knowledge of what it feels like to be on the receiving end.

"This course taught me almost as much about myself as it did the weapons systems

An LAV with 2nd LAR Bn moves into position during gunnery training at MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C., Jan. 17. Marines conducted the training to improve weapon proficiency, maintain unit readiness and prepare for upcoming intermediate gunnery qualifications. (Photo by LCpl Leynard Kyle Plazo, USMC)



Left: A Marine with 2nd LAR Bn operates an LAV during basic gunnery training at MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C., Jan. 17. The course helped the unit's newest Marines become more familiar with the weapon systems to ensure success during the intermediate level of training.

CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C. Gunnery Course Sharpens Skills, Prepares Marines for Next Level

Marines with "Alpha" Company, 2nd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, 2nd Marine Division conducted basic gunnery training at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., Jan. 17.

During the training, junior light armored vehicle crewmen conducted basic gunnery training using the LAV-25A2 to improve crew cohesion and proficiency in using the weapon systems in preparation for an upcoming intermediate gunnery course.

"Intermediate gunnery has very specific tasks ... that are implemented in order to assess a crew's ability to qualify with the main weapon system," said Staff Sergeant Joseph Graziano, the 2nd LAR Bn master gunner.

To prepare for the gunnery training, the Marines conduct procedures such as loading and unloading the LAVs, target

we learned to operate," said Delacruz. "Not only did the class teach me how to use the weapon systems and conduct takedowns, but also taught me I could fight through the pain and rely on my instincts to successfully de-escalate an aggressor."

This type of training is relevant to the Marines and Sailors of the 15th MEU,

especially if they are called upon for a noncombatant evacuation operation or embassy reinforcement.

The 15th MEU and USS *America* Amphibious Ready Group are deployed as a global response force to enhance regional partnerships and serve as a ready-response capability for any type of contingency.

LCpl Jacob Pruitt, USMC

LCPL LEYNARD KYLE PLAZO, USMC



LCPL CODY ROWE, USMC

FROZEN FIGHTER—LCpl Kwan Walker, a network administrator with Marine Wing Communication Squadron 28, 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing, braces in the cold during a conditioning hike as part of Exercise Ullr Shield at Fort McCoy, Wis., Jan. 13. The exercise was designed to improve 2d MAW's capabilities in extreme cold weather environments.

acquisition and other necessities before proceeding down range and conducting live fire engagements against notional targets based on different scenarios.

"Everything we do is implemented into our gunnery table," said Graziano. "They are designed off the idea that if this happens in combat, our Marines will be able to adapt to the situation and still be combat effective."

Junior crewmen are expected to perform just as well as any veteran gunner crew using the LAV-25A2 weapon systems such

as the 25 mm Bushmaster chain gun, a 7.62 coaxial machine gun and a 7.62 M240 Bravo medium machine gun.

"The most important part about this training are the lessons learned for the new crews," said Graziano. "The things they mess up here are learning points. I think the most important part is giving them trigger time and showing them how different live fire is compared to simulated fire so they can adapt and improve what they need to work on."

Marines with the unit conduct gunnery

training multiple times throughout the year to sharpen their skills and maintain expeditionary readiness.

"This training helps with unit cohesion and gets the crews tighter together," said Sergeant Christopher Huey, the master gunner for "Alpha" Co, 2nd LAR. "They are all out here working and getting to know each other so when we come back out they'll be better trained as one cohesive unit."

Cpl Aaron Henson, USMC





COURTESY OF R. MICHAEL LYNON

Dunbar, W.Va.

West Virginia Marines Dedicate New Monument

The Department of West Virginia Marine Corps League donated a United States Marine Corps monument to the Donel C. Kinnard Memorial State Veterans Cemetery in Dunbar, W.Va., Oct. 2, 2017. The remarkable tribute was made possible through a collaborative effort by all 13 Marine Corps League detachments and more than 800 volunteer members from across the state—and the dedication ceremony for the monument happened to fall on the 94th birthday of Chief Warrant Officer Hershel “Woody” Williams, USMC (Ret), World War II Medal of Honor recipient and former commandant of the Department of West Virginia Marine Corps League. Williams served as the guest speaker for the dedication, and a celebration of his birthday followed the dedication ceremony.

This prestigious monument was dedicated to honor the memory, service and sacrifice of all Marines laid to rest at the cemetery and to provide a lasting tribute for Marine families to cherish as they visit their loved ones’ final resting place.

Submitted by R. Michael Lynon

Lewiston, Idaho



COURTESY OF RON GRAY

MCL Detachment Accepts Store’s Donation on Behalf of Toys for Tots

Members of the Marine Corps League Sergeant Major Linehan Detachment #1034 in Lewiston, Idaho, were on hand at the local Shopko store to accept a \$1,000 donation for Toys for Tots, which was presented by the store’s manager on Nov. 15, 2017. Detachment members 1st Sergeant Jim White, USMC (Ret), left, and Ron Gray, former detachment commandant, are pictured here with Shopko employees.

“We’re a very small detachment ... but we are ‘gung ho’ on doing Toys for Tots,” said Gray. The detachment also provides honors at approximately 50 veterans’ funerals in the area each year.

Submitted by Ron Gray

Palm Beach, Fla.

Remarkable Memory Leads to Unlikely Reunion

For Marines, there are certain faces that can’t escape your memory, even after 35 years. Lieutenant Colonel Garry Warren, USMC (Ret), left, was attending a U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) meeting in Palm Beach, Fla., in October 2017 when he saw

a familiar face. Gunnery Sergeant Ron Jones, USMC (Ret), right, was one of Warren’s sergeant instructors at Marine Corps Officer Candidates School in 1982, and both now work for DHS. Warren reintroduced himself to Jones, and the next day brought his platoon photo in as proof!

Submitted by LtCol Gary Warren, USMC (Ret)



COURTESY OF LTCOL GARY WARREN, USMC (RET)

Woodbridge, Va.



COURTESY OF MAJ DONALD FORD RITENOUR, USMC (RET)

Andy Mazzoni; Colonel Frank White, USMC (Ret); Col Barry Collassard, USMC (Ret); and Maj Donald Ritenour, USMC (Ret), gathered on Nov. 10, 2017, for their traditional SOS celebration.

Neighbors Celebrate Corps' Birthday with SOS Breakfast

There are exactly eight Marines residing in River Ridge, an "over 55" community in Woodbridge, Va., and each year they gather for a Marine Corps Birthday "SOS breakfast" at the home of retired Marine major and food service officer Donald Ford Ritenour. They enjoy the company of their fellow Marines and, of course, the old Corps tradition of SOS—creamed beef on toast. They also perform a traditional Marine Corps Birthday cake cutting ceremony at the community clubhouse, coordinated by Lieutenant Colonel Ray Pollard, USMC (Ret), and invite the whole community to attend. From the left, Corporal Robert Ackerman; Master Sergeant George Schaudel, USMC (Ret); LtCol Ray Pollard, USMC (Ret); LtCol Tom Rafferty, USMC (Ret); Cpl

Submitted by Maj Donald Ford Ritenour, USMC (Ret)

Fredericksburg, Va.

Corps' Top Engineers Honored at MCEA Awards

The Marine Corps Engineer Association (MCEA) held its annual awards banquet at the Fredericksburg Hospitality House & Conference Center in Fredericksburg, Va., Oct. 17, 2017. Each year, deserving Marine Corps engineers and units are nominated by their commanders to compete for the title of outstanding engineer in their specialty and grade. Headquarters Marine Corps makes the final selections, and MCEA recognizes the individuals and units at its annual awards banquet. The highlight of the evening was recognizing the 14 active-duty Marines selected as the Corps' outstanding engineers and EOD technicians. Outstanding engineer units of the year were the 1st Combat Engineer Battalion, 9th Engineer Support Battalion and Engineer Operations Company, Marine Wing Support Detachment 31.

Brigadier General William J. Bowers, President of the Marine Corps University, was the guest of honor and presented plaques to the individuals and unit representatives. Among them was Lance Corporal Matthew J. Ardnt, who was recognized as Engineer Equipment Marine of the Year and presented with a plaque by BGen Bowers who was selected as the Combat Engineer Officer of the Year in 1998 as a captain. A complete listing of the 2017 MCEA awardees can be found in MARADMIN 370/17.



COURTESY OF COL JOEL L. COOLEY, USMC (RET)

Submitted by Col Joel L. Cooley, USMC (Ret)

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

GENERAL WASHINGTON'S MARINES

By MSgt Jeff Dacus
USMCR (Ret)



A native of Philadelphia, Maj Samuel Nicholas became the Marine Corps' first officer after being commissioned on Nov. 28, 1775. (Map courtesy of Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division)

Only a few days after General George Washington's brilliant crossing of the Delaware River on Christmas Day in 1776 to defeat the Hessians at Trenton, the great general again found himself crossing the river. The Continental Army marched south through Trenton to a position on Assunpink Creek where they waited for their rear guard of light infantry, which were fighting a pursuing British force under Lord Cornwallis, to join them.

On the south bank of the creek, General Washington had dispersed the majority of his troops. They could hear the sounds of battle as the light infantry fought the British through Trenton and were soon greeted by the sight of the American rear guard moving quickly through the town to cross the single bridge to safety behind the water of the freezing creek. Approaching the bridge, some of the troops began to panic as the British closed in behind them.

On the bridge, they were met by a tall, mounted figure. A retreating soldier described the scene: "The noble horse of General Washington stood with his breast pressed close against the end of the west rail of the bridge, and the firm, composed, and majestic countenance of the general inspired confidence and assurance in a moment so important and critical. In the passage across the bridge, it was my fortune to be next to the west rail, and arriving at the end of the bridge rail, I was pressed against the shoulder of the general's horse and in contact with the general's boot. The horse stood as firm as the rider, and seemed to understand that he was not to quit his post and station."

The retreating troops calmed and regrouped as they made the south side of the creek. As the last of the Americans crossed the bridge, British troops tried to force their way onto the bridge, but were met with a blast of fire from the men Washington



f December¹⁷⁷⁶ to the 3^d of January 1777.



Below: Tun Tavern, located in Philadelphia, served as recruiting headquarters for Continental Marines during the Revolutionary War.

emplaced earlier. The redcoats tried three times to force their way across the bridge and creek but were rebuffed each time. Among those on the south side defending the bridge was an experienced and well-equipped battalion of Continental Marines under the command of Major Samuel Nicholas, a Quaker from Philadelphia. Three times, the British attempted to outflank the bridge and cross the creek, only to be met by the fire of Continental artillery and green-clad Marines.

Congress authorized two battalions of Marines on Nov. 10, 1775, and Nicholas was ordered to recruit his Marines. Recruiting took place at his

family's tavern, the Conestoga Wagon Inn, and at Tun Tavern. Robert Mullan served as the recruiting officer, with Tun Tavern serving as the rallying point for Nicholas. As the war progressed, the Marines were detached for various services with the fledgling Continental Navy, but after serving with the fleet, Nicholas was tasked by Congress to remain in Philadelphia and continue recruiting, both for the Marines and the Navy. The tide of war turned against the colonists around New York, and Washington was forced to ask for help from any quarter.

Nicholas was delighted when his Marines were requested by the commander in chief, saying, "The enemy, having overrun the Jerseys, and our Army being greatly reduced, I was ordered to march with three of the companies to be under the command of His Excellency, the commander in chief."

His battalion, made up of three companies commanded by Captain Andrew Porter, Captain Robert Mullan, and Captain Robert Deane, numbered around 120 men, of whom at least two, Isaac and Orang, were black. They joined General John Cadwalader's brigade just before the epic battle at Trenton. General Cadwalader was told by General Washington, "The Marines—Sailors from Philadelphia you will take under your care 'til a further disposition of them can be made, if necessary letting me know in the meanwhile if they came out resolved upon land or meant to confine their services to the water only."

Recently equipped with new weapons and uniforms, the Continental Marines—not yet referred to as United States Marines—not only looked professional, but also were experienced, tough fighting men who had served during several cruises with the fleet and raids along the Delaware. In addition to the Continental Marines, there were Sailors from the Continental Navy as well as Marines and Sailors from the Pennsylvania Navy serving in the various Pennsylvania militia units of Cadwalader's brigade.

Originally, General Cadwalader's men had been part of the planned attack on Trenton on Dec. 26, but only some of his men were able to cross the river, and thus the Marines were denied a chance to participate in General Washington's victory. But General Cadwalader was a stubborn man, and a few days later, he crossed the Delaware River with his brigade, including the Marines, and sent General Washington intelligence that the British were spread out in New Jersey, presenting an opportunity to strike another blow similar to the successful attack on the Hessians.

General Washington took advantage of the new situation and crossed the Delaware again on Dec. 29 with about 3,000 men, prompting a quick reaction from the British. Lord Cornwallis had cancelled his furlough home when news of the Hessian



COURTESY OF NATIONAL ARCHIVES



COURTESY OF THE COL CHARLES H. WATERHOUSE ESTATE, ART COLLECTION OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE MARINE CORPS

General George Washington rallied his men during the battle in January 1777. Marines and Philadelphia militiamen succeeded in their second attempt to dislodge the British from Princeton, N.J.

This map, which shows the British positions around Princeton, was drawn by General Cadwalader based on intelligence gathered at General Washington's behest in December 1776.

defeat reached New York. He was on the hunt with 8,000 men, leaving only a few to guard stores near Princeton as he chased after General Washington.

Stymied by the American forces on the south bank of Assunpink Creek, Cornwallis put his troops to rest on the night of Jan. 2, stating, "We've got the 'Old Fox' safe now. We'll go over and bag him in the morning."

The Old Fox had other plans. Cold weather had hardened the muddy roads and artillery easily could move alongside marching troops. At about 1 a.m., General Washington's troops began moving northeast from their positions on a side road. General Cadwalader's brigade, with the Marines in the front, followed Hugh Mercer's small brigade of Delaware, Maryland and Virginia regulars through the cold, dark morning. After marching about 4 miles, Thomas Mifflin's brigade was ordered to move away from the rest of the Army to occupy a bridge and prevent the passage of British troops approaching from the south. Mercer and Cadwalader continued on toward Princeton. A few minutes later, Mercer spotted a force of British attempting to intervene between the two American columns and deployed his brigade in the face of the advancing redcoats. Mercer's men fired two volleys before the British returned fire and charged the Continentals. The Americans, many not armed with bayonets, fled before the pointed attack of the experienced and well-trained British.

Washington brought forth General Cadwalader's men after observing Mercer's panicky retreat. The valiant Mercer was mortally wounded and his second-in-command was killed. The Marines deployed with their brigade, taking a position on the right flank as they moved from column into line. They were barely able to fire one volley before the panicked men of Mercer's brigade, followed closely by bayonet-wielding British soldiers, crashed into the left flank of General Cadwalader's militiamen, breaking them. Some on the right, including the green-clad Marines and two cannon, tried to hold the line.

General Washington rode into the confused

mass of retreating soldiers and, with General Cadwalader, tried to rally the troops on the left. The panicked Pennsylvanians continued to flee. Cadwalader moved back another 20 yards and again tried to stop the rushing mob, slowing the withdrawal. Washington joined him with another



Stymied by the American forces on the south bank of Assunpink Creek, Cornwallis put his troops to rest on the night of Jan. 2, stating, "We've got the 'Old Fox' safe now. We'll go over and bag him in the morning."



COURTESY OF LIBRARY OF CONGRESS; PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, DETROIT PUBLISHING COMPANY COLLECTION

This John Trumbull painting, "Death of General Mercer at the Battle of Princeton," depicts the demise of General Washington's friend and a fellow Virginian, Hugh Mercer, who was mortally wounded in early January 1777, at the Battle of Princeton.

brigade of infantry and two more cannons forming a line.

With the Marines and two small cannons anchoring the right, General Washington galloped ahead of them and shouted, "Parade with me, my brave fellows, we will have them soon!" Marching through a barrage of British fire, the regrouped men of Mercer's and Cadwalader's commands halted about 40 yards from the British line and exchanged volleys with Washington riding tall on his horse between the two adversaries exhorting the Americans. The air filled with smoke and Washington disappeared.

When at last the dense gun smoke cleared, Washington could be seen and heard challenging the Americans to charge the British. The king's troops, now outnumbered at least two to one, broke and ran. Some fled back toward Princeton where most were captured by the other Continental column. Washington rallied his men and captured large numbers of British around Princeton College. The commander in chief led the tired and hungry soldiers, Marines, and Sailors north to the rough country of upper New Jersey. The British gave up the chase, leaving New Jersey to the Americans. Hundreds of British had been killed or captured.

American losses were less than 100 killed or wounded. Among the dead was Captain William Shippen, a Pennsylvania Marine serving on the brig

Hancock, a privateer operating out of Philadelphia. Washington congratulated Captain Andrew Porter for the part the Continental Marines played in the actions around Trenton and Princeton. Samuel Nicholas urged General Cadwalader to pursue the Tories of New Jersey but the Army needed to put distance between them and Cornwallis, who was still trying to catch up with the Continental forces.

The Marines stayed with General Washington as the Army moved into winter quarters at Morristown, N.J. They had little to do, performing small chores like escorting prisoners back to Philadelphia. Some were incorporated into artillery units. Porter resigned his commission and stayed on with Washington's Army in a Pennsylvania artillery company. By the spring of 1777, most of the Marines were back in Philadelphia or on their ships, ending their role in Washington's Continental Army. For the rest of the conflict they would, as Washington stated, "... confine their services to the water," fulfilling the historical duties of Marines aboard ships at sea or in amphibious raids and operations.

Author's bio: MSgt Jeff Dacus, USMCR (Ret), lives in Vancouver, Wash., where he teaches history to 8th-grade students. His 23 years as a Marine include a combat deployment during Operation Desert Storm as a tank platoon sergeant. 🇺🇸

With the Marines and two small cannons anchoring the right, General Washington galloped ahead of them and shouted, "Parade with me, my brave fellows, we will have them soon!"

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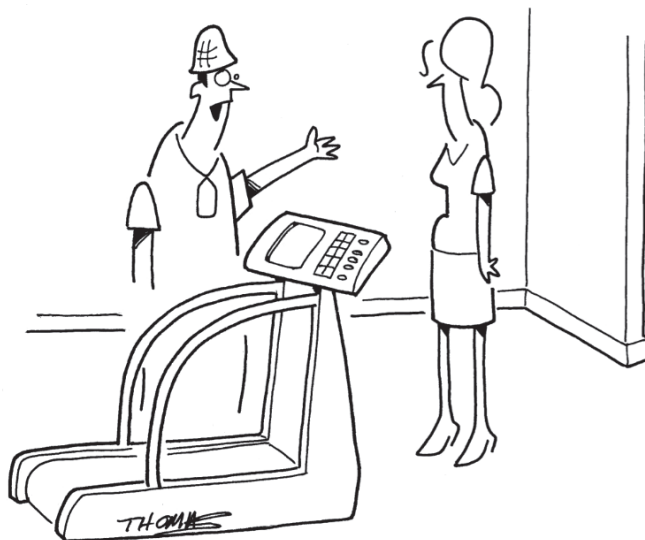
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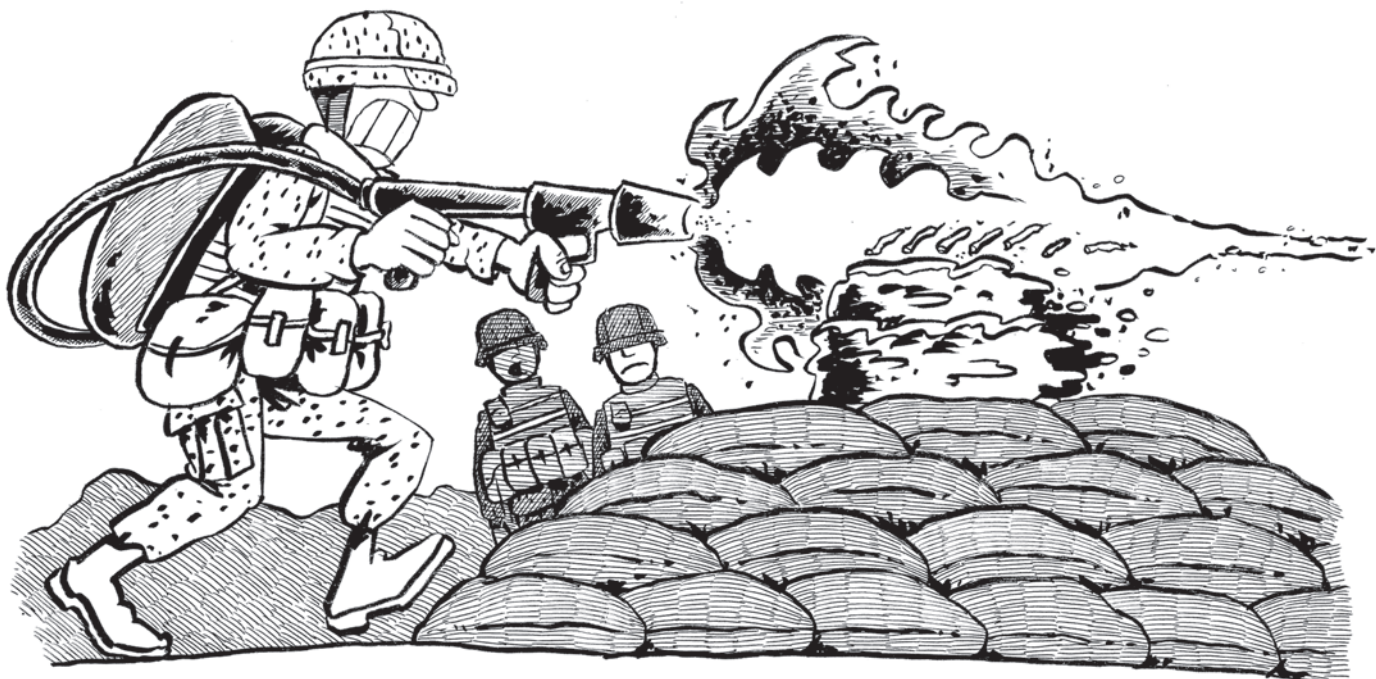
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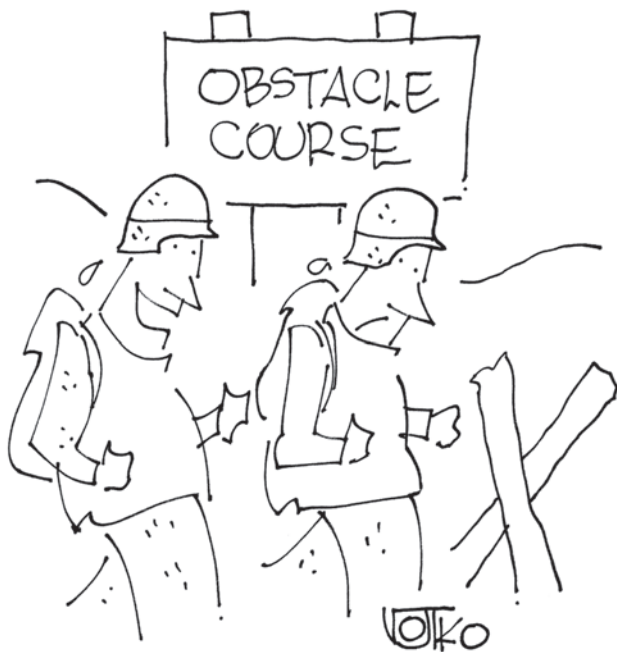
"The good thing is I packed the spare!"



