

MAY 2018

MAGAZINE OF THE MARINES

Leatherneck

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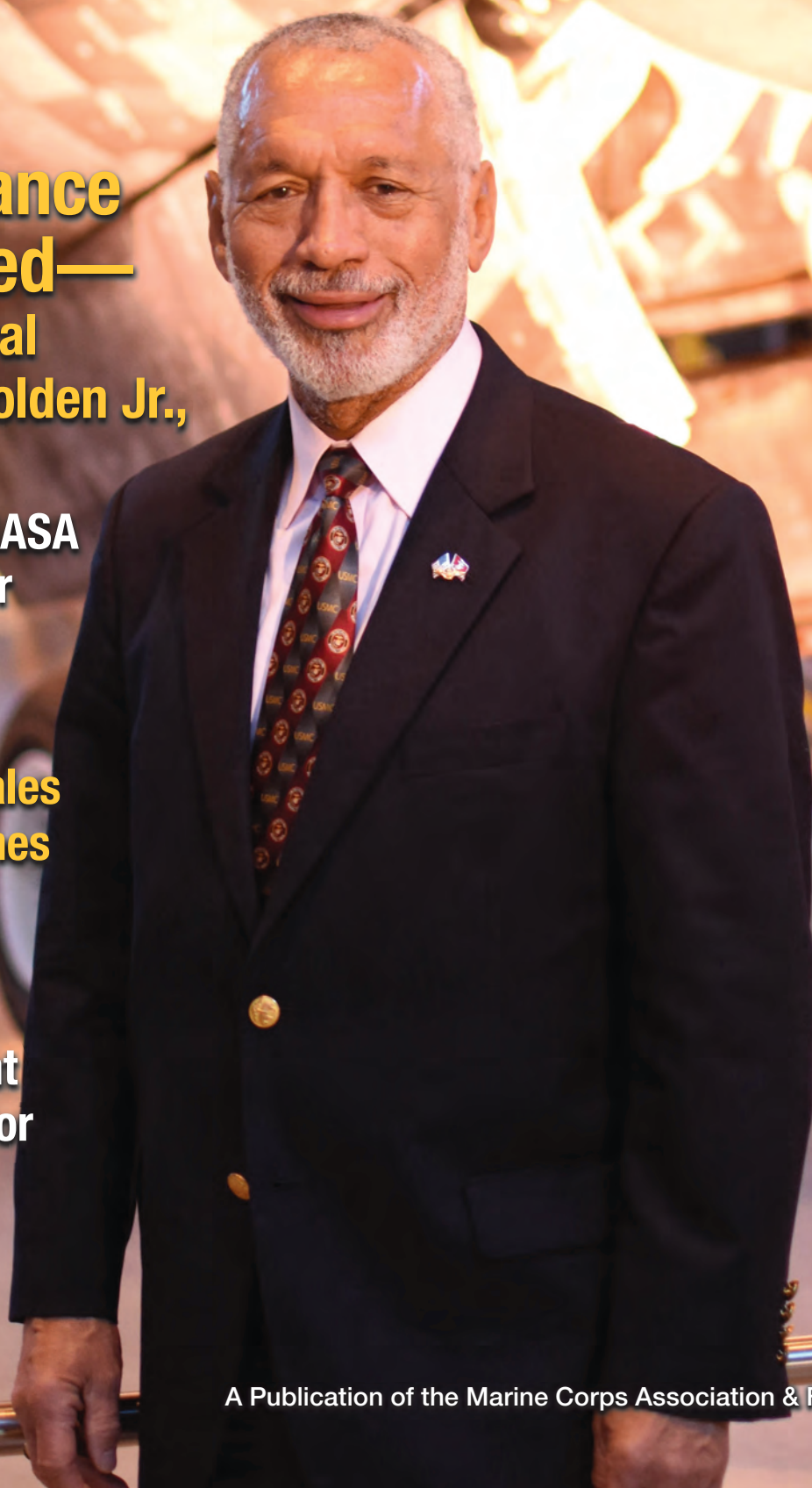
Perseverance Personified—

**Major General
Charles F. Bolden Jr.,
USMC (Ret)**

**The Road to NASA
And the Power
Of A Dream**

**High-Flying Tales
Of WW I Marines
“Over There”**

**15th MEU—
Replenishment
At Sea Calls For
Team Effort**



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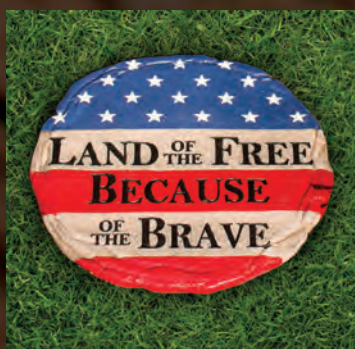
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From the Editor's Desk

Dear Readers,

For the last several years, Paul G. Bayes has sent the obituary of his younger brother, Thomas, into the *Leatherneck* office, hoping we will publish it in the magazine. Private First Class Thomas J. Bayes was killed in Vietnam while serving with 2nd Battalion, 26th Marines 50 years ago. And his brother, himself a Navy veteran, remembers.

Several of the thousands of awards the Marine Corps Association & Foundation presents each year are namesake awards, presented in honor of outstanding Marines who made a significant impact on the Corps. One such award is the LtCol Kevin Shea Memorial Unit of the Year Award given in honor of then-Major Shea who was killed during Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2004. His wife, Ami, and their children, daughter, Second Lieutenant Brenna Shea, and son, Michael, often attend the award presentation to the deserving unit in honor of their husband and father. They remember.

Corporal Jesse Jamie was serving with 1st Battalion, 5th Marines during Operation Iraqi Freedom when his vehicle hit an Improvised Explosive Device on June 15, 2005. He and several other Marines in his squad were killed. His twin brother, Cpl Joel Jamie, also a member of 1/5, escorted his brother's body home. He remembers.

Anyone who has spent any time wearing the uniform of this nation knows that it's not just in war that we lose Marines. Ours is a dangerous profession whether in peace or in conflict, and we often are reminded of that in the harshest of ways. On March 20, 1989, a CH-53D crashed near Pohang, South Korea, during Exercise Team Spirit-89. The helicopter was carrying members of "Charlie" Co, 1st Battalion, 5th Marines. Nineteen Marines were killed. Among the dead was my good friend, Second Lieutenant Darren M. Bell. I remember.

Staff Sergeant Enrico A. Rojo was heading home for Christmas on Dec. 16, 2016, when he witnessed a car accident on his way to the airport. He stopped to help the victim and was struck and killed by another vehicle. He was posthumously awarded the Navy Marine Corps Medal. His family remembers.



Those who raised them, who served with them, who befriended them—we all remember. And we still mourn. Not just on Memorial Day but every day. The pain may lessen but it never truly goes away and the memories are still there. We appreciate their sacrifice and know that not only "freedom isn't free," but that the cost is so very high, and that high cost is often paid by the young. PFC Bayes was 19. Cpl Jamie was 22. 2ndLt Bell was 23. SSgt Rojo was 29. Maj Shea was the "old man" of the group—he was killed on Sept. 14, 2004, his 38th birthday.

There is comfort in knowing that the Marines we lost are mourned by their own families and friends and also by their Marine family. Whether a rack mate from boot camp or a fellow lieutenant on deployment or a leatherneck who fought so valiantly side by side with his fellow Marines in the sands of Iraq, those who served with the fallen also keep their memories alive and remember.

Leatherneck readers need no reminder as to the sanctity of Memorial Day; they not only know its true meaning, they live its spirit each and every day. So, this is not a reminder but rather a shared remembrance of those Marines who, although no longer with us, helped us truly understand the meaning of "Semper Fidelis."

Mary H. Reinwald

Mary H. Reinwald
Colonel, USMC (Ret)

PFC Thomas J. Bayes, 19, of Whitestone, N.Y., was killed in action in Vietnam, April 7, 1968.

A few days after his June 1967 graduation from high school, he enlisted in the Marine Corps. Following boot camp, he deployed to Okinawa and from there went to Vietnam.