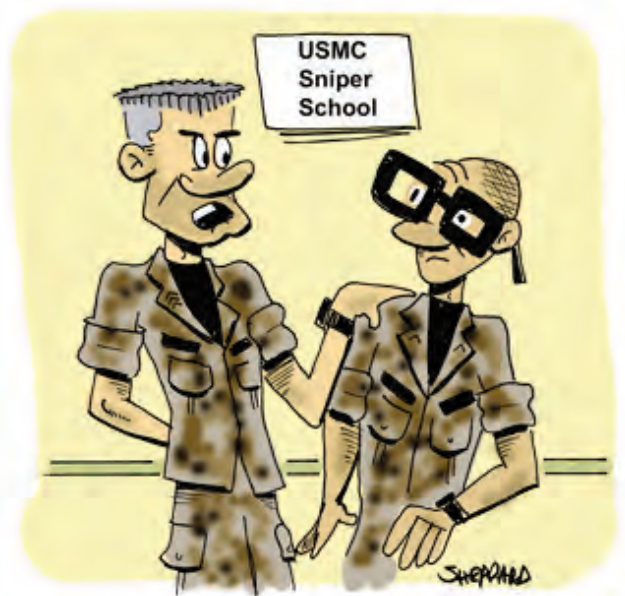
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"Nobody had a lighter, Sir."



"This is much easier than shopping with my wife at IKEA."



"We just don't think this is a good fit."



"He says he hates America and all that it represents."



"The sergeant just sent us an e-vite for a 5-mile hike."

Establishing Camp Pendleton

Editor's note: This is an excerpt from "Camp Pendleton: The Historic Rancho Santa Margarita y Las Flores and the U.S. Marine Corps in Southern California, A Shared History," printed with permission of the Marine Corps History Division. It is available for download at www.usmcu.edu/historydivision.

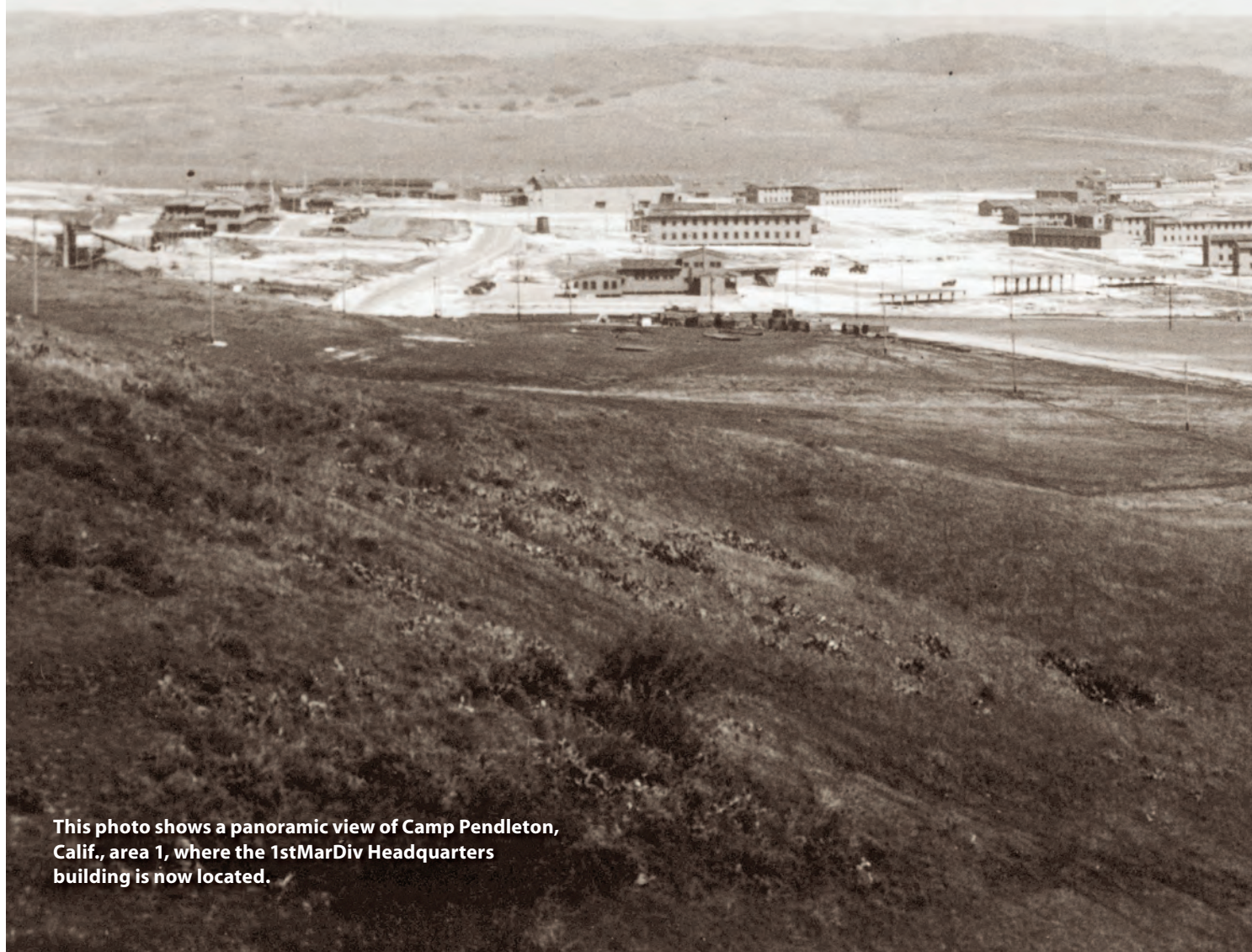
With the looming specter of war in 1940, the Marine Corps doubled in size. Prior to World War II, Marines trained primarily in Quantico, Va., and Parris Island, S.C.

A contingent also trained at the Marine Corps Base San Diego (now known as Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego).

Although these existing facilities expanded to support the influx of new recruits, the anticipated involvement of U.S. Armed Forces in the South Pacific precipitated a call for a larger West Coast training installation. MCB San Diego was landlocked and thus a poor location for amphibious assault training exercises. A 9,000-acre temporary camp, known as Camp Elliot after the 10th Commandant, George F. Elliott, was established north of the city, but that facility, too, soon reached capacity. The Marine Corps began pursuing an additional site for the purpose of training recruits for the Pacific theater.

In the years leading up to World War

II, both the Marine Corps and Army expressed interest in acquiring all or part of the Rancho Santa Margarita y Las Flores for training troops. The tract, located approximately 50 miles north of San Diego near the community of Oceanside, offered ample coastline and relatively undeveloped terrain. Split among several private owners and operated by managers for the heirs, the ranch encompassed more than 260,000 acres in San Diego and Orange Counties. Army planners initially envisioned the site as a training base for developing an armored division, but decided that the steep canyons and hills were ill-suited for units preparing to fight in North



This photo shows a panoramic view of Camp Pendleton, Calif., area 1, where the 1stMarDiv Headquarters building is now located.

Africa or Central Europe. The Marine Corps, by contrast, appreciated the property's vast acreage and varied terrain. In addition, its beaches were conducive to amphibious exercises, a particularly important feature to the Marines due to the greater emphasis being placed on amphibious warfare. Only its distance from San Diego and anticipated development costs prevented Marine Corps planners from recommending the ranch for Marine Corps expansion.

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and U.S. declaration of war in December 1941 added a sense of urgency to military efforts to acquire civilian land for the war effort. Under the Second War Powers Act,

Acquiring the Land

The Marine Corps aimed to purchase the land outright, but the Baumgartner family, who had married into the O'Neill family, offered to lease the property to the Marine Corps instead. The Marine Corps deemed it essential to own the ranch so that it could terminate the existing leases with tenants and use the land as it wished. Condemnation proceedings began for the acquisition of 113,000 acres, and the land was vested to the Marine Corps in December 1942. While some families were able to maintain individual leases from the government to continue farming the land until the 1960s, the majority of tenant farmers moved away. In addition, the residents of a small Japanese settlement were relocated to internment camps. Later purchases expanded the total acreage.

Breanne Robertson



J.E. HADDOCK SCRAPBOOK, MCB CAMP PENDLETON ARCHIVES



The lumberyard, shown here in 1942, was used to construct more than 500 buildings throughout Camp Pendleton.

the federal government possessed the ability to seize private property for immediate use while it negotiated a fair price with the owners. In April 1942, the military compensated the O'Neill and Flood families a combined total of \$4.2 million for approximately 121,000 acres of land, including almost 20 miles of coastal property. This purchase included the core buildings of the Rancho Santa Margarita y Las Flores: the Santa Margarita Ranch House, bunkhouse, and blacksmith shop (now a

chapel), as well as the Las Flores Adobe ranch house constructed by Marco A. Forster in 1867.

Military officials initially intended the new training facility to be ready for occupancy in six months and moved quickly to build the basic infrastructure necessary to support 20,000 Marines. More than 5,000 laborers worked around the clock to prepare airfields, barracks, railroads, administration buildings and other support facilities. The rapid pace of develop-

ment and large number of expected recruits necessitated the widespread construction of temporary structures. The primary troop facilities included Navy B1-type wood frame barracks with battalion mess halls and tent camps. Storage buildings rested on concrete foundations, while most wood frame administration buildings and barracks of temporary construction were elevated on post-and-pier foundations. Nevertheless, the expedited pace of construction was stymied by



J.E. HADDOCK SCRAPBOOK, MCB CAMP PENDLETON ARCHIVES

changing design plans, the challenge of coordinating multiple survey parties, and spring flooding of the Santa Margarita River and smaller streams running through base. To ensure the military installation would be operational by September, the project managers adopted a vertical approach, focusing construction efforts first on the “Mainside” area in the south-east portion of base and expanding to other designated areas in order of priority.

By late summer, Colonel Lemuel C.



USMC

President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Mary Fay Pendleton, widow of MajGen Joseph H. Pendleton, attended the dedication ceremony for Camp Pendleton on Sept. 25, 1942. GySgt Carl A. Ostrom holds the U.S. flag prior to its raising as part of the ceremony.

Shepherd Jr. led the 9th Marine Regiment with the 1st Battalion, 12th Marines, on a four-day tactical march north from Camp Elliott, east of Miramar, to become the first troops to occupy the new installation. Colonel Shepherd conceived of the multiday trek as an extended training exercise. Having dispatched one of his companies in advance to plan simulated attacks against the marching Marines, the commander ordered his troops to remain on constant alert as though they were traversing enemy territory. The perceived threat that the Japanese might attack Southern California made this pretense easy to follow, and the regiment successfully defeated a series of mock ambushes en route to their new quarters.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt oversaw the official dedication of the base on Sept. 25, 1942. In a simple ceremony honoring the memory of Major General Joseph H. Pendleton, the president designated the new military installation Camp Pendleton after the Marine Corps general’s longtime advocacy for a permanent Marine presence in San Diego. President Roosevelt was joined by MajGen Pendleton’s widow, Mary Fay Pendleton, who affixed the national colors and slowly raised the flag, and MajGen Joseph C. Fegan, the first commanding general of Camp Pendleton, who read aloud the orders that formally placed the base in commission.

Designed to provide large-scale tactical training for organizations before they were shipped out to the Pacific, the facility was a geographical model of the concept of a land-sea-air team. Tanks churned in the meadows while infantry trained in the

hilly interior wilderness. Amtracs rolled into Del Mar Boat Basin and out to sea, and the new airstrip near the Santa Margarita Ranch House facilitated Marine aviators’ training for operations in the Pacific theater. By the end of WW II, the entire 3rd, 4th, and 5th Divisions, or fully one-half of the Marines who fought in the

Camp Pendleton Construction Statistics

Prime contractors: J.E. Haddock, Ltd. Engineers, Ltd.

Construction duration: 16 months

Cost: \$35 million (initial contract)

Employees: 5,500 (peak)
from San Diego and Los Angeles

Construction area: Pacific Ocean to Riverside County line and between the city limits of Oceanside and San Clemente

Elevations: Sea level to more than 3,000 feet above sea level

Initial facilities built: 518 buildings consisting of 4.5 million square feet (approximately 100 acres)

Roads built: 14 miles of paved four-lane highway
30 miles of secondary paved roads
65 miles of unpaved roads



Marine Corps History Division

From the beginning of its existence, the Marine Corps has recognized the importance its history has in defining its role for the American public and also in maintaining its roots as a military Service. As a result, on Sept. 8, 1919, the Historical Section, Adjutant and Inspector's Department, Headquarters Marine Corps, was established by Major General Commandant George Barnett. The new Historical Section would be required to set up and maintain an archives section to serve as a repository for historical documents and to prepare an official history of the Corps during the First World War. In addition, the section would also revise and update the Corps' history of record and collaborate with officers and enlisted Marines to record the Corps' history and events of interest. While today's History Division has been expanded significantly to include the Histories Branch, Historical Reference Branch, Oral History Section, Field History Branch, Archives Branch, and Editing and Design Branch, the basic guiding principles remain consistent: to preserve, promote, and publish the history of the Corps.

Today the History Division relies on its historians to research and write the official history of the Corps in the form of monographs, battle studies, occasional papers, oral histories, unit and base histories, and a scholarly journal. Within that structure, the History Division has recently been tasked by the Department of Defense to commemorate two specific periods in Marine Corps history as their anniversaries approach—Marine Corps involvement in WW I and the Viet-

nam War. Collectively, these publications can be found on the History Division website in digital format at www.usmcu.edu/historydivision; in print format at the Brigadier General Edwin H. Simmons Marine Corps History Center bookstore; or by request at history.division@usmcu.edu. All are available free of charge.

In the coming year, History Division will continue to publish titles within the two commemorative series, including battle studies covering Hue City and Saint-Mihiel, and a field guide for Belleau Wood. In addition, a history of Women Marines from 1977 to 2000 and several oral histories on prominent Marines such as Generals William L. Nyland and Michael W. Hagee will also be published in 2018.

The History Division's scholarly journal—*Marine Corps History*—gives historians and scholars, particularly master's and Ph.D. students who are just venturing into scholarly publishing, twice-a-year opportunities to publish articles and book reviews on all topics within the long history of the Corps: the Civil War, the Spanish-American War, Banana Wars, WW I, WW II, the Korean War, the Cold War, Vietnam, Iraq, Afghanistan, and women and minorities in the military. To submit an article for consideration or to request a list of titles available for review, send an email to history.division@usmcu.edu with "Marine Corps History" in the subject line.


To further participate in your Marine Corps history, visit the History Division website or follow us on Facebook at Marine Corps History Division.



Pacific, passed through the “Gateway to the Pacific.” Meanwhile, Camp Elliott had become home to the Fleet Marine Force Training Center, West Coast, and carried the principal mission of training individual replacements for combat units overseas. When the Navy took over the facility in 1944, Headquarters, Fleet Marine Force, San Diego Area, transferred to Camp Pendleton. The merger distinguished the latter as the largest Marine Corps base in the nation. Consonant with its prominence in both population and amphibious training capabilities, Camp Pendleton became a permanent training installation on Oct. 14, 1944.

After the war, Camp Pendleton reversed direction and served as a demobilization center for the Marine Corps. All organized units returning to the United States from the Pacific theater passed through Southern California. Camp Pendleton’s Training Command became the Redistribution Regiment, processing 50,000 men either

for immediate separation or relocation to another station for discharge from the Marine Corps. Several smaller units based at the installation, including the Navajo Code Talkers and the Marine Corps Women Reserve, were disbanded altogether. The total strength of the Marine Corps decreased from 485,000 at the close of the war to 80,000 in 1947.

Author’s bio: Breanne Robertson is a historian with the Marine Corps History Division. Essays drawn from her research appear in Marine Corps History, American Art, Annals of Iowa and Hemisphere: Visual Cultures of the Americas. Her current projects include a monograph on Marine Corps activities in the Dominican Republic between 1916 and 1924 and an edited volume examining the history and cultural meaning of the Iwo Jima flag raisings, entitled “Investigating Iwo: The Flag Raisings in Myth, Memory and Esprit de Corps.” 

Left: Marines from the 9th Marine Regiment and its attachments marched four days from Camp Elliott to the new base at Camp Pendleton, on Sept. 1, 1942.

Below: Marine Raiders dash at full speed along narrow poles as part of their training at Camp Pendleton in January 1943.

USMC



USMC

SEA STORY OF THE MONTH

Shazam! It's Gomer Pyle

Not too long ago I went into downtown Honolulu for a doctor's appointment. After a brief period in the waiting room, I was moved to an examination room. Shortly thereafter my wife entered the room and exclaimed, "Guess who just came into the waiting room—Jim Nabors!"

When my doctor appeared, I asked that if he felt it was appropriate, to please tell Jim that from one Marine to another, thanks for all the years that he has spent bringing good clean enjoyment and happiness to so many.

Unfortunately, I left the office without meeting Jim personally but later that evening the doctor called and relayed this message, "Jim said to tell you, Semper Fi."

God Bless you, Jim, and Godspeed. Rest in peace.

Gabe Brady
USMC, 1954-1957
Ko Olina, Hawaii

Sleepy Recruit

Before lights out we were required to study the Marine manual. All boots were sitting on their foot lockers studying—except me. I was lying on my back on the deck at the north end of the platoon bay.

My fatigue cover was on my head; its bill and the manual were in front of my face shielding my eyes. It looked like I was intently studying. Not so. I had fallen asleep.

I was told later that our DIs had come out of the duty hut, spotted me and then told all the other boots to study as hard as Private Champagne. Fortunately for me, I didn't snore.

I survived and much later was promoted to sergeant—a rank I will always be proud of. I am and will forever be a United States Marine. I was 22 years old in boot camp and now I'm in my late 80s. I still have and still fit into my uniforms, which I wear for many occasions.

Sgt Joe J. Champagne
Gold Bar, Wash.

The Spyglass Of Authority

It was a beautiful spring afternoon in 1946. I was a private first class aboard the battleship USS *Missouri* (BB-63) which was tied up to a pier in Norfolk, Va. As a member of the Marine detachment, I had duty as an

Suddenly, and without warning, the OD handed me his spyglass and said, "Take over the deck" and then he disappeared through a hatch.

orderly for the officer of the deck. Suddenly, and without warning, the officer of the day (OD), a young lieutenant junior grade, handed me his spyglass and said, "Take over the deck" and then he disappeared through a hatch.

I tucked the spyglass under my left arm and smiling to myself, began to strut the deck like Horatio Hornblower himself. Suddenly, an old chief appeared and gazed about looking for the OD. He then spotted me, approached unsmiling,

rendered a snappy salute and said, "Permission to go ashore, Sir." He recognized the spyglass as a symbol of authority. Stunned, I returned his salute and said, "Permission granted." He turned, saluted the fantail and disappeared down the gangway.

Two approaching Sailors saw the chief and smartly did the same. Shortly thereafter the OD returned and I handed him his spyglass. He was totally unaware that he had just created the only Marine PFC officer of the day in U.S. Navy history.

John Mixon
USMC, 1945-1951
Bakersfield, Calif.

Armed Forces Ceremony Takes the Cake

It was the summer of 1977 and I was on recruiting duty in northwest Arkansas. A young dental assistant had asked me out on a date. She was 21 and I was 26. After our third date we both decided to get married. Luckily, we couldn't find anyone to marry us.

That summer a new mall had opened and recruiters from all branches were opening offices within the mall. One Saturday there was to be a grand opening ceremony for the Armed Forces recruiting offices. All the other branches were bringing in equipment and top brass for the ceremony. My commanding officer at the time said we didn't have the funds to bring anything in, but I could recruit other recruiters to attend and help with the ceremony.

I then came up with the bright idea (or not so bright) to see if my girlfriend of two weeks wanted to get married as part of the grand opening. She said yes. I was able to get recruiters from

around the state to do the sword arch. We made the front page of two Sunday newspapers in the area and dwarfed the publicity the other branches received for the grand opening.

1stSgt Carl Bergener
USMC (Ret)
1968-1989
West Palm Beach, Fla.

My People

It was the summer of 1969 in Vietnam. I am of Asian descent, and during inspection, the inspecting officer said to me, "Private, are you going to have a problem shooting your own people?"

I replied, "Sir, I haven't shot any U.S. Marines yet!"

Sgt Ernest V. Tom
Monterey Park, Calif.

Field Day Granted

I was a plane captain in VMA-212 at Kaneohe Bay from 1961 to 1963. Thursday was field day in the barracks. After work at the hangar everybody had to clean the barracks. No liberty allowed until the officer of the day (OD) inspected and approved the field day.

One day we had an OD—a fresh lieutenant—who walked into each squad bay wearing white gloves. He raised one gloved index finger, swiped it as if testing the air, and declared the barracks filthy. "Do it over," he said, turned around and left the barracks telling the duty noncommissioned officer to call him when he thought it was clean enough and not to issue liberty cards until he approved of the field day.