PFC Thomas J. Bayes



Contents

LEATHERNECK—MAGAZINE OF THE MARINES

MAY 2018
VOL. 101, No. 5

Features

1 From the Editor's Desk A brother's devotion to his Marine sibling more than 50 years after his death in Vietnam is a poignant reminder of the true meaning of Memorial Day.

10 Spring of 1918: Marines in the Trenches in France
By J. Michael Miller The first in our series of articles commemorating the Marine Corps' participation in the crucial battles during the last months of World War I.

24 Cheating Death in Vietnam
By Michael Dan Kellum 1stLt Earl Masaji "Pineapple" Miyamoto, a HMM-364 helicopter pilot, cheated death several times during his tour in Vietnam in the early 1970s.

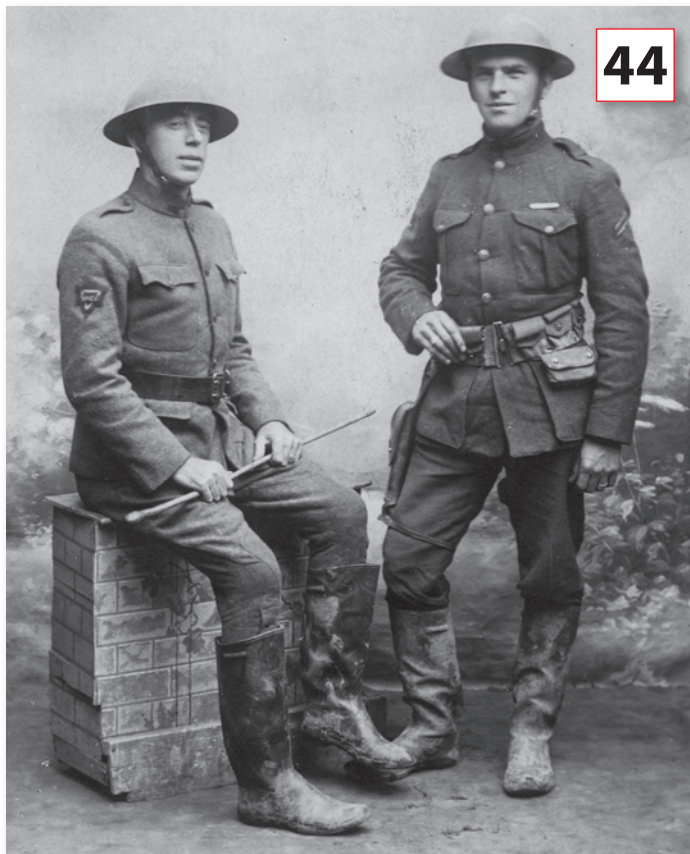
32 Replenishment at Sea Aboard USS *San Diego*
By 1stLt Maria Arnone, USMC Marines and Sailors of USS *San Diego* and the embarked 15th MEU worked together to resupply the ship during a replenishment at sea, Dec. 22, 2017.

36 Major General Charles F. Bolden Jr., USMC (Ret): Hard Work, Perseverance Launched His Dreams Into Motion *By Sara W. Bock* MajGen Charles F. Bolden Jr., USMC (Ret), sits down with *Leatherneck* for an exclusive interview in which he shares the story of his journey from the segregated South of the 1960s to leading NASA years later. A legendary figure in the Marine Corps aviation community, his path began with a dream to attend the United States Naval Academy and the determination to make it happen, even in the face of adversity.

44 "Echoes from Armageddon": The World War I Recollections of George C. Connor *By Ben Kristy* Selected excerpts from George Connor's book-length manuscript, "Echoes from Armageddon," provide a unique perspective on Marines in Europe during World War I.

54 A Memorial Day Tribute: The Return
By SgtMaj Edward F. Neas, USMCR (Ret) One Marine's efforts to return a dog tag to the family of a Marine killed in Vietnam is an outstanding reminder of our duty to remember the ones who didn't return.