This had the effect of pissing off the troops so one of the guys took it to the next level. He went outside and collected palm branches, twigs and vines from the

foliage in the yard and wove them together making a green garland several yards in length. Then he hung this over the wall lockers and racks in his cubicle just before the OD came back for another inspection. When the OD got to his cubicle, he just stood there for a minute or so. Our hero stood by his rack at ease.

Luckily, this time around the lieutenant was accompanied by our maintenance officer, a Mustang major who was older and wiser. The major appreciated the humor of the situation and got a great laugh out of it. He declared field day over and liberty commenced.

Cpl Norm Spilleth
USMC, 1960-1964
Minneapolis, Minn.

Cooled Up in a Chicken Truck

In my bold and reckless days, back in 1962, it was not uncommon for me to leave Camp Lejeune, N.C., on a Friday afternoon, and hitch my way to East Aurora, N.Y., for the weekend, typically once every other month or so, and of course, hitch back in time for Monday morning reveille.

In those days, servicemen were respected and were seldom, if ever, passed by when hitchhiking. And of course, the Marine uniform was in itself a draw.

On one occasion, I got a ride with a truck driver (veteran Marine) to Haymarket, Va., where I stood at the side of the road resplendent in my uniform for not more than 10 minutes when a beat up old van-style truck pulled up and the driver offered me a ride. They were headed to Painted Post, N.Y., which was excellent.

Here's the catch. The truck was filled with open style crates of live chickens being transported to a farm. The only place to ride was on top of the crates on a

blanket supplied by the old gentleman's wife. They were very apologetic for the inconvenience, but could not let a serviceman stand at the side of the road in the cold winter weather.

So, up I went into the back of the truck, lying on what seemed like a hundred squawking chickens, feathers flying constantly, while listening to the war stories of this elderly gentleman from his days in Europe as an airborne Army sergeant.

When we finally got to Painted Post, his wife grabbed the broom she used to sweep out the truck, and again apologetically, swept the chicken feathers off my uniform before going on their way to the farm they were headed for. She must have done a good enough job, because again I was not standing there more than 10 minutes when I got another ride which got me within 12 miles of my destination.

LCpl Bob Arnst
USMC, 1959-1963
Citrus Springs, Fla.

A Sweeping Salute

I enlisted in the Corps in January 1964. I was in Platoon 306 and in my second month of boot camp at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, Calif., when I was "chosen" by one of the drill instructors to "sweep the company street" while everyone else was on downtime in the Quonset huts next to the San Diego airport.

I had almost reached the intersection of two streets when our first lieutenant series commander came bustling up to the corner while heading for the DI's hut. I immediately came to attention and saluted him without realizing I had the street broom in my right hand. He returned my salute as he hustled past me. Immediately, I swapped hands with the broom while still at attention. The lieutenant took a few steps

before something didn't seem right. He did a quick reverse march and said, "Recruit! Did you salute me with your left hand?"

As I was standing still at attention, with the broom now in my left hand, I was able to answer, "Sir! No Sir! How could the private salute with a street broom in the left hand, Sir?" He looked a bit puzzled but then continued on his way to the DI's hut while I let out a great sigh of relief.

Almost two decades later in June 1980, when I had been transferred back to Quantico, Va., as a gunnery sergeant, I was walking along Barnett Ave., in front of the base theater when I met a lieutenant colonel who, I found out later, happened to be the G-3 that we reported to. I approached him, asking if he remembered where we had been stationed together. Neither of us could figure out a base assignment that we were both at together.

The following month my mother sent me my boot camp book. I opened it up to the 3rd Battalion section

of the book; guess who my series commander was?

I told my lieutenant colonel I had figured out where we had been stationed together. I asked him if he had ever been saluted via the left hand. We both had a good laugh from this.

P.S. He was the officer who promoted me to master sergeant several years later.

MSgt Rod T. Gasche
USMC, (Ret)
Carrabelle, Fla.

Do you have an interesting story from your time in the Corps that will give our readers a good chuckle? Maybe it's a boot camp tale or a good old sea story that will have us in stitches? We would love to hear your stories and see any accompanying photographs. Write them down (500 words or less) and send them to: Patricia Everett, Leatherneck Magazine, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134, or email them to p.everett@mca-marines.org. We offer \$25 or a one-year MCA&F membership for the "Sea Story of the Month." Spread the word! 🍷





LCPL ISABELO TABANGUIL, USMC

Sgt Ethan Mintus and Sgt Joseph Latsch, UAS operators with VMU-3, are the first to be awarded Navy and Marine Corps Achievements Medals with the newly authorized Remote Impact “R” device during a ceremony at Hangar 103, MCAS Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, Dec. 11, 2017.

UAS Operators First Marines To Receive Awards with Remote Impact Device

Sergeant Joseph Latsch and Sergeant Ethan Mintus, unmanned aerial system (UAS) operators with Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron (VMU) 3, each received the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal with Remote Impact (“R”) device during a ceremony at Hangar 103, Marine Corps Air Station Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, Dec. 11, 2017.

The Marines were the first UAS operators in the Corps to receive the new “R” device for providing remote support during combat operations overseas. Lieutenant Colonel Kenneth Phelps, the commanding officer of VMU-3, said the two Marines have made history within the UAS community and the entire Marine Corps.

“This award demonstrates the impact of using a UAS during combat operations from a remote location,” said Phelps. “This is very important to the VMUs and individuals that fly unmanned aircraft because we’re often supporting missions from afar while still having a significant impact on those operations.”

Mintus said they were given an important mission during his deployment.

“We had a couple of weeks of planning on a high value individual (HVI) in the area,” said Mintus. “We were using our

aircraft as an indirect fires spotting asset, and during our flight we were coming up on ‘bingo fuel’ so we had to return to base and go off-station.”

Mintus said the decision was made to prepare another aircraft to provide support during the operation.

“A ‘Spoke Operation’ is to extend from our launch and recovery site,” said Latsch. “Within 48 hours of touching down on the Spoke site, we were in support of the joint task force commander from the friendly foreign military forces of the host country.”

Latsch said they provided observation for allied forces during the operation.

“The commander gave us a mission which helped support our allies to engage the enemy with indirect fire assets,” Latsch said. “We were trying to track enemy targets in order to allow allied aircraft to attack targets with more accuracy. During the time I spent in country, the detachment I was part of played a critical role in supporting our allies on the ground during combat operations.”

Phelps said Mintus and Latsch performed exceptionally well during their deployment in support of friendly forces in the field.

“Sgt Latsch was the first to go down to a Spoke site that enabled us to actually support different islands for the task force

commander,” Phelps said. “Sgt Mintus was prepping another aircraft to launch ... on-station while still flying a mission for the current aircraft in the air trying to track the enemy. This helped to extend time on station so there would be no interruption to the support being given to the friendly forces currently engaged with the enemy.”

Phelps said he’s pleased the Marines have played an important role in providing UAS support during operations overseas.

“I think it’s fairly significant these two gentlemen are representative of some of the creative Marines we have in the VMU community,” Phelps said. “I’m extremely proud of everything they’ve done and achieved.”

LCpl Isabelo Tabanguil, USMC

MCA&F Recognizes III MEF Marine of the Year

“Everyone has a different reason for joining the Marine Corps,” said Corporal Nelfi Tineoferreiras, an inventory management specialist with Headquarters Company, Combat Logistics Regiment 35, 3rd Marine Logistics Group. “You have to stay focused on that reason and let it motivate you. That’s how you stay successful.”

Tineoferreiras was recognized as the III Marine Expeditionary Force Marine of the Year for 2017 during the Marine Corps Association & Foundation’s professional dinner at the Butler Officers’ Club, Camp Foster, Okinawa, Japan, Jan. 12.

“When you work hard, it always feels good to know that someone is paying attention,” Tineoferreiras said.

A native of the Dominican Republic, Tineoferreiras earned her citizenship during Marine Corps boot camp in 2016 and has since worked hard for every accomplishment she has achieved.

“I have two brothers,” said Tineoferreiras. “One is in jail; neither graduated high school. I didn’t want to follow that path. I wanted to pave a way for myself and to be an example.”

As the noncommissioned officer-in-charge of the Receiving Section, Headquarters Co, CLR-35, Tineoferreiras verifies and routes more than 659,000 items each year for distribution to all units within III MEF.

“Being entrusted with the job of handling so many important items that are essential to the MEF is a great honor to me,” said Tineoferreiras, who at the age

Cpl Nelfi Tineoferreiras, the NCO in charge of the Receiving Section, CLR-35, 3rd MLG, sorts supplies at Camp Kinser, MCB Camp Butler, Okinawa, Japan, Jan. 11. She was recognized as the III MEF Marine of the Year for 2017 during a professional dinner sponsored by MCA&F, Jan. 12.

of 22 has been on the job for fewer than two years. “When I first started the job, I wasn’t very good at it,” she added, saying that she was determined to improve, so she asked a lot of questions and paid attention to how the Marines in her chain of command managed the day-to-day tasks of running the receiving section.

“Studying the job was an important step in becoming successful,” Tineoferreiras said. “I knew that if I wanted to excel, I had to put in the time to learn how to do every part of my job to the best of my ability.”

Tineoferreiras was meritoriously promoted to corporal on Dec. 2, 2017, for her demonstration of maturity, initiative and unmatched technical proficiency, according to her award citation. She attributes her success to having great leaders who guided her development.

According to Sergeant Edmanuel Williams, acting noncommissioned officer in charge of Storage Supply Company, CLR-35, Tineoferreiras is an outstanding Marine and an even better human being, and she deserves every promotion and award that comes her way.

“It’s hard to describe her,” Williams said. “I could never sum up a Marine of her caliber in just a few words. I need paragraphs for her. She’s incredible.”



LCPL JOSHUA PINKNEY, USMC

Williams said Tineoferreiras is a great leader and has successfully managed large areas of responsibility for a long time.

“She’s the best of both worlds,” Williams said. “She’s humble, she’s caring. But she’s not afraid to be fierce. She’s got that Devil Dog blood. You can see it pumping through her veins. She’s been taking charge of her section ever since she was a private first class.

Tineoferreiras said her main focus is not the awards and accolades, but her Marines.

“I know that when I was new to this unit, I had leaders who I would respect and look up to,” she said. “My goal is to be the one to set that example now.”

LCpl Joshua Pinkney, USMC

Ammunition Marine’s Invention Expected to Reduce Pack Weight

Staff Sergeant Alexander Long, ammunition logistics focus team chief at Program Manager-Ammo, Marine Corps Systems Command, was one of 18 winners of the first-ever Commandant’s Innovation Challenge in 2016.

For most of 2017, the Innovation Cell, Next Generation Logistics (NexLog) assisted Long in his mission to reimagine the logistical platform by which infantrymen are resupplied during battle.

Long created a handheld device which was a direct answer to a call from Lieutenant General Mike Dana, Deputy Commandant for Installations and Logistics, during the Innovation Challenge pro-



DUSTIN Q. DIAZ



COURTESY OF NEXT GENERATION LOGISTICS

SSgt Alexander Long has developed his winning entry from the inaugural Commandant’s Innovation Challenge with the support of the Innovation Cell, NexLog. The first prototype of the PCARD, which is expected to reduce the pack weight of Marines by 33 percent, is pictured on the right.



CPL CARL KING, USMC

WARRIOR CHALLENGE—Leathernecks with 3rd Reconnaissance Battalion compete in the unit's third annual Warrior Challenge at Camp Schwab, Marine Corps Base Camp Smedley D. Butler, Okinawa, Japan, Dec. 15, 2017. The challenge is timed and consists of eight events, conducted in remembrance of those killed or missing in action from the battalion. The fastest team received a handmade recon paddle and bragging rights. At the conclusion of the challenge, Marines reminisced about those who had gone before them.

motional video, in which he exclaims, "Man, this pack feels heavy! I wish there was a way to make it lighter!"

"Bombs and bullets are our business in the Marine Corps," said Long. "Millions of dollars are being spent each year attempting to make Marines' rifles weigh one ounce less."

Long found that as an ammunitions technician forward deployed and supporting infantrymen after their campaigns, fire teams were playing a "telephone game" and jamming their communications in an attempt to resupply their Marines. Seeking the answer to LtGen Dana's question, Long asked himself, "How do we increase efficiency, when we know consumables are the enemy, but they are also a necessity?"

"We create real-time information that is proactive rather than reactive," Long said. The current platform, he said, delays the resupply process and ultimately causes ineffective and untimely information, which often results in failure to support the current needs of the Marines. This leads to Marines carrying more weight than they typically need.

Today's generation of Marines, Long said, are more technologically savvy and physically fit than any other generation to date. Infantrymen go into battle with an additional 100 pounds strapped to the bodies, but if the Marine Corps looks at what produces the most weight within each pack, it's not the weapons or gear, but the consumables—food, water and ammunition.

Long believes that by the end of 2018, his tech-savvy handheld device, the Personal Combat Assistance and Reporting Device (PCARD), will offer Marines the capability to quickly and efficiently order and receive their supplies, thus reducing pack weight by as much as 33 percent.

The PCARD utilizes a three-button configuration with an information screen that uses a color-coded system of red, yellow and green, signifying the urgency of the resupply—red rated most urgent and green least urgent. By placing this wearable device in the hands of fire teams and platoon leaders, they can utilize methods already understood and can log the resupply needs of Marines in as few

as eight seconds. All this can be done before the transmitted request is forwarded for approval.

PCARD also will give Marines in the rear the ability to compile the data transmitted and anticipate the needs of the Marines before they deploy on future missions.

The original concept was pitched to the Department of the Navy Innovation Strategic Group (DISG) and was approved for \$433,000 in funding. Out of the 18 challenge winners, PCARD is the only device currently being field tested, as two prototypes have been developed in fewer than nine months.

With the help of MD5 National Security Technology Accelerator, a Department of Defense program, the first PCARD prototype was developed with assistance from the University of Southern Mississippi and Kopis Mobile. The first model was introduced at the Sea, Air and Space Expo; Modern Day Marine Expo; the Pentagon and the General Officers Symposium.

After receiving exemplary feedback in these venues, the project continued to production of a second prototype. Twenty units of the second prototype, created with the assistance of Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Lincoln Laboratory, were developed for a weeklong field test at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., where senior leadership within 1st Marine Logistics Group was able to learn about the device while training junior Marines within their platoons on the new technology. The device was tested for complications in range, signal depth and frequency. After the week of testing, Long was happy with the results but not completely satisfied.

"Don't let perfection be the enemy of good enough," he said, adding that he still feels the device holds much more potential.

Thanks to the GPS technology in the wearable PCARD, Long hopes to take advantage of the drone supply program to use in conjunction with traditional cargo resupply missions.

Frances Seybold, MCB Quantico

Artist Donates Sculpture To Combat Center

The officers' club at Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif., hosted a dedication ceremony for a new sculpture, Jan. 9. Claudio D'Augustino, a sculptor who has created many Marine Corps-related pieces for Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, gifted the sculpture to the combat center.

In 1997, D'Augustino was commissioned by MCRD San Diego to create a piece to commemorate 75 years of recruit train-



LCPL ISAAC CANTRELL, USMC

Artist Claudio D'Augustino stands in front of his sculpture during a dedication ceremony at the Officers' Club, MCAGCC Twentynine Palms, Calif., Jan. 9. He worked on the sculpture at MCRD San Diego, where he gathered inspiration from the spirit of Marine recruits and drill instructors.

ing there. He viewed the creation of the sculpture "Marine Recruit" as a way to give back to the military community and thank them for their service.
In the years to follow, D'Augustino created several more Marine Corps-related pieces, such as a drill instructor bust, a bust of Lieutenant General John A. Lejeune, and his most recent pieces, a sculpture of

the Marine Corps emblem—the one that was donated to the combat center.
"I was able to work on [my latest] sculpture on board MCRD San Diego, and hearing the drill instructors and seeing the Marines go through training inspired me," D'Augustino said. "Once you step onto a Marine Corps base, you can feel the sacrifices that have been made and you

get the sense that you're doing things for the United States. By working on base, I was able to feel those emotions and make this sculpture happen."
Lieutenant Colonel Larry Warfield, assistant chief of staff, Marine Corps Community Services, spoke at the dedication ceremony.
"When I look at Claudio's sculpture, I can hear the echoes of Marines and Sailors who have come through the combat center and dedicated their lives to the service," Warfield said.
D'Augustino expressed his gratitude to everyone who made the event possible and said that the whole experience felt very surreal to him.
"Donating this sculpture is a dream come true for me, and knowing that it has been placed in this building makes me happy because this piece is in good hands," D'Augustino said. "I'd like to thank everyone who made this moment possible and everyone on base who participated to make this happen."
Cpl Dave Flores, USMC



Crazy Caption Contest

Winner



LCPL MARTIN EGNASH, USMC

"When I said, 'Meet me at the bar,' this is not what I had in mind."

Submitted by
Frank W. Tynan
Saratoga Springs, N.Y.

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

This Month's Photo



SGT ALLY BEISWANGER, USMC

(Caption) _____

Name _____
Address _____
City/State _____ ZIP _____



“Something’s Not Right”

Marine Corps, DOD Confront Signature Wound Of Modern-Day Combat

Part I
By Sara W. Bock

March is Brain Injury Awareness Month, and the Marine Corps has been integral on multiple fronts in the Department of Defense-led effort to expand and improve diagnosis, treatment and prevention of traumatic brain injury (TBI) among military personnel, particularly during the last decade. This two-part series was made possible through the assistance of the Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center (DVBIC), Naval Medical Center Camp Lejeune, N.C., the Intrepid Spirit Center at Camp Lejeune and Wounded Warrior Battalion-East.

Invisible Wounds

“Say what the doc wants to hear,” Captain Andrew Yeary told himself as he was brought into the Concussion Restoration Care Center at Camp Leatherneck in Helmand Province, Afghanistan.

It was 2013, and he had just survived an improvised explosive device (IED) blast. His tank’s hull had been breached, and by all accounts he was lucky to be alive; but in that moment, all Yeary could think about was getting back in the fight with his fellow Marines in 2nd Tank Battalion. He was determined not to let them down, even if that meant downplaying his symptoms.

When Yeary’s tank hit the IED, the

resulting blast fogged his vision. He vomited and then lost consciousness. The blast caused a traumatic brain injury (TBI), which just a few years earlier would likely have been “brushed off” and ignored, as he had no visible external sign of trauma. But the Department of Defense recently had committed vast resources to better understand, diagnose, treat and prevent TBI, which officials now consider to be the “signature injury” of modern-day combat.

Concussion care centers like the one at Camp Leatherneck were one of many byproducts of a somewhat intensely debated push in the military for early detection and treatment of mild TBI,



DVB/C

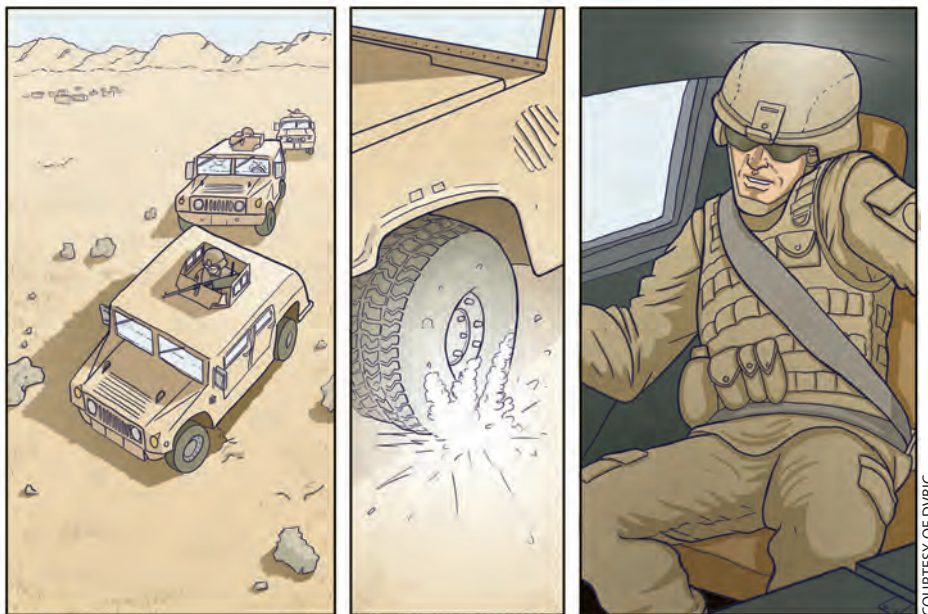
Opposite page:
The DOD recently has poured resources into understanding the effect of blast exposure on the brain in an attempt to reduce incidence of TBI among servicemembers. Here, Marines with 2nd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment and 2nd Combat Engineer Battalion take cover while conducting urban demolition breach training for Talon Exercise 2-17 at Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz., March 30, 2017. (Photo by LCpl Santino D. Martinez, USMC)

Right: Then-1stLt Andrew Yeary stands at attention in front of BGen James Lukeman, Commanding General, 2nd Marine Division, while the citation for Yeary's Purple Heart medal is read at MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C., March 6, 2013.

more commonly known as concussion, in an attempt to return troops to the force while minimizing long-term effects. At the height of Operation Enduring Freedom, there were 11 concussion care centers in Afghanistan alone. Prior to their implementation, Marines with TBI were often flown to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany and then sent to the states rather than returned to their units.



CPL AUSTIN LONG, USMC



This illustration depicts a series of events causing a Marine to sustain a vehicle blast-related brain injury.

But even when treated immediately and aggressively, the very nature of invisible wounds is that many who suffer from them are able to at least partially mask their severity in a way that they wouldn't be able to do for an external, physical injury—and Yeary did. He went right back to the fight with 2nd Tanks, but he had trouble sleeping, felt “foggy” and often became extremely irritated for no apparent reason. He kept it to himself and tried to brush it off as just a result of being in combat. He surely wasn't going to tell anyone and risk being removed from his unit.

And then there was a second IED. After exposure to that blast, all of Yeary's symptoms intensified. His previously impeccable short-term memory all but vanished, and simple tasks seemed to take him much longer than before. Anger and irritability would come and go without warning. His sleeping troubles persisted, he battled constant headaches—mostly migraines—and ringing in his ears. His hearing in one ear was intermittent. When he returned home from deployment, things didn't improve; in fact, they just got worse.

“Still don't want to tell anybody that anything's really happened. I'm a big tough Marine. I'll get through it, push it away, and it'll go away,” Yeary remembers thinking. “But unfortunately it didn't go away, and the more I'd tell myself to make it go away, the more the symptoms would gradually just get a little bit worse.”

His wife knew he wasn't the same person he was before and urged him to get help. Thankfully, he now had available to him a wealth of resources that didn't even exist a decade earlier.

A Sea Change

“Something's not right.” It's a phrase that echoed among military medical providers, unit commanders and family members as Marines and other servicemembers began to return home from Iraq and Afghanistan.

Kathy Helmick, acting director of Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center (DVBIC), is a nurse practitioner who has been a key player in the field of military TBI for the past 14 years. She heard those words—“something's not right”—firsthand in 2006 when she visited Landstuhl on behalf of DVBIC to meet with trauma surgeons who were




Kathy Helmick, acting director of DVBIC, sits down with *Leatherneck* in Silver Spring, Md., Jan. 3.



receiving medical evacuations from both Afghanistan and Iraq.

“We can't put our finger on it—we're not really sure what's going on, but we have a lot of guys that are ... coming back just with cognitive issues, balance issues, bad headaches, sleep problems, and they think they're going crazy. They think something's really wrong, and we really don't know what to make of this,” the trauma surgeons told Helmick.

As of the early 2000s, said Helmick, TBI and concussion had been startlingly under-studied; but the realization that blast exposure was likely causing these otherwise unexplainable, widespread issues was the impetus for progress and an opportunity for the military to lead the charge in the broader medical field alongside some unlikely partners: the NFL and NCAA. In 2007, said Helmick, the DOD, committed to figuring out what was going on, invested in a line of inquiry to the tune of \$300 million.

A photograph showing two Marines in full combat gear walking through a dusty, fortified area. They are surrounded by sandbagged positions and military equipment. The scene is hazy, suggesting a dusty or smoky environment. The Marines are walking away from the camera towards the background where more structures and equipment are visible.

Marines assigned to “Fox” Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 7, ground guide their vehicles on the way to provide security for an IED post-blast analysis near Forward Operating Base Now Zad, Helmand Province, Afghanistan, Nov. 25, 2012. By this point, it had become more widely acknowledged within the DOD that blast exposure is a contributor to high incidence of TBI.

CPL ALEJANDRO PENA, USMC

As a result of that funding, DVBIC has partnered with many collaborators on more than 700 research studies, most of which have focused on concussion—mild TBI—which she says ushered in a “sea change” from the prior focus on researching penetrating and severe brain injuries.

DVBIC, the TBI center of excellence for the Defense Health Agency, was established in 1992 as the result of a congressional mandate and supports a network of more than 20 centers, including military treatment facilities, Intrepid Spirit centers and VA medical centers. Headquartered in Silver Spring, Md., its staff oversees research conducted at its network sites, provides education and clinical care support, and assesses TBI injury data.

TBI has four possible classifications: mild, moderate, severe and penetrating, and is caused by either an impact or a blast, in combination with an alteration of consciousness. This may vary from actual

unconsciousness to “seeing stars” or just feeling dazed and confused, said Helmick. In a deployed environment, blasts are the leading cause of TBI which explains the increased incidences of symptoms in Iraq and Afghanistan once IEDs became the insurgents’ weapon of choice against coalition forces. In combination with land mines, rocket propelled grenades and mortar rounds, the arsenal of modern weapons, said Helmick, led to extensive blast exposure for many.

“Leadership and ‘boots on the ground’ folks noticed that something was really wrong,” Helmick said.

But at the same time, there was a fear that whatever it was would turn into another unexplained, hard-to-define veterans’ medical mystery, much like World War I “shell shock.”

In addition to medical research studies, the DOD needed actual boots on the ground to see what was going on—and figure out how to fix it.

The Gray Team

One individual who played an integral role in the sweeping changes in the military’s approach to TBI now sits at the helm of Naval Medical Center (NMC) Camp Lejeune, N.C.

Navy Captain James L. Hancock, Commanding Officer, NMC Camp Lejeune, is an emergency medicine physician who served with the Fleet Marine Force multiple times; most notably in Afghanistan in 2008 with 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment. While there, he developed and deployed mobile trauma bays, providing advanced trauma care to forward locations.

Hancock’s military service has come at a cost—Hancock has sustained multiple blast injuries, the last of which sent him headfirst into a radio tower. He has undergone 16 surgeries, but the biggest hurdle, he said, was dealing with the effects of TBI from that final blast. After returning home, already in rough shape at 80 pounds lighter than when he had left, he would



Above left: CAPT James Hancock, USN, Commanding Officer of Naval Medical Center Camp Lejeune, has personally dealt with the effects of TBI and was a member of the elite Gray Team in Iraq and Afghanistan in 2009.

Above right: A Navy corpsman studies the pocket-size MACE produced by DVBC.



stand beside his wife and kids and not be able to come up with their names, which would fill him with feelings of rage.

He had witnessed similar cognitive impairments in blast-exposed Marines and Sailors during his deployments, and now he knew exactly how they felt.

"All of a sudden we ended up with these kids, after the IEDs started, with rates of post-traumatic stress disorder, rates of rage attacks, rates of cognitive difficulties that couldn't be explained. As a physician I saw it every day," said Hancock. "At the time, the thought was dust you off, get you back in the game. You're not bleeding, let's get you back in the game."

The medical establishment and some military leaders, said Hancock, had their suspicions about these unexplainable symptoms. He remembers hearing things like, "We're MRI-ing, we're CT-ing, we're drawing blood, we're doing all this and we're not seeing anything objective—everything is subjective. Is this because this kid wants a Purple Heart? Is it because they're looking for disability?"

It was a polarizing issue among some, but the reports of "something's not right" had reached the Pentagon's top brass. Many had heard it firsthand from recovering servicemembers' parents or spouses while visiting them in military treatment facilities. Then-Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps General James F. Amos and his wife, Bonnie, were among those who had seen the effects up close in the Marines they visited and were staunch advocates for a quest for answers.

Then-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of

Staff, Admiral Michael Mullen, was also engaged and wanted to figure out the best way to change the military's approach to brain injuries. He assembled an elite team of senior military doctors and scientists to visit every forward operating base (FOB) in both Iraq and Afghanistan in early 2009 and see what was being done for blast-exposed or "blown up" servicemembers. Dubbed the Gray Team, a reference to the gray matter in the brain and the "gray area" surrounding the entire topic of TBI, the group was led by Lieutenant Colonel Christian Macedonia, an Army surgeon and out-of-the-box thinker who was known for his straightforwardness.



A blast exposure scenario is depicted in this illustration created by DVBC.



CPL JEFF DREW, USMC

A mushroom cloud rises into the air above the Ladar Bazaar in Shukvani, Helmand Province, Afghanistan, after Marines with 2nd Combat Engineer Battalion detonated a line charge, leveling the marketplace to eliminate the threat of IEDs, Aug. 6, 2011. Due to the nature of modern warfare, Marines and servicemembers who served in Iraq and Afghanistan were exposed to blasts often, and as TBI became more widely understood and reported, greater measures were taken to ensure early detection and treatment.

Rounding out the team was Colonel Geoffrey Ling, a dual M.D./Ph.D. and Army neurointensivist; Air Force Col Mike Jaffee, then-active duty director of DVBIC; and Hancock himself, who jokes that he was there to carry the luggage and be the one “with the Purple Heart who got blown up.”

What they found at the FOBs was inconsistency, said Hancock. He would ask corpsmen, “Hey, tell me how you’re doing the MACE [Military Acute Concussion Evaluation] exam.” Some would reply with an ashamed, “Sir, what’s a MACE?” while others would rattle off the complete battery of tests.

The MACE is a pocket-size concussion screening and cognitive/neurological exam guide developed and distributed by DVBIC as a resource for medics and corpsmen to evaluate troops exposed to blasts or other

potentially concussive events. Hancock said that during earlier deployments, he had observed Marines memorizing questions and answers, so that even if they were concussed, they could get through a MACE. “That’s the reason now there are several versions of the MACE and you never know which one you’re going to get,” said Hancock. All units were supposed to be implementing the MACE, but it didn’t seem to be enforced; perhaps in part due to a fear that pulling Marines out of a unit would have catastrophic effects on the ability to fight and win.

“The bottom line is you fight for your country when you join the service. When you deploy and you’re in it, you’re fighting for each other. That bond is unbelievably strong—[it’s] why these guys want to get back in the fight,” he added.

The Gray Team returned home and re-

ported the inconsistencies to the chairman who agreed on the importance of standardization.

In 2010, the DOD released a policy requiring that every servicemember involved in a potentially concussive event, or located within 50 meters of a blast, must be removed from combat for 24 hours and screened for concussion. They picked 50 meters based on a breacher study conducted at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., which had concluded that if a blast measuring over 25 pounds per square inch (PSI) enters through your eye sockets and ears, the brain is rattled.

“The reason that was so important and it was a game changer was because previously downrange what would happen was people would be in an incident and then go back home, back to their FOB, or whatever, and they may have a headache,

An explosion rocks the ground in the Ladar Bazaar, Shukvani, Helmand Province, Afghanistan, Aug. 5, 2011, after a line charge was detonated by Marines with 2nd Combat Engineer Battalion.



and then kind of work through it, try to keep doing their job in theater, and then they come back home ... but this thing happened six months ago so what are they supposed to do?” said Helmick. “So the policy changed the dynamic of how you get screened ... so it’s not ... on the patient or the person to come forward, but rather it’s based on a mandatory screening related to the potentially concussive event ... that’s a really big difference.”

But while the new policy had backing from DVBIC and the joint chiefs, it was hugely controversial.

“The medical establishment wondered where we got our medical degrees, what we were using,” said Hancock in reference to the specific 50-meter requirement. And then there was a nagging—yet legitimate—question from commanders: what impact would this policy have from a unit readiness standpoint?

He recalls a moment when a Marine general looked him in the eye and said, “Jim, you protect my Marines. I’ll fight the damn war. Don’t you think about tactics—you protect my damn Marines.” Those words still resonate with Hancock today.

Subsequent groups of the Gray Team pushed for the implementation of MRI scanners downrange. With the addition

of Dr. David Brody, a civilian scientist, and several others, the team returned to Afghanistan. Brody was studying the possibility of using diffusion tensor imaging, a new MRI technique, in diagnosing TBI—something previously unheard of, as concussions and most TBIs cannot be seen on regular MRI and CT scans. Concussion centers were now in place, and they noticed an overall shift in the approach to TBI—people were finally taking it seriously.

“I think the problem with the brain is we’re just scratching the surface of what we know and what we’re finding,” said Hancock. “I think there’s still a lot of men and women out there that are dealing with the effects of this, and I think we’ve got a long way to go before we get there—but this is a hell of a start.”

Get the Help

For Capt Yeary, the help he needed came in the form of a 16-week interdisciplinary program at the Intrepid Spirit Center at MCB Camp Lejeune, as well as several months at an inpatient facility in Florida, the Department of Veterans’ Affairs (VA) Tampa Polytrauma Rehabilitation Center, which takes a holistic approach to treatment.

Yeary remains a recovering service-

member with Wounded Warrior Battalion-East, and he’s at a point in his recovery that is considered “sustainment mode.” He’s moved on from being only responsible for taking care of himself to serving as the battalion’s Headquarters Company commander. And while he’s had to find a “new norm,” he is confident that he’d be the worst version of himself had he not come forward.

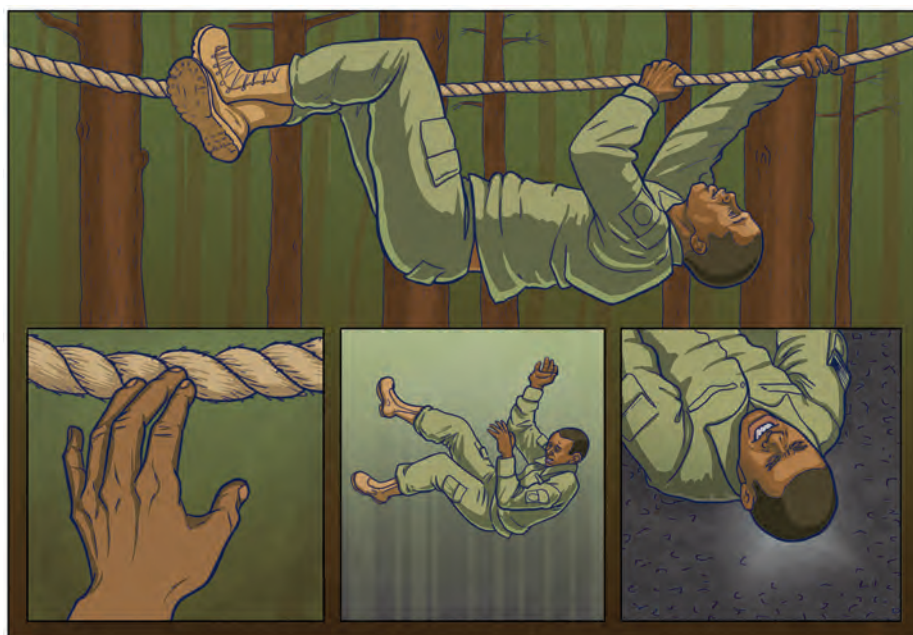
“You just adapt and overcome. And that’s probably our biggest problem is nobody wants to admit that we need to take a knee, something is wrong, and get the help,” said Yeary.

He has found comfort in the support of others who know what he’s going through, like Major Joshua Ellsworth, the executive officer of Wounded Warrior Bn-East, who, while not considered a recovering servicemember, was a TBI patient after being injured in a freak accident on Camp Leatherneck in 2013. A tornado picked up the makeshift gym structure he was in and threw him back down to the ground from 30 feet in the air.

Ellsworth’s story is just one of many examples of non-blast related incidents that can cause TBI among servicemembers—others include vehicle crashes, falls, sports injuries and assaults. Regardless of how



CPL JEFF DREW, USMC



COURTESY OF DVBIC

This DVBIC illustration depicts a servicemember falling to the ground and taking an impact injury to the head while completing a confidence course, reinforcing the fact that many cases of TBI in the military occur in garrison.

they were sustained, the symptoms often present the same, and the differences and similarities between blast-related TBIs and impact-related TBIs are still being studied.

Both Yeary and Ellsworth agree that an individual with a TBI has to be ready to get help before treatment will be effective. “You can lead a horse to water, but you’re not going to make him drink,” said Yeary. It’s something they see often in Wounded Warrior Bn and that frustrates him.

“You have to admit to yourself that there’s something wrong. You have to ‘buy in’ to the treatment,” said Yeary, adding that many Marines he’s seen come forward for help—particularly senior staff noncommissioned officers and officers—have waited so long that they can hardly function, their spouse has left them or they’ve developed a substance abuse problem that has made matters worse.

Since the Corps’ combat operations have slowed, Ellsworth has noticed an influx of Marines saying, “I’ve got a problem.” Both Marines urge anyone and everyone with symptoms to come forward for the sake of keeping their fellow Marines safe.

“The biggest thing for me was, looking back on it, I realize I’m supposed to be a leader in the Marine Corps and in charge of all these people, and I got so lucky that I didn’t get anyone killed or hurt or injured worse than we did because I didn’t want to admit I had a problem,” said Yeary. “If my son ever goes into the Marine Corps, I want the person in charge of him to be the brightest, the smartest, the best, to help him with his career—rather than a

guy who is struggling with all kinds of craziness because he refuses, because he’s too proud to get help.”

It’s a widespread problem, the Wounded Warrior Battalion staff believes, that while TBI treatment programs are fully supported by the Commandant and the rest of the Corps’ general officers, many lower-level unit leaders are reluctant to part with the Marines who need help because they need them to in order to be operationally ready.

“Marines want to stay in the fight. They want to not leave their unit. They feel like they’re letting people down if they deal with their own issues,” said Lieutenant Colonel Chris Hrudka, the commanding officer of Wounded Warrior Bn-East. “There are a lot more out there that are still in the fleet, that want to make that next deployment, want to get to the next promotion ... We always ask ‘What’s the cost of putting this off? What’s the damage of doing this to yourself, to your family and your career?’ ”

“It’s a constant sustainment. It’s an everyday thing for the rest of your life,” said Yeary of dealing with the effects of TBI. “But it is the nature of the beast. You’re going to take some bangs when you go to combat ... it’s inherently dangerous and you take the good with the bad. If you walk away unscathed: great. If you don’t, get the help—because it’s here.”

Author’s note: Part two of “Something’s Not Right” will appear in our April issue and will cover TBI treatment and clinical care, research, technology and educational initiatives.



SARA W. BOCK

Maj Joshua Ellsworth, left, XO of WWBn-E, and Capt Andrew Yeary, right, a recovering servicemember, stand at the entry to WWBn-E, MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C., Jan. 12. Both Marines deal with the effects of TBI.

Passing the Word

Compiled by Sara W. Bock

U.S. Mint Opens Sales for WW I Centennial Silver Dollar

The United States Mint opened sales for their new 2018 World War I centennial silver dollar, Jan. 17. The new coin honors the 100th anniversary of American participation in the war. In addition to the silver dollar, the U.S. Mint created special companion medals honoring each of the branches of the Armed Forces that served in WW I.

The Marine Corps medal depicts Marines during the aftermath of the Battle of Belleau Wood. One Marine stands guard as the other kneels to pay respect to the fallen. The inscription quotes a report to the American Expeditionary Forces: "WOODS NOW U.S. MARINE CORPS ENTIRELY."

Army Colonel Gerald York, grandson of World War I hero, Army Sergeant Alvin York, made the ceremonial first purchase of the new silver dollar coin at the Mint's lobby gift shop in Washington, D.C., Jan. 17. Col York then gifted a first-purchase

coin to Lieutenant General W. Mark Faulkner, USMC (Ret), Chief Executive Officer of the Marine Corps Association & Foundation, and Mr. Bob Borka, Chief Operating Officer of the Marine Corps League.

"These veterans should be remembered.



The U.S. Mint recently introduced a WW I centennial silver dollar and companion medals, like the Marine Corps one pictured above. (Courtesy of U.S. Mint)

During World War I, nearly 5 million American men and women placed their lives on hold. Many deployed to places that most had never visited to fight for the freedom of people they never met. They did not do this for personal gain—they did it solely to bring peace to the world," said Terry Hamby, chair of the U.S. WW I Centennial Commission.

The obverse design of the new collectible silver dollar is titled "Soldier's Charge" and depicts an almost stone-like soldier gripping a rifle. Barbed wire twines are featured in the lower right-hand side of the design. The wire design element continues onto the reverse side, in a design called "Poppies in the Wire."

Designed by Leroy Transfield and sculpted by Donald Eberhart, the design was selected by the Secretary of the Treasury following an open design competition in 2016.

Surcharges from the sale of the coins will go to the United States Foundation for the Commemoration of the World Wars to



Col Gerald York, USA (Ret), presented a first-purchase coin to Mr. Bob Borka, COO of the Marine Corps League, and LtGen W. Mark Faulkner, USMC (Ret), CEO of MCA&F, at MCA&F Headquarters in Quantico, Va., Jan. 17.

assist the WW I Centennial Commission's efforts. The commission was authorized by Congress to create the new National WW I Memorial in Washington, D.C., which will be located at Pershing Park, one block from the White House.

The WW I Centennial silver dollar will be produced in limited quantities and will be available for purchase until Dec. 28 at www.catalog.usmint.gov. The silver companion medals honoring the Marine Corps and other armed forces also can be purchased there, as well as at the U.S. Mint lobby gift shop at 801 9th Street, NW, Washington, D.C.

U.S. Mint

USMC Announces Partnership With USA Rugby

Marine Corps Recruiting Command (MCRC) announced its newly developed partnership with USA Rugby during the USA Rugby 2018 National Development Summit in Denver, Jan. 19.

The Marine Corps partners with organizations that share its core values of honor, courage and commitment. Rugby, which is well-known for instilling discipline, physical fitness and mental toughness in its players, was a natural choice for the Marines.

USA Rugby was founded in 1975 and is the national governing body for the sport in America, and a member of the United States Olympic Committee and World Rugby. It consists of 115,000 active members and oversees four national teams, multiple collegiate and high school All-American sides, as well as an emerging Olympic development pathway for elite athletes. As an official partner, Marines will have the opportunity to attend several USA Rugby events, such as training and education seminars, college championships and high school regional cup tournaments. This will allow Marines to engage with coaches and rugby athletes, with the hope of impacting their success on the rugby field and possibly influencing them toward service in the Marine Corps.

"To play this sport well, you have to be willing to sacrifice, or go to that dark place and fight through adversity—same thing you have to do to be a successful Marine," said Dan Payne, the chief executive officer of USA Rugby.

Major General Paul Kennedy, the commanding general of Marine Corps Recruiting Command, believes that both men and women who are recruited from the sport of rugby will have a better chance of enduring the Marines' grueling training.

Both MajGen Kennedy and Payne said they look forward to what the future holds for the partnership.

Sgt Shaehmus Sawyer, USMC



SGT SHAEHMUS SAWYER, USMC

From the left, SgtMaj Mike Lanpolsaen of MCRC; MajGen Paul Kennedy, CG, MCRC; Dan Payne, CEO of USA Rugby; Maj Benjamin Heredia, CO of RS Denver and SgtMaj Jon Jerome of RS Denver stand together at the USA Rugby 2018 National Development Summit in Denver, Jan. 19. During the summit, MajGen Kennedy announced a new partnership between Marine Corps Recruiting Command and USA Rugby.

"Brain Training" App Available To Servicemembers Free of Charge

Every Marine, Sailor, soldier and airman in the U.S. Armed Forces now has access to computerized "brain training" and assessments from Posit Science Corporation through its BrainHQ web, phone and tablet apps.

Library distributor Demco Software made the arrangements with the Department of Defense through the library systems of the Navy, Marine Corps, Army and Air Force. Now, a library card is all that active, reserve and retired personnel need to obtain a subscription to BrainHQ, which typically costs between \$8 and \$14 per month.