COVER: MajGen Charles F. Bolden Jr., USMC (Ret), stands in front of Space Shuttle *Discovery*, which he piloted on a 1990 spaceflight and commanded during a 1994 mission, at the Udvar-Hazy Center, National Air and Space Museum in Chantilly, Va., Feb. 5. See "Major General Charles F. Bolden Jr., USMC (Ret): Hard Work, Perseverance Launched His Dreams Into Motion," on page 36 for an exclusive *Leatherneck* interview with the Marine aviator, astronaut and NASA Administrator. Photo by Nancy S. Lichtman. Copies of the cover may be obtained by sending \$2 (for mailing costs) to *Leatherneck Magazine*, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134-0775.



Departments

- 4 Sound Off
- 8 Corps Connections
- 16 In Every Clime and Place
- 22 Leatherneck Laffs
- 30 Sea Stories
- 50 We—the Marines
- 53 Crazy Caption
- 58 Books Reviewed
- 62 Passing the Word
- 64 In Memoriam
- 70 Reader Assistance
- 72 Saved Round

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Letter of the Month

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

It was Christmas Eve in December 1968. I was the only Marine officer on a small staff at the Military Assistance Command in Saigon. We had heard that the Reverend Billy Graham would join the staff for breakfast.

I was standing in the back of a small auditorium waiting for Graham's arrival when he appeared as scheduled. As we all sat down, Graham asked, "Is there a Colonel Smith in the house?" I realized he was talking to me. I had just returned from leave because my mother had suddenly died in October. My boss, a great Army general, had apparently told this to Graham.

I was seated near him, and he took my hand and said, "Let's pray for your mother."

To this day, I cannot believe this happened. A memorable Christmas in a far off war-torn land.

LtCol Rodgers T. Smith, USMC (Ret)
El Cajon, Calif.

Surprise, Surprise, Surprise

On my second float into Beirut, Lebanon, January through June 1983, we were given some R&R in Athens, Greece. I was with two other Marines, and we were walking around enjoying the sites, foods

and local beverages of Greece. We had just entered Constitution Square where I noticed three Huey pilots I knew.

One of the officers motioned for us to come over to their table. There were five people at the table and one was covering his face with a menu. That person dropped the menu, and yelled out, "Golly, Sarge." We three Marines were thrilled to meet Mr. Jim Nabors and to receive a "golly" from him.

After laughing and talking for a short time with Mr. Nabors, we handed him the Greek fisherman hats we were wearing to autograph. I still have that hat where it's on display in my "hooch" room.

Cpl John Soper
USMC, 1982-1983
Rindge, N.H.

WM's 75th Anniversary

I'm disappointed that there was no mention in the February *Leatherneck* of the 75th anniversary of the Women Marines which was Feb. 13.

Things have changed markedly over these many years. I served under a special program in which college women could join for training in keeping with their college program. Six weeks training at Quantico, Va., between sophomore and junior years, again between junior and senior years, and upon graduation commissioned a second lieutenant with a return to Quantico for six weeks of officer training.

Our summer uniforms were a sweltering blend of nylon and Dacron dresses, regular cotton utilities, and exercise "peanut" suits. We then were assigned a first duty station and served two years on active duty, considered active reserve, then four additional years inactive duty with four to six weeks active duty per year. I did apply to stay on active duty, but only two from my class who applied were accepted.

A few years ago a friend sent me a video of enlisted women at recruit training. There have been complete changes in the uniforms including camos, boots and firing on the rifle range. It would be interesting if there was published information to show how so many things have changed for women in the Corps. A friend of mine, the late Colonel Vera M. Jones, USMC, was sent to Naval Language School in Monterey, Calif., and then sent for a tour in Vietnam. I never knew exactly what her duties were, I presume some sort of translation.

As I recall, Col Pauline Beckley was the

commanding officer during my training from 1956 to 1958 at Quantico. I spent my two years of active duty at Camp Lejeune, N.C., and spent a few months working in the base legal office. A quota came out for junior officers to attend Naval Justice School in Rhode Island that I was recommended for. Unfortunately, I was not given the chance, as the major refused to approve my request. He felt it would be "a waste" to send a woman officer for that training. He instead sent a male first lieutenant from the naval hospital physical evaluation board. I was sent to fill his spot on the board. How times have changed.

Well, perhaps there will be a *Leatherneck* article about the many years' service of Women Marines, varied MOSSs, duty stations, etc.