"Brain health in the military is not only about recovering from brain injury—and that's extremely important—but it's also about the mental readiness of our troops and their resilience under extremely challenging conditions," said retired Army Colonel Dallas Hack, M.D., who co-authored the White House's National Research Action Plan for Mental Health and Traumatic Brain Injury. "I'm pleased to see that an evidence-based solution was selected, and this arrangement should enable every military facility and medical

center to have access."

BrainHQ contains dozens of brain exercises that challenge users to think faster, focus better and remember more. In studies across varied populations, BrainHQ has improved performance at standard measures of cognition, quality of life and real-world activities.

"We are already engaged with dozens of VA and military facilities in treatment and research programs targeting cognitive decline from injury, aging and mental illness, as well as attaining peak performance from servicemembers," said Dr. Henry Mahncke, CEO of Posit Science. "We stand ready to help groups at bases, training facilities and medical centers acquire access to BrainHQ through this new program."

Access to BrainHQ for individual active, reserve and retired members of the military is available through special URLs for the library systems of the Navy, Marine Corps, Army and Air Force, as well as Military OneSource and base libraries. To learn more about BrainHQ, visit www.brainhq.com.

Posit Science



From the *Leatherneck* Archives: February 1968

"Let's Go ... Charlie!"

Leathernecks of Co C, 1st Bn, 1st Marine Regiment maneuver through rugged terrain and dense jungle during Operation Medina in 1967.

October 1967 ...

Hell three times reinforced was breaking loose on the small jungle-enclosed battlefield. Then, from somewhere, a baritone voice thundered above the melee, singing "The Marines' Hymn" over staccato bursts of Communist-made automatic weapons and the steady "whump" of grenades.

The Hymn swelled above the din as wounded Marines lying in tight knots across a fire-raked helicopter landing zone on exposed terrain took up the song, urging their buddies on to the fight.

"Let's go ... Charlie!" the deep voice bellowed, "Let's go get 'em!" And Lieutenant Jack Ruffer charged off into the jungle, leading his men in the Hymn at the same time. They followed closely on his heels, whooping blood-curdling oaths at the North Vietnamese soldiers hidden in the dusk-darkened undergrowth.

"Charlie" Company, 1st Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, had its adrenalin up and was fighting for its existence with all the tenacity and fortitude it could muster against three, possibly four, Communist companies termed "first-rate" by Charlie Co's commanding officer, Captain Bill Major.

This wasn't the first engagement of Operation Medina for Charlie Co, but it was the bloodiest for the Communist forces and the Marines.

The rifle company had taken to the field the previous day with 162 able Marines. They were the point unit for their battalion and 2/1, seeking elements of the 9th North Vietnamese Army Regiment in the Hai Lang forest, southwest of Quang Tri city.

That first day had been spent mostly waiting to get to the operational area. The first groups of Charlie Co, landed by U.S. Army and Marine helicopters, immediately set up a hasty defense around the landing zone. By midafternoon, the company had moved off the hilly landing zone and waded through a sea of elephant grass to plunge into a dense jungle.

With the enemy out of sight, the company had fought its way through the towering jungle without significant incident the first day. The night was marked only by a light rain seeping down through the high canopy.

In midmorning of the second day of the operation, Lt Ruffer and his platoon remained behind on a crude emergency landing zone to help evacuate two non-combat casualties. One Marine had broken his ankle; the other sustained injuries to his kidneys. Both of the injured had fallen



Capt Bill Major, right, discussed the enemy's assault route with LtCol A.F. Belbusti.

down the slippery mountainsides which Charlie Co was crossing.

By 1400, the company's progress had been noticeably slowed by the rugged terrain and thick jungle. They paused as the trail they were breaking intersected another well-used path that undoubtedly was an enemy avenue.

"I don't like the idea of using their trail," Gunny Thompson grunted to Capt Major.

The captain didn't like the idea either, but both felt it was the quickest route to their final objective for the day. None of the line companies favored the idea of spending the night in the jungle, surrounded by visibility-cutting undergrowth and strung out in positions where they would lose too much of their firepower. Their objective, if they could reach it, would afford them a tenable position.

With battalion headquarters' approval, the company swung out onto the trail and less than an hour later, they made contact with the enemy.

The North Vietnamese were waiting on a little hill where the trail disappeared

around an outcropping of brush. From this well-concealed hill, they opened fire with heavy 12.7 mm machine guns and AK-47 automatic rifles, backed by a barrage of hand grenades.

The Marines on the point dropped in the opening volley. Others went down from the exploding grenades. For less than a minute the enemy held the upper hand. Surprise had given them a short-lived advantage.

The enemy had made two mistakes, however; one was the tactical estimate of their ambush site. The other was the underestimate of the character of Charlie Co.

From their elevated position, slightly above the trail, the NVA were able to visually command about 10 yards of open ground. The only way their fire could be effective against the Marines was for the riflemen to stand, thus presenting themselves as targets. But the fire was effective in that it kept the Marines pinned down and gave the enemy grenadiers a chance to hurl their grenades.

Apparently, the Communists thought

Charlie Co would withdraw from the fight after the ambush was sprung. With the ambush site only about 5 yards from where the point Marine lay, Charlie Co hit back immediately with M16 rifle fire, M60 machine-gun fire, M79 grenades and 60 mm mortars. Within 10 minutes, the enemy found the outpouring of Marine firepower too withering to withstand and broke contact.

"Pour 'em on!" Gunny Thompson ordered his mortar crews.

"All corpsmen up!" came a chorus from the battle area.

The entire point squad of the third platoon had become casualties from the ambush. The point Marine died of his wounds despite the concerted efforts of corpsmen to save him. Eleven other Marines, including Lt Paul Nelson, the platoon commander, lay off the trail, wounded. Another four Marines who had sustained injuries ranging from torn knee ligaments to a dislocated shoulder were also out of action. All of the casualties would have to be evacuated.

Engineers moved up to the ambush site, now encircled by Marines in the jungle surrounding it, and began to blast and chop down trees to clear a landing zone from which medical evacuation helicopters could extract the wounded.

Meanwhile, Lt Ruffer's platoon took the high ground behind the ambush site while the third platoon, now led by Sgt Tom

Livingston, who had replaced Lt Nelson, formed a defense to the front, and Lt Bob Anderson's second platoon fanned out in the draw leading to the ambush site.

As dusk began to settle, only one stubborn tree remained in the LZ. It resisted the attempts of engineers to blast it down, although its trunk was shattered. Axes bounced off it. It was unyielding to efforts of a group of Marines trying to push it over.

The first helicopter was on the way in.

"The pilot says he'll take care of it," said Capt Mike Lesnik, who was leading a Forward Air Controller (FAC) team attached to Charlie Co.

The pilot, Capt H.L. Eisonson, of Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron (HMM) 163, brought his helicopter slowly in above the defiant tree. Together, the air borne crew chief aboard the chopper and Capt Lesnik guided Capt Eisonson over against the tree until the right wheel of the helicopter touched its limb-stripped top.

Capt Eisonson jockeyed his aircraft hard against the tree until it snapped at its splintered base and left the landing zone clear. Seconds later, the four most seriously wounded were aboard Eisonson's bird and on their way to a hospital.

Operating from the LZ, which measured little more than 50 feet in diameter, the aircrews ferried out the wounded. Just as the last helicopter was clearing the zone,

the enemy launched a ground attack, and at the same time, opened fire on the aircraft. The gunner aboard the aircraft returned the fire over the heads of Marines who had taken cover during the opening bursts.

Down the trail to the front of Charlie Company's position, Cpl Sherman Betts and his machine-gun section unhesitatingly returned fire with their M60 against two squads of NVA troops who broke into a clearing.

"There's a pot full of them down there and they're coming this way," Betts shouted above the throb of his gun. Then a grenade fell next to Betts and he and his crew were put out of action momentarily. Betts was the only man who was able to fire the gun although he had sustained a severe wound in his back.

By now the fight was on in earnest. The NVA were not probing. They were launching an all-out attack against Charlie Co, attempting to overrun and annihilate the Marine unit.

Trees surrounding the LZ splintered as enemy bullets whacked into them. Cpl Betts began sprinting up the fire-covered trail for a resupply of ammo. He never made it back to his gun because he was ordered to have his wound treated and to remain prone on the LZ.

Meanwhile, Capt Major disregarded his own safety as he stood on the exposed LZ, urging his men on while his radio



Marines cut down trees to clear an LZ so helicopters could extract the wounded.



U.S. Army and Marine helicopters transported the first group of Charlie Co Marines who immediately set up a hasty defense around the LZ.

Marine helicopters evacuated the wounded from the LZ, which measured little more than 50 feet in diameter.

more than a genuine matter of concern. Still, the enemy concussion grenades were not as much a threat as the severe fire coming from the Red automatic weapons.

Gunny Thompson was kneeling on the LZ, directing a mortar into position, when a concussion grenade bounced off a log behind him. He dove to the ground, but the explosion caught him in mid-air, perforating both of his eardrums and sprinkling one arm with metal fragments. He rolled on the ground for a second, clutching his hands over his ringing ears, then knelt again to complete positioning of the mortar which began to fire illumination rounds over the jungle.

By this point in the battle, the NVA had infiltrated through the now pitch dark jungle and were getting inside the Marine perimeter around the LZ.

A corpsman, Hospitalman Kermit Hammergren, stopped treating a wounded engineer and raised his already drawn pistol, aimed at the edge of the LZ, and fired twice. A shadowy figure which had been creeping in among the wounded Marines spun around to fall face down, clutching his stomach. "Doc" Hammergren laid his pistol beside his knee and went back to treating the casualty.

Somewhere down the fire-raked trail to Charlie Co's front, Corporal Jimmy Leonard was blazing away against an enemy machine gun. His own machine-gun crew was wounded and out of action. Leonard had sustained three separate wounds in the fight, but remained at his gun and was credited with destroying at least two enemy squads. Each time he killed the Red gunners manning the weapon, others would crawl up to take their places. This was repeated seven times before the enemy ran out of troops to man the gun.

On Charlie Co's left flank, the terrain lowest in relation to the LZ, Staff Sergeant Bill Cooley had instructed his men to don their gas masks. The contact with the enemy was so close and fierce that it appeared they might overrun the Marine lines. Cooley drove them off by ordering his riflemen to toss tear gas grenades and to maintain a smothering volume of fire.

At the onslaught of the attack, Capt Lesnik, a helicopter pilot, had rushed to the trail where the fighting had erupted. He had blazed away with his M14 rifle while trying to get an idea of where the enemy was concealed so he could call in close air support. He fell, wounded by one of the few fragmentation grenades the enemy hurled. But he remained in action during

operator made contact with the battalion command post.

"We're being hit hard from the front, sir," Capt Major told his battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel A.F. Belbusti, over the radio, "but we can hold them. Would like to know if you can send Delta Co to reinforce if we need them."

The reply was affirmative.

Again exposing himself to the fire, Capt Major began expanding his already thinly spread lines into the now night-darkened jungle. The fire from the front seemed to skip across the tiny LZ. Then from Charlie Co's left flank, a series of high-pitched whistles signaled another Red force into the attack.

Immediately, enemy automatic weapons began raking the LZ from the new direction. Marine guns hammered back while at the same time holding off the original assault.

Again, whistles. The NVA began attacking the company's rear and now the Ma-

rines were under attack from at least three companies, hitting from three directions.

On another whistled signal, enemy grenades began falling onto the LZ. They had the upper hand because they knew exactly where the Marines were. The Marines knew only that they were almost surrounded and cut off from their battalion.

Capt Major radioed for assistance from Delta Co and received an immediate reply that they were on their way.

Concussion grenades plopped into the LZ, bouncing off logs and debris.

"Grenade!" Private First Class Knobby Clarke called from the front. Then an explosion, followed by a long burst of fire from his rifle.

"Grenade!" echoed Lance Corporal Bob Duca as one fell near his position on the rear slope. He, too, directed a burst of fire in the direction from which the grenade had been launched.

Soon the rain of grenades became commonplace to the Marines, but they were

the rest of the battle, maintaining contact with Marine aviation units standing by to assist on call. Cpl Bob Button and PFC Don Dehner, both members of the FAC team, were wounded. Only PFC Scott Thorne remained unscathed among the four-man team.

It was beginning to look as though Charlie Co was “up against the wall” when the Communists began to attack from the unmolested right flank. A probable fourth enemy company had joined in the fight.

Then, with the battle reaching its most critical stage, Lt Ruffer began singing “The Marines’ Hymn.” As other Marines joined in, he leaped to his feet in the area most exposed to enemy fire and began shouting encouragement and entreating his Marines: “Let’s go get some!”

What Lt Ruffer said may sound trite. It is written in fiction, and well-rehearsed actors, wearing their helmets at jaunty angles, rattle it off in perfect diction as they lead movie extras down the barrels of sputtering machine guns. Never try to tell a Marine from “Charlie” Co that Lt Ruffer’s one-man monologue didn’t help to pull the company through a tight spot.

Brandishing a .45 pistol, Lt Ruffer charged down the trail, firing to each side as he went. Behind him, other Marines surged forward. A grenade bounced off the lieutenant’s back and as he started down for cover, a second grenade landed

in front of him. He was bracketed by the explosion from both but returned immediately to the attack, evidently uninjured.

The enemy fire on the trail slackened as Lt Ruffer pulled his men back to reform for another assault on the trail. He carried a wounded Marine as he went back up the trail to the LZ. Then, he led a second assault against the seemingly impenetrable forces.

Behind Lt Ruffer followed Cpl Ken Chambers, armed only with the machete he had used to break trail. He had expended all his ammo in the fight, but was intent on leading his fire team in the assault.

Charging down the trail, Lt Ruffer extended his .45 and shot down an enemy soldier charging past him up the trail toward the LZ. This second attack carried farther than the first, but the enemy fire power was too overwhelming for the small group. They turned and fought their way back to the LZ, encountering the Reds all the way.

Although these assaults had not driven off the enemy, they were forced to withdraw from inside the Marine lines. When they left, six dead North Vietnamese, clad in black T-shirts and green shorts, were found inside Charlie Co’s position.

Capt Major had continued to brave the enemy fire and direct his troops into protected positions while the battle raged. He had received minor wounds from a

bullet and was suffering from a slight case of concussion. Although his position was continually exposed to enemy fire, it was the best site for him to observe and direct the placement of his Marines.

Via the radio, Capt Major received a message that Delta Co was picking their way through the jungle to his position. The captain quickly assumed that if they continued on their present route, they would most likely be ambushed by the NVA assaulting Charlie Co’s rear.

On learning this from the captain, Lt Ruffer charged down the trail on which his company had been ambushed that afternoon to make contact with Delta Co’s point. He went alone, exposing himself not only to the enemy, but taking a calculated risk that Delta Co would mistake him for a guerrilla. The risk paid off as he safely reached the point man, exclaiming all the way who he was so the advancing Marines could identify him.

Then it was back to the fight for Lt Ruffer as he led the Marines of Delta Co, who were shouting encouragement to their buddies in Charlie Co, still engaged in the battle.

Charlie Co’s riflemen didn’t look around to acknowledge Delta Co’s entrance into the battle. They poured out their last rounds of ammunition and shouted back their own brand of encouragement to Delta Co.



Because it was the quickest route to their objective, Co C Marines traveled a well-worn path that undoubtedly was used by the enemy.



Marines ignored the danger from the enemy as they hustled to evacuate the wounded men.

Charlie Co takes a few minutes to rest after a trek up rugged terrain.

Almost abruptly the enemy fire stopped as the reinforcements flowed across the LZ and melted into the jungle to help Charlie Co expand their small perimeter. Then, the enemy dissolved into the now moonlit jungle.

The fight had lasted for four uninterrupted hours.

As the weary Marines were relieved by Delta Co, they faced the agonizing task of recovering their casualties from the jungle, digging in and the uncertainty the night would hold for them.

"If it just doesn't rain," said Private First Class "Chesty" Story, "we'll make it."

"If the moon stays out all night," added LCpl Richard Caballero, "we'll have a good chance of seeing them if they come back."

For the first time in two weeks, it didn't rain. The moon, in its first quarter, hung brightly over the LZ until 0500 the next morning.

Oct. 12 dissolved slowly into Oct. 13—a Friday!

"It's gonna be a good day ... a lucky day," quipped Cpl Dave Bailey on learning that midnight had slipped by.

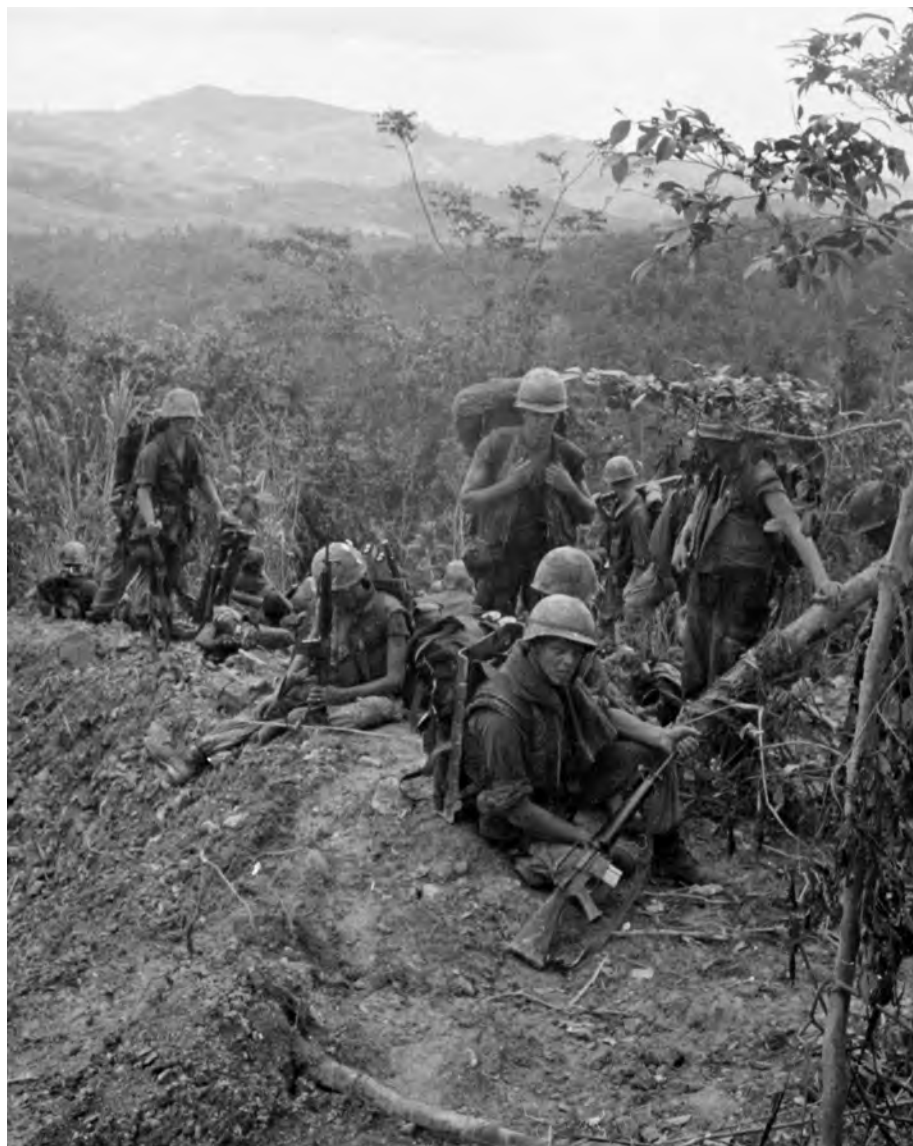
Charlie Co's seven corpsmen had worked hard under fire. Four of them had been wounded, but they all continued to minister to the Marines sprawled over the LZ.

Out on the perimeter in the darkness, riflemen like PFC Demarcus Wright, PFC Dennis Touhy and PFC Mike Ellis lay listening for noises in the darkness surrounding them. Some of these men were wounded, although not seriously, and chose to wait until daylight to have themselves evaluated.

Of the 42 Marines injured in the fight, eight were in critical condition with wounds ranging from head injuries to stomach wounds. During the night, a Navy surgeon got on the battalion radio net to give corpsmen instructions that might help save the more critical casualties. Three of the critical died during the night, despite the valiant efforts and constant vigilance of the overworked corpsmen.

A pilot from HMM-163 offered to attempt to pick up the serious cases. But he wanted to know if Charlie Co could clear the LZ a little more if he flew in a gasoline-powered chain saw.

The saw arrived an hour later, hanging from a 150-foot rope beneath the helicopter. Eagerly, the engineers tackled the trees on the edge of the LZ that were posing the biggest threat to landing helicopters. Marine artillery kept up a steady bombardment around the LZ, ringing



the defenders in and drubbing away at any enemy still in the area.

Overhead, an Air Force C-47 (Puff the Magic Dragon) circled, dropping illumination flares suspended from parachutes. The vintage aircraft poured molten red streams from its rapid-firing "mini-guns" on suspected enemy harbor sites around the LZ.

By 0400, the engineers proclaimed the LZ ready to accept the aircraft. A half-hour later, the first medevac helicopter settled over the LZ with its landing lights bathing the Marines beneath it. The three most critical casualties were hoisted on board using Stokes litters as the helicopter hovered about 25 feet above the ground.

Soon, the remaining wounded were being medevacked by a steady stream of helicopters. Some elected to land, while others lowered litters.

On board the aircraft, machine gunners strained for a glimpse of telltale muzzle flashes from the enemy they knew still surrounded the LZ. On the ground, Marines ignored the danger from the enemy

as they hustled to get their wounded buddies out of the battle area.

Dawn broke over the LZ just as the last of the litter patients were being lifted out. All that remained to be evacuated were ambulatory patients, none of them with serious wounds.

The remaining medevac helicopters had to be diverted back to an area near Quang Tri where another Marine unit had engaged the enemy. It would be a while before they would return, but some of the patients could fly out on resupply helicopters.

"We've still got plenty of chow," Gunny Thomas allowed, "but we're hurting for ammo and water, in that order."

Charlie Co had depleted its ammunition during the long fight and all the able hands had readily given up what water they had left to corpsmen who needed it for the wounded. They could fight through another day without more water, but not without additional ammo.

By 0730, the first resupply chopper appeared over the hills to the east, a cargo



A rifleman with a “liberated” North Vietnamese flag after the costly night battle.

sling beneath it carrying rifle ammunition, grenades and mortar rounds. It roared in over the LZ, lowered the cargo net to the ground, settled just long enough to take aboard five casualties, then spiraled back into the sky.

The next chopper, carrying water, drew enemy fire before it reached the LZ. The chopper scrambled out of the area while the Marines on the ground attempted to locate and neutralize the source of the enemy fire.

A fire fight below the slope threatened to break out when a few rounds zinged over the LZ. Charlie Co braced itself for another fight, but it never came.

At the cost of another wounded Marine, one of two NVA soldiers probing the defenses was killed and the second escaped, although evidence indicated that he was wounded.

The dead NVA soldier brought the enemy confirmed body count to 44. Twelve automatic rifles, one machine gun, an RPG-2 rocket launcher, and scores of hand grenades were taken from the Red bodies. Many were armed only with grenades.

“It must have been a hell of a fight,” said LtCol Belbusti as he joined Capt Major on the debris-strewn LZ late that morning. He eyed the bodies of two uniformed Red guerrillas lying where they had fallen on the edge of the LZ.

The captain briefed his commander on the situation and gave him an account of the battle.

Throughout the day, Charlie Co awaited the final evacuation of its wounded. But the helicopters were busy elsewhere.

Some of the Marines slept in the broiling sun. Others watched and waited, and a few re-read letters they had carried to the field with them. By midafternoon, the helicopters reappeared to withdraw the other wounded Marines; they also brought water to Charlie Co.

Because it was so late in the afternoon when the evacuation was completed, Charlie Co faced the prospects of spending another night on the LZ. This time, they were well dug in and there was no chance of the enemy catching them by surprise.

The NVA soldiers came again, but their efforts were not as sincere as the night

before. In a brief encounter, two more Marines were killed and eight wounded. The Communists left nine of their own dead behind.

With the evacuation of the wounded and dead the next morning, Charlie Co moved back down the route they had covered two days before. They were a solemn procession of Marines who had seen their share of combat in two days.

Leading them back to the landing zone from which the operation had been launched were Capt Major and GySgt Thompson, the only officer and staff noncommissioned officer left on duty with the company. Lt Nelson had been evacuated following the ambush; Lt Ruffer, not realizing that he was suffering from severe internal concussion from the grenades that had hemmed him in, had to be evacuated; Lt Anderson, whose tempera-ture had soared inexplicably to 105, had to be evacuated; and SSgt Cooley, who sustained two bullet wounds, was taken out of the field.

Absent on the trek out of the jungle were nearly 75 percent of the squad and fire team leaders who had begun Operation Medina. Among them were Cpls Ken Chambers, Tom Hill, David Welsh, Tommy Bateman, Bill Dillion, and Leo Giddings, all of whom had been wounded while leading their men.

A few days after Medina ended, Capt Major nominated 23 of his men for individual decorations ranging from the Medal of Honor to the Navy Commendation Medal. And there were 64 Purple Heart medals to be presented to Charlie Co’s Marines.

Weeks later, the Marines of Charlie Co were at Site X near a new airstrip at Quang Tri. Another operation was kicking off in the hills to the west of the strip and Charlie Co had drawn the point again.

There were many new faces in Charlie Co that November afternoon. And many of the old familiar faces were missing. Lt Jack Ruffer had been promoted to captain after returning from the hospital and was now assistant operations officer for the battalion.

He stood on the edge of the tent area where Charlie Co was now billeted and listened to the “old salts” who had fought through Medina telling the new replacements sea stories. He grinned when a rifleman told of “... that crazy lieutenant who stood up under fire and started sing-ing ‘The Hymn’ and hollering like hell.”

Capt Major appeared from a tent, pulling on a pack.

“Let’s go ... Charlie!” he barked. 🐼

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One of seven AAVs destroyed in the fight at An Nasiriyah. The investigation determined that two vehicles could be confirmed as destroyed by friendly fire. (Photo by MSgt Edward D. Kniery, USMC)

CARNAGE AND COURAGE

At the Saddam Canal Bridge

By Dick Camp

An Nasiriyah, March 23, 2003

During the 2003 invasion of Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Brigadier General Richard F. Natonski's Task Force Tarawa of the 2nd Marine Expeditionary Brigade was tasked to secure two bridges on the eastern side of An Nasiriyah to facilitate the movement of the I Marine Expeditionary Force toward Baghdad. Natonski wanted to avoid Nasiriyah, the fourth-largest city in Iraq. "Our intent was never to get involved in the urban area," he explained. The last thing he wanted to do was to "get bogged down" in a house-to-house fight.

Lieutenant Colonel Rickey Grabowski's First Battalion, Second Marine Regiment, riding aboard Assault Amphibious Vehicles (AAV) as mechanized infantry, led Task Force Tarawa into Nasiriyah.

"The memory that is most seared into my mind is seeing our lead tank [Company A, 8th Tank Battalion] heading over the bridge, with a staggered line of amtracs behind it, and Marines looking out of all those amtracs, with their rifles up." He recalled, "I remember saying to myself, 'This is it. Ain't no turning back now.'"

Major Bill Peeples' Co A, 8th Tank Bn, a reserve unit from Kentucky, brought 14 M1A1 Abrams main battle tanks to the fight. He led 1/2 into Nasiriyah and proved to be instrumental in providing support to "Charlie" Company's hard-pressed infantrymen in the fight for the bridges. The tanks were able to knock out enemy positions in buildings with their 120 mm main gun and provided covering fire with their .50-caliber and 2-7.62 mm machine guns. Captain Michael Brooks said, "When the tanks came in, they were able to take out some of the fortified buildings

with their main guns. You could hear the cheer from the Marines."

Grabowski gave the order to advance. Second Lieutenant Frederick E. Pokornery Jr. told his friend, "This is not good. We are going to get killed today."

A Simple, Straightforward Plan

Grabowski developed what he considered to be a simple, straightforward plan to seize the bridges. His plan depended on good communications and a permissive enemy environment. Within minutes of crossing into the outskirts of Nasiriyah, "all ... communications went down" and a large force of regular Iraqi soldiers and paramilitary fighters greeted the battalion with a hail of gunfire.

So much for the simple, straightforward plan.

The battalion found itself engaged in a mean slugfest with an overwhelming

This photo shows an aerial view of An Nasiriyah from the north side of the Saddam Canal that was crossed by 1stBn, 2nd Marines on March 23, 2003.

force of the determined enemy.

Bravo Company (Rein) crossed the southeastern bridge, made a hard right turn and headed east for about a kilometer when it came under intense small arms, machine-gun and rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) fire. The company maneuvered against the enemy and fanned out into a relatively open field. Suddenly, one of the tanks “just dropped into the mud,” Corporal Jason J. Polanco recalled. Within seconds, eight tracs and three tanks sank into a thick, gooey layer of silt and sewage. Bravo Co’s advance stalled as its Marines struggled to extricate the stuck vehicles.

Alpha Company, following in trace, secured the southeast bridge and established defensive positions in the face of increasing enemy fire. In the meantime, Charlie Co’s 11 amtracs passed over the bridge and forged ahead to seize the Saddam Canal Bridge. First Lieutenant James “Ben” Reid, weapons platoon commander said, “The company commander [Captain Daniel J. Wittnam] tried to spot Bravo, who we were supposed to be following but couldn’t see them. He thought the company must have pushed up the main highway toward the northern bridge [Saddam Canal Bridge] and decided to get up there and help them.”

The four-lane divided highway ran for 4 kilometers through an area dubbed “Ambush Alley” by the planners because



LCPL BRYAN J. NEALY, USMC

it was lined with concrete block houses, surrounded by high walls, numerous alleys and intersections—the type of cityscape perfect for an ambush.

Charlie Co’s tracs moved in a tactical column, with 1st Platoon in the lead, followed by 2nd Platoon and 3rd Platoon. The column crossed over the bridge and reached the northern bank when suddenly, “We’re taking rounds from everywhere,” Sergeant Jose Jimenez said.

Shootout

Colonel Nicholas E. Reynolds described Charlie Co in “Basrah, Baghdad, and Beyond, U.S. Marines in the Global War on Terrorism” as “coming under ‘intense machine-gun, small arms and RPG fire’

from a variety of combatants—a mix of regular soldiers and paramilitary fighters—almost all of whom wore civilian clothes.” Capt Wittnam stated, “We saw women shoot at us with RPGs ... we saw children shoot at us. We never saw one person in uniform.” Sergeant William Schaefer said the Marines tried to distinguish between Iraqi fighters and noncombatants, “but at that point, it was hard.” Lance Corporal Eric Killeen popped out of the hatch with his squad automatic weapon (SAW) and poured fire down streets, into doorways and at second-story windows. “My adrenaline was pumping so high. Every emotion you can imagine was running through [my] body,” he exclaimed.



Co C’s AAVs on the way to fight in An Nasiriyah in 2003.

USMC



An LAV from 3rd Plt, Co C, 2nd Light Armored Reconnaissance Bn, sits atop a bridge in An Nasiriyah, April 1, 2003, as Iraqis show they are not hostile.

this point, no Marines had been killed and the amtracs had escaped serious damage. Suddenly, the second to last vehicle, C-211, was hit by an RPG that penetrated the trac's aluminum hull and wounded four Marines. Corporal Kevin Doughtie recalled, "I looked over on the other side of the trac and I saw Corporal Randy Glass. His leg is only halfway there."

Cpl Glass remembered, "I thought I was dead, but then I opened my eyes. I didn't feel any pain. I couldn't move. I just thought, this is the way I'm going out." Corpsman Luis E. Fonseca was awarded the Navy Cross for braving the deadly enemy fire to treat the wounded and evacuate them to safety.

The explosion torched the rucksacks secured to the right side of the hull. "The whole side was on fire ... but the engine was still operational," Cpl Doughtie explained. First Lieutenant Michael S. Seely shouted to the driver, Sergeant Michael E. Bitz, "Get us the hell out of here!" Sgt Bitz maneuvered the vehicle over the bridge and joined up with the rest of the company forming a perimeter several hundred meters north of the bridge. Sgt Bitz was posthumously awarded the Silver Star for evacuating wounded Marines and providing them security.


Lance Corporal Edward Castleberry, an amtrac driver, said, "I'm pushing hard to get through. Everybody in the back is hooting, hollering and shooting like crazy. We got the hatch open and there's 10 infantry guys just shooting. The guys standing on the top are mowing people down ... pieces of people were all over the street. People are running in from alleys just shooting RPGs at us. Gunfire and tracers rounds going off and I'm just thinking, 'Wow. This is surreal to me.' " He was stunned to see two suicidal Fedeyeen fighters dash into the street

directly in front of his vehicle. "They were expecting to shoot their RPGs at us; it would stop us and then they could just reload and kill us," he said. Before he could get a round off, the insurgents fired their RPGs. "One RPG shot straight as an arrow and went below where we were at. The other one shot off in a corkscrew into nowhere." LCpl Castleberry gunned his vehicle and ran over one of the insurgents. "I just hit him with 27 tons of death!"

The company reached the Saddam Canal Bridge and started across. Up to

M1A1 Abrams tanks, part of Charlie Company, 1st Tank Battalion later joined the fight, north of intersection Highway 1 and 2 on April 1, 2003. (Photo by Sgt Paul L. Anstine, USMC)





Co C, 1st Tank Bn, moves east along Highway 27 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, April 2, 2003. (Photo by Sgt Paul L. Anstine, USMC)

“As soon as it stopped,” Cpl Doughtie said, “the Marines started piling out of it and the thing burned to the ground. Then we just started getting bombarded with a massive amount of artillery, small arms fire, RPGs and anything they could think of, they were throwing at us. We’re just sitting ducks right there.”

According to Colonel Rod Andrew in “An Nasiriyah, U.S. Marines in Battle,” “Co C was on its own and had ventured into the teeth of the defenses of the 23rd Brigade of the 11th Infantry Division.” The company was taking heavy fire from the three directions, including the Martyr’s District, a military complex to its southwest. Its position on the roadway was surrounded by fields that were lower, which silhouetted them for the enemy’s gunners using RPGs as mortars, lobbing them high in the air.

1stLt Reid, the mortar platoon commander, hurriedly positioned the company’s 60 mm mortar section to counter the incoming fire. “My only thought [was]—I’ve got to get my mortarmen firing. Pick out a target and get those guns up and get them dropping.” LCpl Castleberry observed the section. “I could see those mortarmen almost melting the tubes, dropping so many [rounds] ... trying to kill the enemy. They probably saved a lot of lives.”

Second Lieutenant Frederick E. Pokorney Jr., the artillery forward observer, established contact with the 1st Battalion, 10th

Marine Regiment and called in a fire mission. Reid recalled, “Just as I turned around to spot for some rounds that my mortarmen had just dropped, something big just blew up behind us. An ear-piercing sound that something just hit, slamming down on the concrete.” It was a direct hit on a mortar squad’s position. 2ndLt Pokorney, Staff Sergeant Philip Jordan, and Lance Corporal Brian R. Buessing were killed and several men wounded, including Reid, who was slammed into the roadside embankment. He got up and went to find the platoon corpsman. “One second I was running and the next one my face is slammed into the dirt and the blood started to pool into the dirt.” The right side of his face was riddled with shrapnel. “I remember thinking, ‘This is it, do I just lay here and die?’ ” He answered his own question by lurching to his feet to find the corpsman.

Friendly Fire

Charlie Co was cut off, with intermittent communications and under increasingly heavy fire from automatic weapons and mortars. At one point, Captain Whitman was able to get a report through to Grawowski that Charlie Co held the Saddam Canal Bridge. The Bravo Co forward air controller (FAC), who still believed that his company was the northernmost unit, did not pick up that message. Sometime around 1 p.m., he made contact with a two-plane section of Air Force ground

attack A-10 Warthogs. They spotted Charlie Co’s vehicles and mistakenly reported them as Iraqi. The FAC, despite not being able to see either the aircraft or the target from approximately 2 miles away, cleared them to attack. “I felt that if I did not act, Marines would die,” he later stated.

“We saw A-10s flying around and we’re thinking ‘great,’ ” Cpl Doughtie explained. “We’ve got somebody to help us out. The next thing I know is they’re shooting in the wrong direction. Jesus, there were sparks raining down from what I presumed to be his 30 mm.” Castleberry said he heard a big “waaah” and then the ground just exploded. 1stLt Seely, who had been strafed by an A-10 in Operation Desert Storm, knew instantly what it was. “I did not even have to look up, because I knew exactly what that sound was ... I ran up and found the 2nd Plt scattered all around the area there.” Alpha Co’s Captain Jim Lane remarked, “He fired so many rounds at one time, it sounded like a machine gun, you know—rat, tat, tat—all at one time, over a wide area with depleted uranium rounds. Whatever’s in that area is dead!”

1stLt Seely said, “I grabbed the platoon radioman and told him to put that damn thing on battalion tac now! ... I started calling, ‘Cease fire! Cease fire!’ Timberwolf 6 [LtCol Grabowski] came up, perfectly calm, and I started talking to him. He said, ‘What do you got?’ I said, ‘We [are] having friendly air, [an] A-10



Capt Dan Wittnam, foreground, CO, Co C, 1/2, and his Marines, despite horrific casualties, fought for and held the Saddam Canal Bridge in eastern Nasiriyah.

strafing our pos[ition].” Capt Wittnam spotted the aircraft. “The first thought that went through my mind was, ‘Thank God, an A-10 was on station,’ ” and then, “the earth went black from the dirt being kicked up and a feeling of absolute, utter horror and disbelief.”

Lance Corporal David K. Fribley sprinted toward Castleberry’s AAV. “I’m turning around, screaming at him, telling him to get in,” Castleberry said. “He was trying to climb in—he’s got one arm trying to get in, and he just takes a huge

round directly through his chest and it blew his whole back out.” Sergeant Jeremy Donaldson had a near miss. “It came through my turret from an upper angle,” he said. “I’m confident it was an A-10 ... unless the Iraqis grew wings and hung off the clouds with a 30 mm cannon.”

The Alamo

Several casualties were loaded in Castleberry’s amtrac. Sgt Schaefer lined up five other AAVs and sent them south with the wounded for treatment. “I was

willing to take a chance because we had guys bleeding to death,” Schaefer said. “I was tired of seeing people getting killed.” Castleberry remembered, “Following the trac in front of me and it goes ‘whoosh.’ I see a white flash, something hits the top of it. I see inside it and half of it blew out. Everybody inside blown to bits ... 27 tons of steel blew 3 feet in the air—that’s a big explosion!” Then Castleberry’s amtrac was hit in the transmission by a 30 mm shell and lost hydraulic fluid. He managed to steer it into a courtyard before crashing into a large telephone pole.

Sixteen men bailed out of the disabled vehicle with the wounded and took cover inside two small buildings, which soon earned the nickname “The Alamo.” “Then all hell broke out,” Sgt Schaeffer exclaimed. “They just started coming out of nowhere—hundreds of them.” The trapped men were surrounded and under heavy fire. Sgt John Wentzel exclaimed, “Oh my God! What in hell are we doing in the middle of the city?” Castleberry recalled, “There [were] some guys across the road shooting at us. They [popped] around the corner trying to get a better shot at us.” The trapped men carried a radio but the batteries were so weak they couldn’t reach anyone. “We’re trying to



Marines from Task Force Tarawa race toward a firefight to aid their fellow leathernecks in An Nasiriyah, Iraq.



Co E, 2/25 Marines prepare to enter the town of An Nasiriyah in order to secure a bridge, April 4, 2003.

SSGT OLGA STEERT, USA

figure out how we're going to get out of there," Castleberry said. After three hours, the trapped men finally were able to make contact with Lieutenant Conner Tracy. "I hear static transmission over the radio and all I really got was the name Castleberry, so I told him to click one for 'yes' and key twice for 'no.' My first question was, 'Are you south of our bridge ... 'yes.' Are you north of the southern bridge? Doing that, I pieced together that he was in the city."

Maj Peeples received notification about the trapped Marines. "He and his XO [executive officer] took off right down Ambush Alley—just two tanks, unsupported, right up that three mile stretch into God knows what," Capt Brooks said. The wounded were placed on the back of Peeples' tank and taken to safety. The rest of the men were rescued in a caravan of humvees. Jason Doran led the rescue force. He told his men, "Drive fast—kill every-body—and get our boys out of there." Castleberry remarked that, "It [was] a wall of lead. We [were] shooting every bit of ammo we [had] left just so we could make it out of town." After reaching safety, he recalled, "My gunny [gunnery sergeant] came up and just grabbed me and embraced me and that's when I felt safe. It was a real

emotional moment for me."

By late afternoon, after hours of fighting, everything died down as the rest of the battalion moved north through Charlie Co's position. Tanks and helicopter gunships drove off most of the remaining attackers. Eighteen Marines had died and 24 wounded during Charlie Co's battle.

United States Central Command conducted an investigation of the A-10 incident. The report produced conclusions that stood in sharp contrast to many eyewitness accounts. The investigation was unable to determine conclusively whether much of the damage and loss of life resulted from either the Air Force A-10 fire or enemy rockets. The Investigating Board concluded that of the 18 Marines from Co C killed on March 23, eight were conclusively killed by enemy fire. It further stated that of the remaining 10, forensic evidence and the mixture of intense fire rendered it impossible to determine the numbers killed by enemy fire and friendly fire. Seventeen Marines were wounded. Of those, 15 received wounds from a combination of friendly and enemy fire, and two from sources "which the Board cannot determine." Many Charlie Co Marines disagreed with the findings and noted that several Ma-

rines were wounded or killed at the precise instant that an A-10 strafing run or AGM-65 Maverick occurred on their position. As for the seven destroyed or abandoned tracs, the investigation was only able to determine that two of the vehicles were positively destroyed by friendly fire.

Reid summed up the fight for the bridges, saying, "What ultimately made us successful was that lance corporal machine gunner, or that private first class grenadier, or that fire team leader, that sergeant making calls on the spot looking out for the welfare of his Marines that ultimately carried the day. The guy that got no glory, no combat award. He got nothing except the bad memories to live with. Give him the recognition he deserves."

Author's bio: Dick Camp, a retired Marine colonel, is the former director of operations for the National Museum of the Marine Corps, former deputy director and director (acting) of the Marine Corps History Division and a prolific author. His most recent nonfiction books, "Shadow Warriors" and "Assault From the Sky," are available from The MARINE Shop. He is a frequent contributor to Leatherneck. 🦖

Books Reviewed

BOUNTY HUNTER 4/3: MY LIFE IN COMBAT FROM MARINE SCOUT SNIPER TO MARSOC. By Jason Delgado with Chris Martin. Published by St. Martin's Press. 352 pages. \$25.20 MCA Members. \$27.99 Regular Price.

Jason Delgado, the middle child of a Puerto Rican family of five, was born and raised in the South Bronx in the 1980s when many local boys were swiftly incorporated into the gang/theft/drug trade. Delgado was lucky that his older brother kept a sharp eye on him and as importantly, Delgado joined a police organization called the New York Cadet Corps in his teens where he acquired many of the future skills that would serve him well.

The group facilitators, many of whom were Vietnam veterans, ran full-scale military field problems with the boys. They had their cadets read about men like the famous Marine sniper, Gunnery Sergeant Carlos Hathcock II, and Delgado set his goal of becoming a military sniper. The Cadet Corps prepared and motivated him for the rigors of Marine boot camp and beyond.

After his first aborted try, the young Marine qualified for the 7th Marine Regiment's scout sniper program. He writes, "For every person that loved the sniper platoon, there was an equal number that hated us. We were high profile and skylined. With that came a prima donna attitude on our side and a lot of resentment from the other direction."

On Okinawa, the scout sniper platoon experienced rigorous target practice and field training designed to have their "best and brightest" prepared to attend the 13-week Scout Sniper Basic Course. Delgado smoothly completed the intensive Scout Sniper Basic Course at Camp Pendleton, Calif. Upon graduation, Delgado joined the hallowed ranks of the world's most feared Marine scout snipers. For his efforts, he and the other graduates received their own symbolic HOG's tooth; these Marines were now certified "Hunters of Gunmen."