I was promoted to captain in July 1963 and was finally able to put on the shoulder bars for my last active-duty stint at Camp Pendleton, Calif. Those bars were sent to me years before by our 1956 platoon sergeant, June R. Doberstein, USMC.

Cynthia L. (Stewart) Hollingsworth
Wenatchee, Wash.

• *To coincide with this summer's convention of the Women Marines Association, Leatherneck will be celebrating the centennial of female Marines in our August issue which will include an interview with the Corps' most senior female Marine, MajGen Lori Reynolds. We have published numerous articles over the years detailing the history of women in the Corps and discussing the evolution of their roles and responsibilities. Many of the articles can be found at http://www.mca-marines.org/women_Marines_100.—Editor*

4th Marines at Corregidor

I would like to comment on the 4th Marine Regiment that was attached to Corregidor Island. My father was assigned to USS *Canopus* (AS-9) in Manila Bay at the start of World War II. After the ship was scuttled by her crew to prevent the Japanese from getting the ship, my father, along with many other Sailors, was attached to 4th Marines in an attempt to defend the "Rock."

Finally overrun and captured, my father and many others spent the rest of the war as Japanese prisoners of war (POW). As I attempted to follow the various POW camps that he was placed in, I constantly saw the name Private First Class Jack O. Elkins, a Marine who passed away

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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

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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

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a few years ago in the northern part of Washington.

I had the chance to know several Marine Corps officers who served as advisors to the Vietnamese Marines. I also worked with the Marines at Yokosuka Naval Support Activity including those assigned to shore patrol and the Marine detachment. The last time that I worked with Marines was while attached to USS *Okinawa*. I met several Marines including a gunnery sergeant assigned to the cargo handlers and a major attached to the air department.

I spent 22 years in the Navy and have complete respect for the Marine Corps, which was instilled in me by my father.

John E. Christian, USN, (Ret)
Puyallup, Wash.

Iwo Flag Raising, March 2005

I may have the distinction of being the oldest Marine to raise the American flag atop Mount Suribachi on the island of Iwo Jima. Not on Feb. 23, 1945, but on March 23, 2005.

After serving in the Marine Corps from Jan. 29, 1960 to Jan. 29, 1964, I was discharged with the rank of lance corporal. Entering the civilian world I became involved with the John Basilone Detachment of the New Jersey Marine Corps League and later became the detachment's commandant. Since boot camp, where I first saw the famous statue, I always had the obsession of wanting to walk on the black sands of Iwo Jima and climb Mount Suribachi. The opportunity became a reality when I learned Military Historical Tours was running a special tour in March 2005 to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Battle of Iwo Jima. I, along with numerous others, including Medal of Honor recipients, celebrities, dignitaries and the Young Marines, spent three days on the Island of Guam and 12 hours on Iwo Jima. While on the tour, I became friends with Medal of Honor recipient, Jack Lucas, and R. Lee Ermey, both of whom gave me their challenge coins.

Walking on the black sand is something I shall remember and treasure for the rest of my life. Since black sand is the only souvenir the Japanese allow to be taken off the island, I filled two quart jars with the sacred black sand.

Jack Lucas, I and the Young Marines were standing next to the monument where the famous flag raising took place. A few feet away was a 25-foot flag pole flying the American flag. Because the hoisting rope was dry-rotted, it broke while we were standing there and the American flag fell to the ground. Mike Kessler, who was in charge of the Young Marines, quickly organized a group to



COURTESY MEL "BLACKIE" MESZAROS

The American flag was hoisted on Mount Suribachi, March 23, 2005, in honor of the 60th anniversary of the battle, when suddenly the rope broke and the flag fell to the ground. The Young Marines who were present came to the rescue by replacing the rope and hoisted the flag again.

lift the 25-foot pole out of its sleeve in the ground. After getting new rope to replace the rotted one, the American flag was now ready to be flown again.

The group consisting of 10 Young Marines, Mike and myself proceeded to place the base of the pole into the sleeve and raise the pole and American flag upright.

Mel "Blackie" Meszaros
Monroe, N.J.