Consider the scout sniper's difficult profession. On overlook duty they see things clearly, far more than the infantrymen they protect, and record notes for the intelligence section. They are hindered

by carrying massive weight: radios, rifles, side arms and ammunition. Moreover, they need to transport enough water to last them for three days; now add in the additional weight of their night vision and other supporting equipment. They go in first, and they come out last. Many times, they must be in no-man's land for days at a time.

The sniper team faces chaotic exhaustion and a zombie-like fatigue, which fosters a serious emotional drain on body and spirit. Danger can come from any direction. In the urban environment, they play a non-stop game of leapfrog, up-and-down stairs, and must often bound from rooftop to rooftop. All these mind-blowing stunts are often performed in oppressive 100 degree-plus heat. Often, they take fire from friendly forces as well as from enemy snipers, and with oncoming darkness their mission becomes even more challenging.

The invasion of Iraq kicked off in May 2002 and as the Marines moved north on their 500-mile push to Bagdad, the sniper teams performed with great skill and professionalism. After liberating the Iraqi capital, the Marines thought that their war was now over. They were mistaken.

The lessons learned were many, and adaptation would be needed. The sniper school had trained their students in the

Vietnam traditions (the GySgt Carlos Hathcock method).

This new war, fought in the desert and urban environments, needed countless revisions.

Infiltration methods and weapon selection clearly needed adjustment. Occupying an inhabited Iraqi home for use as a safe hide required sophisticated linguistic and personal skills. New strategies were needed to effectively adapt their camouflage techniques for urban hides, and there was a need to rethink their skills for the new rooftop war. Sunstroke cases proliferated and were a constant concern of the scout snipers.

On Sgt Delgado's second tour of duty he was sent to the Husaybah in the western part of Iraq. Here, coordinated groups of enemy fighters and weapons flooded over the Syrian border and into Iraq. Now acting as their platoon sergeant,

Sgt Delgado was the most experienced sniper in his unit.

The scout sniper platoon sergeant stands between his men and the politics of the commanders located well back from the realities of a shooting war, now evolving into a force of occupation. Officers, Delgado concludes, were overly concerned with the "hearts and minds" side of the military situation and rejected the sharp-eyed advice of the snipers on the ground. Every tactical move, as well as most aspects of any shot taken, was carefully evaluated—and here Delgado means, "investigated."

Delgado notes with frustration: "It got to the point where every time we shot somebody for wrongdoing, it was a matter for investigation. I swear damn near every officer in the battalion took a turn investigating me."

Not to imply that all the officers were problematic. Delgado fully respected the officers that haunted the battlefield and endeavored to grasp and seek to understand the everyday trials, challenges, and advice of his snipers.

The rich mosaic of Delgado's experience as a sniper is truly superb. "Bounty Hunter 4/3" is the best written, most comprehensive, and by far, most interesting look into the art and science of today's professional, post 9/11 gentlemen hunters. Indeed, this extraordinary book cries out to be fully examined and judiciously considered by all leathernecks, and anyone intrigued by the salty legend of the modern Marine military scout sniper.

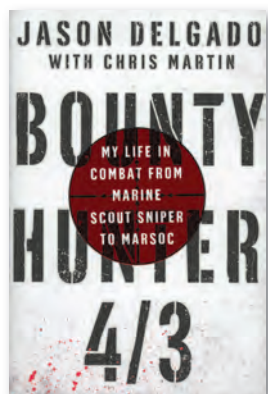
Bob Loring

Author's bio: Readers will recognize Marine veteran "Red Bob" Loring as a frequent Leatherneck reviewer, who has had more than 100 book reviews published in the magazine.

SHOOTING GHOSTS: A U.S. MARINE, A COMBAT PHOTOGRAPHER, AND THEIR JOURNEY BACK FROM WAR. By Thomas J. Brennan and Finbarr O'Reilly. Published by Viking. 352 pages. \$24.30 MCA Members. \$27 Regular Price.

The most intense battles described in the book "Shooting Ghosts" don't take place in the mountains of Afghanistan or the deserts of Iraq. Nor do they involve guns or bloodshed.

One battle happens in a lonely apartment where a suicide note is written and pre-



scription sleeping pills are consumed. Another takes place by the ocean, where surfers catch waves and a sea urchin sits on nearby rocks.

The apartment is where retired Marine Sergeant Thomas J. Brennan tried to take his life. The ocean is where war photographer Finbarr O'Reilly again sunk into the depths of depression.

"Shooting Ghosts" is a book that recounts how two men dealt with the traumatic effects of war after they returned from the battlefield. One man, Brennan, was a participant of war. The other man, O'Reilly, was a witness.

Brennan's trauma stems from the lives he took on the battlefield and a brain injury he suffered during war.

(Editor's note: To learn about the DOD-led effort to improve diagnosis, treatment and prevention of traumatic brain injury among servicemembers, read "Something's Not Right" Marine Corps, DOD Confront Signature Wound of Modern-Day Combat," on page 36 by Sara W. Bock.)

O'Reilly's trauma stems from the horrors he's captured on film, the deaths

of many friends, and coping with the question of whether his work as a war journalist truly makes a difference.

The story is told in a back-and-forth first-person narrative. The men write about their struggles and how their friendship helped both cope with the "ghosts" of the past.

"It took getting to know each other for us to understand what trauma means, what it does to those who live with it, and how to cope," O'Reilly writes. "We are still learning."

The two men met in southern Afghanistan in 2010. Sgt Brennan is on his third deployment and has been put in charge of 14 Marines and a Navy corpsman. O'Reilly, a Canadian journalist working for Reuters, finds himself

embedded with Brennan's squad. The book begins with a description of how Brennan suffers a traumatic brain injury during a firefight. O'Reilly captures the moment with his camera.

What begins as a surprising bond between a Marine and a journalist on the battlefield becomes even more surprising when they reconnect after the war, having

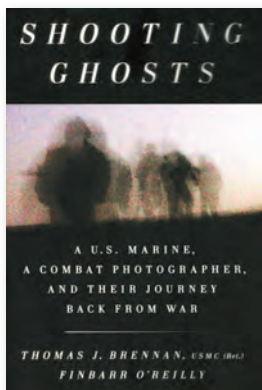
begun new lives. For Brennan, it's the life of a storyteller; after publishing several articles in *The New York Times*, the veteran Marine works for newspapers in North Carolina and is accepted into Columbia University's journalism graduate program. For O'Reilly, it's a life without war; after years of covering conflicts overseas, the Canadian journalist decides to walk away from what outsiders view as a romantic profession: war photography.

Both men's stories can be summed up in a passage from a 2015 article for the *Los Angeles Review of Books*. O'Reilly quotes the article, written by Iraq war veteran Roy Scranton.

"Every true war story is a story of trauma and recovery," Scranton wrote.

What makes "Shooting Ghosts" a compelling read is the honesty of each writer. Neither holds back in describing the scenes that haunt them, nor do they tip-toe around the details of their post-traumatic stress.

Brennan, who joined the Marines in 2003 soon after high school, deployed to Iraq the next year. The young man fought in the Second Battle of Fallujah—a bloody engagement that killed more than 80 U.S. servicemembers and wounded hundreds. He writes about killing—how "pulling the trigger for that first kill is beyond





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difficult” but “the more I do it, the easier it becomes.”

He also writes about his most traumatic event from his deployments—an event that could be difficult for some readers to consume. After firing a SMAW rocket launcher into a building, Brennan sees the aftermath of his work. Near the bodies of two insurgents are two other bodies—smaller bodies. Two children, a boy and a girl, are killed by Brennan’s rocket. Brennan recounts the tale to a therapist.

“It takes about eight more sessions before I can tell the entire story,” he writes. “Eight sessions of reliving the deaths of two innocent Iraqi children. Eight sessions of pain and suffering.”

O’Reilly, a veteran journalist, lived for years in Dakar, a city in Senegal. He began working in the region in 2001—first as a text journalist and later as a photographer. He describes the years on the job as a “blur of conflicts and challenging assignments.”

One moment sticks with O’Reilly. In 2007, a year in which his assignments included New York Fashion Week in the U.S. and a trip to Afghanistan to cover the war, he traveled to Cameroon to report on and photograph the aftermath of a plane crash that killed 114 passengers.

While making a phone call from the crash site, he realizes the ground beneath his feet is soft.

“Looking down, I saw that I was standing on a disintegrating corpse,” O’Reilly writes. He states it wasn’t the “grisly scene” that bothered him about that day; it was the reason he was there.

“I just felt like a parasite. It was perhaps, a crack into which later traumas would become wedged.”

While the book dives into the darkest depths of each man’s soul, the co-authored memoir is really a story of hope. “Shooting Ghosts” is a must-read for any active-duty servicemember or veteran suffering from the traumatic effects of war. It offers examples of how those who have suffered can overcome the ghosts of the past—how they can build a new future.

In both Brennan’s and O’Reilly’s tales, there’s a light at the end of the tunnel.

After witnessing traumatic events for years and years, O’Reilly gives up his pursuit of capturing horror on film and finds peace. Brennan, meanwhile, discovers solace in writing and takes on a new career.

“TJ and I now embody the stereotypes of the broken military veteran and the damaged war journalist, but such labels—while true—hardly tell the whole story, and serve little purpose,” O’Reilly writes. “Neither of us is a victim. We both chose to go to war. We seek no sympathy or pity. What we’re trying to figure out

now is how we can lead purposeful lives after experiencing the sense of loss and meaninglessness wrought by war.”

LCpl Kyle Daly

Author’s bio: LCpl Kyle Daly is a Southern California native who joined the Marine Corps after working as an editor and reporter for various publications, including the Pacific Daily News in Guam. He lives in Jacksonville, N.C.

HILLTOP DOC: A MARINE CORPSMAN FIGHTING THROUGH THE MUD AND BLOOD OF THE KOREAN WAR. By Leonard Adreon. Published by BookBaby. 244 pages. \$13.46 MCA Members. \$14.95 Regular Price.

From a poem, “We Paid Too Much,” written by the author, a corpsman attached to the 1st Marine Division, 1951-1952, during the Korean War.

“Two hundred and ten went up the hill;
Eighty-Seven reached the top;
Another hill, another day;
We own the hill;
We paid too much.”

Leonard Adreon carefully avoided the subject of his war for 60 years. However, in 2011, he enrolled in a writing class at Washington University where his fellow students encouraged him to write about his war experiences. Surprised by their interest and encouragement, the now aging Hospitalman Third Class finally broke his long silence and set to work writing his memories of the bitterly fought Korean War.

In the later days of 1944, Leonard Adreon a 17-year-old from St. Louis, was drafted into the Navy. Leonard served stateside until WW II’s end and later attended college before being recalled to service during the Korean conflict. Having received medical training, he was assigned to the Marine Corps as a corpsman.

By the time “Doc” Adreon landed in Korea, the early 1950 battles of maneuver had ground down into a vicious hill-to-hill battle between United Nations forces and the enemy. By now, the fight on the Korean peninsula centered around restoring the previous north/south Korean boundary along the 38th parallel.

By 1951, new replacements arrived to replace many battle-weary troops. It had been years since Leonard’s stateside medical training in Farragut, Idaho, and the new corpsman had lost his bible, the “Handbook of the Hospital Corps.” On-the-job-training by Marine and Navy veterans would be the order of the day.

Additionally, the new corpsmen received basic training for the care and operation of various infantry weapons including the M1 semi-automatic carbine, the M1 Garand, grenades, the BAR and the Bazooka. Importantly, Marines assisted the new corpsmen in gaining the leatherneck fighting spirit and brotherhood ethos. The new replacements swiftly came to embrace the overriding maxim: “We are all in this together.”

Hill to jagged hill fighting was the name of the deadly game. Doc Adreon was assigned to the second platoon of “Dog” Company. All too often, Dog Co geared up to assault a treacherous hilltop, only to be driven off again. A devastating mortar barrage was usually followed by an assortment of bugles and whistles during the enemy’s often well-coordinated counter attack. The enemy usually attacked in the dark of night, when the Marines could not count on their decisively effective air support.

Armed with the tools of the trade, Navy corpsmen went into battle equipped with the basics: bandages, tourniquets, and an abundant supply of syringes packed with pain-reducing morphine. In one haunting

instance, enemy mortars bracketed Leonard’s position. Working with combat experienced corpsmen, Adreon helped perform many life-saving field procedures, including helping to perform a tracheotomy on one fortunate Dog Company Marine using only a ball-point pen tube.

Once upon hearing the call, “Corpsman! Corpsman!” Adreon responded by running when a mortar blast

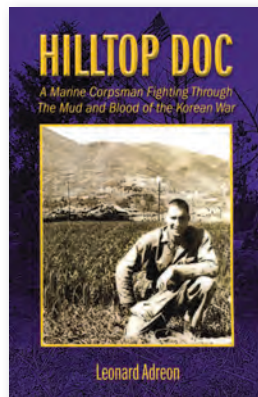
briefly deafened and blinded him. Stunned, he somehow remained conscious. His buddies joked that he’d definitely receive a Purple Heart. However, with the urgent need for front-line corpsmen, doctors hastily cleared him to return to his unit.

Leonard Adreon’s gritty manuscript, supported by an assortment of previously unpublished photos, help the reader better understand the challenges faced each day by corpsmen.

Thanks Navy, we dearly adore our “Always Faithful” brothers-in-arms who we Marines affectionately call “Doc!”

Bob Loring

Author’s bio: Readers will recognize Marine veteran “Red Bob” Loring as a frequent Leatherneck reviewer, who has had more than 100 book reviews published in the magazine. 🐻



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In Memoriam

Compiled by Nancy S. Lichtman

DPAA Identifies Remains of WW II Marines

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency recently announced that the remains of two U.S. Marines, unaccounted for since World War II, have been identified and returned to their families for burial. The Marines were killed in the fighting on Betio Island on the first day of the Battle of Tarawa, Nov. 20, 1943.

PFC Harold P. Hannon, 28, of Scranton, Pa., was assigned to Co E, 2nd Bn, 8th Marines, 2ndMarDiv.

PFC Ray James, 21, of Sylva, Miss., was assigned to Co F, 2nd Bn, 8th Marines, 2ndMarDiv.

DPAA

Robert R. Akins, 92, of New Baden, Texas. After his 1943 graduation from high school, he joined the Marine Corps and served with the 1stMarDiv during WW II. He saw action at Guadalcanal and on Okinawa.

After the war he was an athlete in college and eventually became a high school football coach. During his 38 years of coaching, he amassed more than 300 wins. His grandson is New Orleans Saints quarterback Drew Brees.

Cpl Joyce (Nesheim) Amato, 93, in Waupaca, Wis. She was a Marine who served from 1944-1946. She later worked as a draftsman.

Herman P. Bailey, 96, of Lillian, Ala. He was a Marine who served in WW II and fought on Okinawa.

Col Edward L. Bale Jr., 97, of Los Mochas, N.M. His 30-year career in the Marine Corps included service in WW II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War.

CWO-4 Brooks L. Bauer, 64, of

Ryder, N.D. His Marine Corps career spanned two decades.

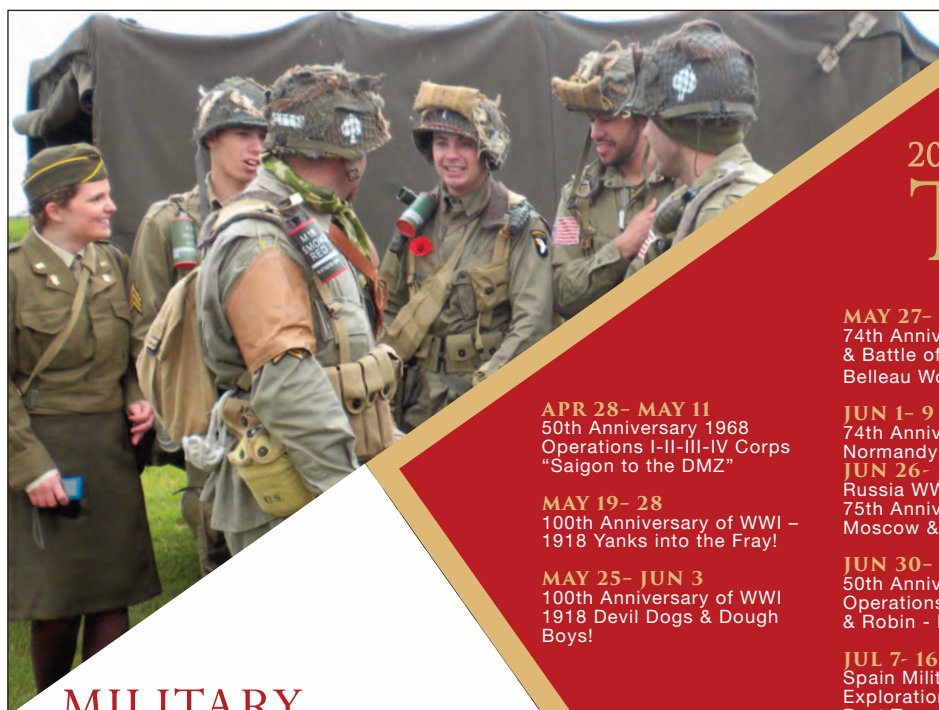
Sgt John F. Canavan Jr., 92, of North Reading, Mass. He was a Marine who served during WW II.

Cpl Jerald J. Childers, 94, of Lynchburg, Va. He served in the South Pacific during WW II. He was a member of the MCA&F.

GySgt Joseph F. Conge Jr., 73, of Falls Church, Va. He joined the Marine Corps in 1961 and went to boot camp at MCRD Parris Island. During his 20-year career, he worked in intelligence and also served as a recruiter. After retiring from the Marine Corps he worked in the intelligence field with the Secret Service. He was an avid reader of *Leatherneck* and member of the MCA&F.

Arthur R. "Art" Eveland, 94, in Hutchinson, Kan. He was a corpsman who served with the 4thMarDiv in the Pacific during WW II.

George A. Florentine, 91, of Branford, Ct. At the age of 17, he enlisted in the Marine Corps and served in the South



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Boys!

JUN 1- 9
74th Anniversary of D-Day:
Normandy to Paris

JUN 26- JULY 6
Russia WWII Eastern Front
75th Anniversary of Kursk
Moscow & Stalingrad

JUN 30- JUL 12
50th Anniversary of
Operations Scotland II
& Robin - I-Corps

JUL 7- 16
Spain Military & Cultural
Exploration Madrid
Post Tour Barcelona

JUL 7- 16
WWII Italy - 75th Anniv
of Operation Husky
Invasion of Sicily

AUG 2- 11
Guadalcanal & Tarawa

AUG 2- 12
Imperial China
Beijing - Xian - Shanghai

AUG 19 - 31
50th Anniversary I-Corps
Operations Mameluke
Thrust & Maui Peak

SEP 12- 26
Ireland All of the Emerald Isle
WWII U.S. "Irish Marines"

SEP 24- OCT 4
WWII Concentration Camps
Poland, Czech Republic &
Germany for Oktoberfest

SEP 30- OCT 8
Korean Experience

OCT 5- 13
Israel Military & Cultural
History

NOV 2- 13
WWI 100th Anniversary Paris

NOV 17- 23
75th Anniversary of the
Tarawa Landing

USMC VETERAN OWNED & OPERATED SINCE 1987

Pacific during WW II. He was selected for officer training and was sent back to the United States where he attended Yale University. After graduation, he went to dental school and completed graduate work in orthodontics.

Sarah A. Frost, 97, of Dublin, Ga. She was a Marine who served during WW II.

Cpl Thomas C. Hammond, 88, of Memphis, Tenn. He enlisted in the Marine Corps at age 17. In 1946 he completed boot camp at Parris Island and served until 1948 when he left the Corps to attend college. During the Korean War, he was activated and was sent to OCS, however, an injury to his ankle ended his Marine Corps service. His son and two grandsons are also Marines.

Capt James J. "JJ" Hanson Jr., 36, of Yulan, N.Y. He was a Marine infantry officer who deployed to Iraq in 2006. He later worked in state and local government until 2013, when he was diagnosed with brain cancer.

Benjamin R. Holcomb, 90, of Elkview, W.Va. During WW II he joined the Marine Corps and saw action on Guam and Iwo Jima.

Harry Kowalchuk Jr. 73, of Liverpool, N.Y. He was a member of the MarDet aboard USS *Hornet* (CVA-12).

John H. "Jack" McKenna, 79, of Freehold, N.J. He enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1957 and served with the 8th Marines in Lebanon in 1958.

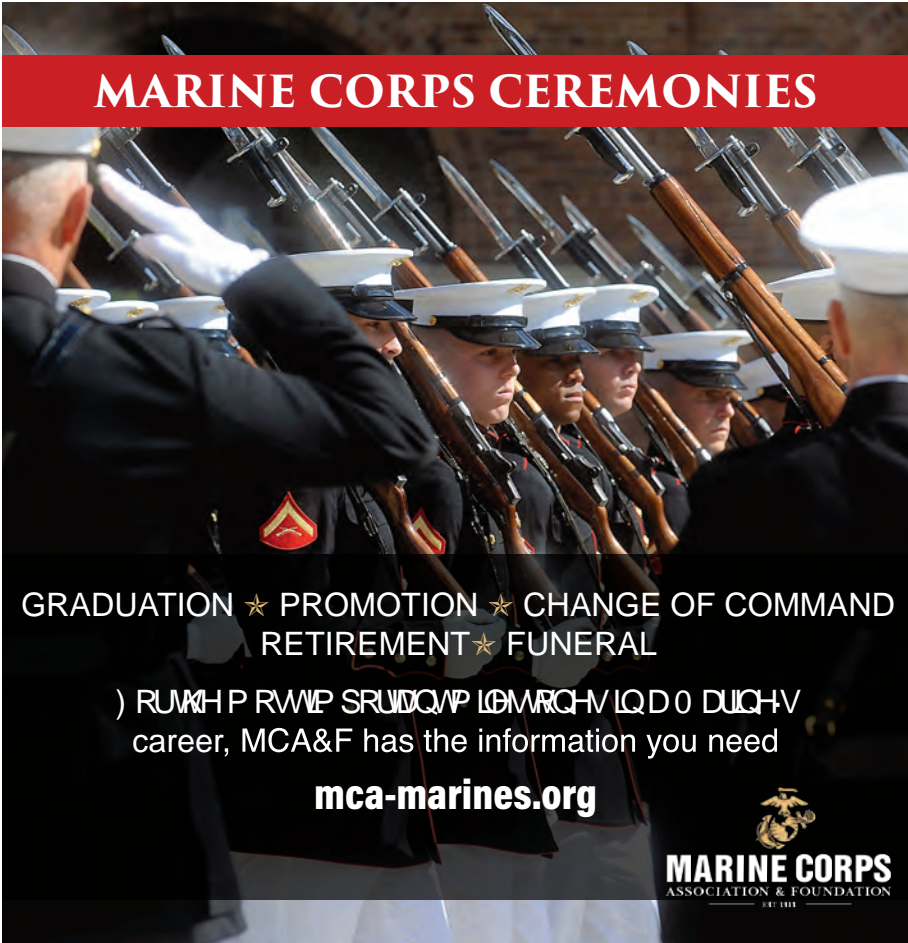
Wally McNamee, 84, in Fairfax, Va. He was a Marine combat photographer during the Korean War. He later worked for *Newsweek* and *The Washington Post* as a photojournalist. He photographed many world events, including the Vietnam War, and was assigned to cover the White House for the administrations of 10 presidents.

Capt David A. Mears, 96, of Essex, Mass. He saw action on Guadalcanal and was wounded on Okinawa in the fighting on Sugar Loaf Hill.

1stSgt Thurman "T.I." Miller, 97, of Mount Hope, W.Va. During WW II he was assigned to K/3/5, 1stMarDiv during the fighting on Guadalcanal and other battles in the Pacific. He later worked 40 years in the coal mining industry as an electrician and mechanic. He wrote several books about his life experiences, including "Earned in Blood: My Journey from Old-Breed Marine to the Most Dangerous Job in America." He was a member of the 1stMarDiv Association.

Raymond H. Patrick, 85, of Parker, Ariz. He joined the Marine Corps after his 1942 graduation from high school. He served in the South Pacific and fought on Guadalcanal and Iwo Jima. His awards include the Purple Heart.

Sgt Robert J. Philhower, 73, of Ring-



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wood, N.J. He was an Eagle Scout who joined the Marine Corps in 1966. He served in the Vietnam War. He later earned a bachelor's degree in mathematics with a minor in music education.

SgtMaj Richard R. Phillips, 81, of Green Bay, Wis. He was a Marine Corps veteran. He later was a truck driver.

SSgt Francis "Frank" J. Porter Jr., 93, of Beverly, Mass. During WW II he deployed to the South Pacific with Marine Air Group 21. After the war he became an engineer with General Electric and was involved in the design of fuel cells for the Gemini and Apollo space flights, and the instrument panels for various Boeing aircraft.

SSgt Robert G. Schlager, 86, of Lancaster, Pa. He was a Marine who served in the Korean War. He later worked in the construction industry.

Maj Vincent Scully, 97, in Lynchburg, Va. He served in the Marine Corps during WW II. After the war he completed graduate work in art history at Yale University, eventually becoming a faculty member lecturing on the topic of architectural history. One of his students, Maya Lin, designed the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Dr. Edgar L. Smith Sr., 93, of West Bloomfield, Mich. He was a Montford


Point Marine who served in WW II. He later worked for 40 years as a veterinary medical officer for the Department of Agriculture.

MSgt Paul E. Smith, 79, of Rutherfordton, N.C. His 21 years in the Marine Corps included two tours in Vietnam. He later started his own construction company.

Cpl Joe Stimpson, 64, of Kalispell, Mont. He was with 2nd Force Recon from 1960-1964, and made more than 150 parachute jumps.

William "Bill" H. Sutley, 96, of Sheridan, Wyo. He enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1942 and served in the Pacific theater until 1945. He was assigned to 4th Tank Bn during the Battle of Iwo Jima. He was a member of the VFW, American Legion and MCL.

MSgt George A. Wallace, 80, of Delaware, Ohio. He was a Marine Corps veteran. He was a member of the MCL and the American Legion.

SgtMaj Ray Wilburn, 98, of Twentynine Palms, Calif. During his 32 years in the Marine Corps he served in three wars. During WW II, he was assigned to 3rd Artillery Bn, 10th Marines on Gavutu. He later saw action in Korean War. He was the sergeant major of 1st Medical Bn during the Vietnam War. 

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SOUND OFF [continued from page 4]

short documentary. My granddaughter was allowed to sit in and heard an earful. She's quite interested in it all so I'd like her to hear what it was like from the ground.

Any takers? You guys allowed to talk to Army gunship pilots?

Robert D. Denlinger
 Greenup County, Ky.

Misawa Air Base and Marine Service

It was good to see the mention of Marines training at Misawa Air Base in Northern Honshu Island, Japan in your October 2017 [In Every Clime and Place] issue. I was stationed there in 1972 and 1973. My MOS was 2571 (special radio operator). I've lost contact with all those Marines I trained and served with and have seen little if any reference to Misawa. We did exist, and we did contribute—though a long way from Vietnam.

In August 1973, I was discharged through Treasure Island, Calif., and was

subject to that special welcome many of us had on the streets of San Francisco, Calif. I'm glad that all those serving today see such a great measure of well-earned respect from everyone.

Sgt James Paul Bratney
 Eastsound, Wash.

Reader: "Oorah Has No Meaning"

As a former drill instructor, I wonder what they are teaching our recruits. Our motto is Semper Fidelis which has a beautiful meaning. When I greet a young Marine with "Semper Fi," I receive back an "Oorah," which has no meaning at all.

1stSgt Harry O. Blake Jr., USMC (Ret)
 Gulfport, Miss.

1967 Tank Convoy

I saw a picture on page 11 of your October 2016 edition which is very similar to a picture I took in 1967 of our convoy in Phu Bai heading to Asha Valley. Our outfit was Headquarters Battalion, 12th Marines, 3rd Marine Division.

James Thomas Lowie
 Friendswood, Texas



Unidentified Barracks

On page 66 of the January issue the photo of the barracks sure looks like the one on the corner of Barnett Avenue and John Quick Road, Quantico, Va. I was stationed there in 1969 at Infantry Weapons School. We lived in this building. The mess hall was on the first floor and squad bays above. It has been 49 years and I guess there are many buildings in Quantico that may look the same.

Sgt R.J. Amshoff
 USMC, 1968-1974
 Okeana, Ohio

Doc Remembers Another Hue Marine

As a corpsman who served with H Co and BAS, 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines in 1967-1968, I read with keen interest your article on Hue City, "House to House," in the January *Leatherneck*. I know many of the Marines in the article and can state they fought with incredible bravery. I have always felt honored and privileged to serve along with such men. They watched my back every minute I served with them and I am eternally grateful.

One particular lance corporal, David D. Harbin, deserves special mention because of his bravery and leadership as noted in his Silver Star citation for his actions on Feb. 4, 1968, during Operation Hue City. He still carries an AK-47 round in his body. I hope you can find space to publish my letter in recognition of an outstanding Marine.

Dennis "Doc" Noah
 Baltimore, Md.

Forty & Eight Boxcars

I read the article "A Battlefield Was Our Goal: The 6th Marines Journey to France," [January issue] with great interest since I began my Marine Corps career with 1st Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division.

Author J. Michael Miller provided history laced with anecdotes that added a personal factor to the events of 1917 in France.

Also, as a longtime member of the current "Forty & Eight," I dare to correct Mr. Miller regarding the "infamous 40 men or four horses boxcars" used to transport troops to the frontlines ... it actually is 40 men or eight horses, hence 40/8.

MGySgt Carlton "Chuck" LeDrew
 USMC (Ret)
 Yuma, Ariz.

J. Michael Miller's article on Marines in World War I, January issue, is very informative.

I invite him to double check on the

usage and terminology of French railroad cars.

“Quarante et huit,” 40 and eight, was a well-known term. It referred to 40 men and eight, not four horses per car. He states four in the text of page 31 and again in bold alongside a photo of a car.

BGen Walt Donovan, USMC (Ret)
Boise, Idaho

While reading my newest issue of *Leatherneck* your article, “A Battlefield Was Our Goal,” was of great interest to me as my grandfather was in France with the 32nd Red Arrow Division.

I enjoyed the article until it made reference to 40-men or four-horse boxcars. The reason I question this is I am a proud life member of the 40&8 Voiture Locale #408, Grand Voiture, Ill. The history of the 40&8 trace our roots to World War I and those same boxcars your article labeled as 40 or four. The 40&8 has a proud history and calls itself “The Honor Society of American Veterans,” and I don’t know if I should attend our next meeting and say its 40&4 vs. 40&8. I am just wondering the source the author used to get his 40 and four claim? Thank you for any light you can shed on this issue.

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

Exhibit Curator Designs

A Sword Display Fit for the CMC

The December 2017 issue of *Leatherneck* with swords being the most featured subject, such as the cover with the picture of the NCO sword, the article “Sword Refurbishing: Trusting the Experts Makes All the Difference,” and the Saved Round of how the sword was first authorized, sparked my interest.

During General P.X. Kelley’s tenure as Commandant, I became involved with swords. I was hired by Colonel F. Brooke Nihart, USMC (Ret), to be the exhibit curator for the Marine Corps Museum when it was located at the Washington Navy Yard.

Brigadier General Edwin Simmons was the director of the museum.

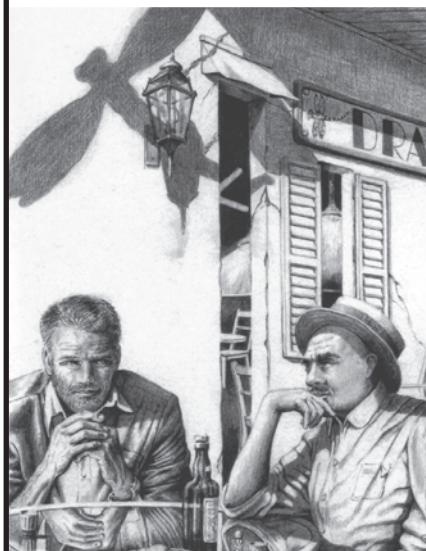
One day Gen Kelley called BGen Simmons to his office and asked if he could recommend some new decorations for his office.

BGen Simmons said he would send over his exhibit curator to help.

He told me to meet Gen Kelley, and as we surveyed what was there, I suggested some new artwork for three of his bulkheads and asked him to allow me to make a shadowbox with an officer’s sword and an NCO sword to indicate officers and enlisted as a family of Marines. Gen

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COURTESY OF MSGT CARL M. "BUD" DEVERE SR., USMC (RET)

MSgt Carl M. "Bud" DeVere Sr., USMC (Ret) displays his NCO sword and his son's officer sword in a shadow box that proudly hangs in his home.

Kelley liked the idea and gave me authorization to do it.

As I left the office, I said I would ask my son, who was a Marine captain, if he would loan his sword, and I would loan my NCO sword to the project. Gen

Kelley liked this idea because we were family members. I had my woodcraftsman make the shadow box after my son said he would be honored to have his sword in the CMC's office.

The sword case hung in the Comman-

dant's office throughout Gen Kelley's tour and remained there for the tours of Gen Gray and Gen Mundy. When I finally got the swords back, I made another shadow box that is now displayed in a museum I put together in the basement of my home.

MSgt Carl M. "Bud" DeVere Sr.
USMC (Ret)
Longmont, Colo.

Correction

James McCord notified us that the photo on page 34 of our January issue shows Marines from the 3rd Plt, Co F, 2/5 and not 2nd Plt as listed. McCord was the platoon's commander and is pictured second from the left in the photo.

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




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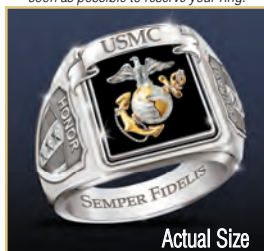
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Reader Assistance

Edited by Sara W. Bock

Reunions

• **Marine Embassy Guard Assn.**, May 3-7, Arlington, Va. Contact Max Wix, (682) 716-3972, contact@embassymarine.org, www.embassymarine.org/2018-mega-reunion/.

• **Marine Corps Aviation Assn. Don E. Davis Squadron (Aviation Logistics)**, March 15-18, Myrtle Beach, S.C. Contact Wayne Miller, (973) 441-3636, millerwayne559@gmail.com.

• **11th Marines, OIF-I (15-Year Reunion)**, April 6-7, Camp Pendleton, Calif. Contact Casey Harsh, (703) 432-8060, casey.harsh@usmc.mil. Facebook group: Cannon Cockers OIF-I 15 Year Reunion.

• **1/27 (1stMarDiv FME, RVN, 50th Anniversary Reunion—all other 27th Marine battalions welcome)**, July 18-22, Alexandria, Va. Contact Felix Salmeron, (469) 583-0191, mar463@aol.com.

• **2/4 (all eras, 50th Anniversary of victory at Dai Do—Gold Star family members welcome)**, April 30-May 3, Quantico, Va. Contact Becky or Frank Valdez, (714) 306-2329, fxala@hotmail.com.

• **F/2/7 and H/2/1 (1965-1966)**, July 15-20, Colorado Springs, Colo. Contact Ron Gryn, (352) 638-2872, boatmanron@gmail.com.

• **K/3/7 (all eras)**, Aug. 12-16, Savannah, Ga. Contact Bill Gerke, (631) 433-8575, msggerke@aol.com.

• **Support Co, 3d Engineer Bn (RVN, 1967-1968)**, Sept. 11-13, Ocean City, Md. Contact A.J. Folk, 215 Sweetwater Lane, Newtowntown, PA 17073, (610) 589-1362, ajfpa@comcast.net.

• **RVN-Era Aerial Observers**, May 29-June 1, San Diego. Contact Tim Moriarty, (408) 529-4117, tmoriarty@fastmail.com, or Bill Mundt, (732) 763-7323, wtmundt@msn.com.

• **1st Provisional Marine Brigade (“The Fire Brigade,” Korea, 1950)** is planning a 65th anniversary reunion. Contact Col Warren Wiedhahn, USMC (Ret), Military Historical Tours, 13198 Centerpointe Way, #202, Woodbridge, VA 22193, (703) 590-1295, jwiedhahn@aol.com, www.miltours.com.

• **Marine Corps Security Forces**,

Naval Weapons Station Earle, Sept. 28-30, Colts Neck, N.J. Contact Dusty Wright, (618) 553-2205, slickstuff@nwcable.net.

• **Marine Barracks NSA Fort Meade, Md.**, April 12-15, Parris Island, S.C. Contact Bob Pepin, (508) 831-5575, rpepin@wpi.edu.

• **Battle of An-Nasiriyah (15th Anniversary)**, March 23-25, Fort Worth, Texas. Contact Dion Brugger, tfreunion@gmail.com, www.tfreunion.org.

• **105th OCC, 1st Plt, Co C, December 1977 (staff NCOs, officers and commissioning female Marines)**, is planning a reunion. Contact Debbie Thurman, debbie.thurman54@gmail.com.

• **TBS Class 3-67/41st OCC**, Nov. 15-18, New Orleans. Contact Fred Lash, (703) 644-5132, fredanddonnalash@verizon.net.

• **TBS, Co H, 8-68 (50th Anniversary and Memorial Plaque Dedication)**, June 6-10, Quantico, Va. Contact Capt Terrence D. Arndt, (314) 308-5020, tdarndt@gmail.com.

• **TBS, Co F, 6-79**, is planning a reunion. Contact LtCol Tom Conners, USMC (Ret), (919) 303-2697, (919) 418-5757, tconners3@yahoo.com.

• **Warrant Officer Screening Course, 1st Plt, Co D, January 1974**, is planning a reunion. Contact Capt Joseph C. Chiles, USMC (Ret), (619) 729-9562, joseph.chiles@gmail.com.

• **“Kilo” Co (Plts 277, 278, 279 and 280), Parris Island, 1961**, is planning a reunion. Contact MSgt Martin D. Smith, USMC (Ret), 10 Lee Ct., Stafford, VA 22554, (540) 720-3653, martann843@gmail.com.

• **Plt 98, Parris Island, 1948**, is planning a reunion. Contact SSgt Jim Proulx, USMC (Ret), (904) 343-4850, bertojotol@gmail.com.

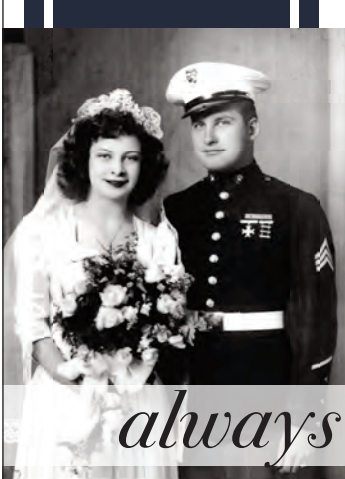
• **Plt 171, Parris Island, 1966**, is planning a reunion. Contact J.P. Kuchar, 33 Sheridan Ave., Metuchen, NJ 08840, (732) 549-6468, jpkuchar@mac.com.

• **Plt 244, Parris Island, 1967**, is planning a reunion. Contact former Sgt J.D. Croom III, (704) 965-8521, jcroom47@aol.com.

• **Plt 245, San Diego, 1965**, is planning a reunion. Contact David S. Alvarez, (209) 735-2601, srt8o06@yahoo.com.

• **Plt 266, Parris Island, 1962**, is planning a reunion. Contact Donald A. Welch, 129 Hawthorne Pl., Ithaca, NY 14850, (607) 256-0554, don814u@hotmail.com.

• **Plt 340, Parris Island, 1963**, is plan-




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ning a reunion. Contact Garrett W. Silvia, (508) 992-7392, gwsil@comcast.net.

- **Plt 431, Parris Island, 1945**, is planning a reunion. Contact 1stSgt George P. Cavros, USMC (Ret), (262) 782-7813, gcavros88@gmail.com.

- **Plt 1018, San Diego, 1968 (50th anniversary)**, is planning a reunion in Salem, Ore. Contact Dan Stombaugh, (541) 606-0398, dwstombaugh@msn.com.

- **Plt 1040, San Diego, 1968**, is planning a reunion. Contact Stephen Norpel, 206 N. 7th St., Bellevue, IA 52031, (563) 451-8417, snorpel@yahoo.com.

- **Plt 1059, San Diego, 1967**, is planning a reunion. Contact Dave Jamieson, (805) 896-7404, daveyo_jamieson@msn.com.

- **Plt 2023, San Diego, 1983**, is planning a reunion. Contact Jeffrey R. Johnson, 3751 Merced Dr., Unit 4D, Riverside, CA 92503, jrj430@yahoo.com.

- **Plt 2030, Parris Island, 1965-66**, is planning a reunion. Contact John E. Lyford, (518) 654-6073, reniejohn@roadrunner.com.

- **Plt 2077, San Diego, 1966**, is planning a reunion. Contact SgtMaj Raymond Edwards, USMC (Ret), 100 Stephens St., Boyce, LA 71409, sgtmajedretired@gmail.com.

- **Plt 2086, San Diego, 1966**, is planning a reunion. Contact Bill Kennedy, (707) 527-8319, wm.kennedy98@yahoo.com.

- **Plt 3042, San Diego, 1968**, is planning

a reunion. Contact Gary Berry, (614) 679-1499, tagpresident@verizon.net.

- **Plt 4035, "Papa" Co, Parris Island, 2000**, is planning a reunion. Contact Tammy (Manyik) Epperson, (571) 451-7263, tammy.epperson@gmail.com.

- **Marine A-4 Skyhawkers**, Nov. 1-4, Pensacola, Fla. Contact Mark Williams, 400 Howell Way #102, Edmonds, WA 98020, (425) 771-2030, rogerwilco14@gmail.com, <http://a4skyhawk.info/article/notices>.

- **VMFA-212 "Lancers" (1975-1981 and beyond)**, May 3-5, 2019, San Antonio. Contact J.D. Loucks, vmfa212reunion@aol.com.

Ships and Others

- **USS Hornet (CV-8/CV/CVA/ CVS-12)**, Sept. 19-23, Mobile, Ala. Contact Sandy Burket, P.O. Box 108, Roaring Spring, PA 16673, (814) 224-5063, hornetcva@aol.com, www.usshornetassn.com.

Mail Call

- Crystal Joerg, (732) 619-9226, crystaljoerg@gmail.com, to hear from members of **Plt 335, San Diego, 1963**.

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- Nate Swope, charles.n.swope@gmail.com, wants a **March 2015 issue of Leatherneck**.

- Glenn Thompson, 200 Lasso Circle, Kemp, TX 75143, (214) 287-5191, gtjrsmc85@gmail.com, wants a **recruit graduation book for Plt 2017, San Diego, 1982**.

- Stephen Romey, 6672 Conch Ct., Boynton Beach, FL 33437, (301) 807-0217, sgromey@gmail.com, wants a **recruit graduation book for Plt 1017, Parris Island, 1983**, and a **cruise book for TBS Co H, 1985**.

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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Saved Round

By Nancy S. Lichtman

FINAL FOOTAGE—This is the last known photo taken of combat correspondent Corporal William T. Perkins before he gave his life to protect his fellow Marines. On Oct. 12, 1967, Perkins, second from left, filmed the evacuation of wounded Marines from “Charlie” Company, 1st Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment during Operation Medina. Two hours later, the 20-year-old was killed in the Hai Lang Forest in Vietnam when he threw himself on an enemy grenade that landed in close proximity to three other Marines.

Cpl Perkins was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions that day.

In 2015, Cpl Perkins’ mother donated his Medal of Honor and other items to the Smithsonian Institution’s National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C. In addition to his Medal of Honor, Cpl Perkins’ Purple Heart and Bell and Howell camera (inset photo) are on display in the Museum’s “Price of Freedom: Americans at War” exhibition.

Staff Sergeant Bruce Martin, a *Leatherneck* correspondent, also was covering Co C, 1/1 during Operation Medina when he took this photo. His article “Let’s Go Charlie!” from the February 1968 issue of *Leatherneck* is on page 46. 📷



JACLYN NASH, COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY



SSGT BRUCE MARTIN, USMC