Reader Remembers Maine's Author

I really enjoyed the February issue, particularly the article on the USS *Maine*. Seeing Ron Keene's name as author was icing on the cake. Any time Ron rejected one of my many submissions he would always explain why. He could reject writing, but never a writer. It's hard to think of *Leatherneck* without thinking of Ron.

Bob Gannon
Rochester, N.H.

Errors Spotted

Thank you for your latest edition of *Leatherneck*. I almost always read it cover to cover the day that it arrives.

I found two possible errors in the March edition that I feel compelled to comment on. On page 65, you list an obit for Corporal Joe Stimpson. I always try to do the math when ages and dates of service are mentioned. If Joe had been 64 years old when he passed away this year that would mean he was born in 1953. There is virtually no way that he could have served from 1960 to 1964 since he would have been seven years old in 1960. Perhaps Joe was 74 when he passed away.

Secondly, on page 66, you featured a photograph that may have been supplied by James Thomas Lowie. The title of the letter is "1967 Tank Convoy." The U.S. Marine vehicle in the photo is an

M-51 Tank Retriever. I would have recommended that you call the letter "1967 Armor Convoy," since the vehicle shown is not a tank.

Sgt John Wear
USMC, 3rd Tanks, RVN, 1968-1969
Elbert, Colo.

The tanks in the March issue, page 66, are indeed not tanks. I served in 8" howitzers for four years from 1963 to 1967. The vehicle is either 8" howitzers (self-propelled) or 155 guns. Noticing the gun's insignia, they are either the 1st 8" How Btry or 3rd 155 Guns. The only way to tell is by barrel length.

I served in both batteries during my enlistment. Third 8" in the fall of 1963 where I was promoted to private first class on Nov. 22, 1963. In March 1964, 1st and 2nd platoons were transferred to Okinawa and became 1st 8".

During the Tonkin Bay incident, 1st Plt, 1st 8" mounted out for a two-month cruise in a World War II rusty hulked LSD (amphibious dock landing ship). Tales are still spun over adult beverages about that cruise.

At the end of my tour in Okinawa, we were transferred back to 3rd 8" at Twentynine Palms, Calif. First 8" sailed to Chu Lai, Vietnam, soon after we left. In March

1966, 3rd 8" sailed to Chu Lai, relieving 1st 8", who went with 3rdMarDiv to the Da Nang sector.

Both of these described guns and howitzers are on display after entering the main gate at Twentynine Palms.

Cpl William R. Van Meter
Austin, Texas

• *Sgt Wear—you have a good eye. Several others pointed out the discrepancy with Cpl Stimpson's date of birth and service dates. As far as "Tank Convoy," Cpl Van Meter is correct. The vehicle is the back end of an M109 self-propelled howitzer. The photo caption was correct but the sub-head was erroneous.—Editor*

Losing Stripes

In the March Sound Off section, Major James Murphy responded to the comment I made in our December 2017 issue regarding the E-3 rank. My comment had not been detailed.

I was released from active duty as an E-2 private first class. I then joined the Marine Corps Reserve where I stayed for just over a year. While in the reserve I was promoted to E-3 corporal. I don't recall the promotion being an "acting" rank at that time but it probably was.

[continued on page 66]

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Corps Connections

Compiled by Sara W. Bock

Fort Hall, Idaho

"Peaches and Pound" Brings Back Memories of Vietnam

One leatherneck's birthday cake was served up with a side of nostalgia on Feb. 18 thanks to a Facebook interaction between his daughter and a Marine he served with in Vietnam as a member of 1st Platoon, "Alpha" Co, 1st Battalion, 1st Marines.

In this day and age, social media platforms like Facebook have allowed veterans and their family members to track each other down and reconnect across the miles. Eddie Neas keeps up with Ed "Chief" Matsaw of Fort Hall, Idaho, pictured, on Facebook through Matsaw's daughter, Punkin Matsaw Eschief, who solicited the help of her Facebook friends to make her dad's birthday special. Neas was quick to jump in with an idea that would bring him back to their days together in Vietnam.



PUNKIN MATSAW ESCHIEF

"I told her to get a pound cake, put peaches on top with one candle and tell him, 'It's a birthday wish from all his buddies he served with in Vietnam,'" said Neas.

A while later, Neas received this photo with a message from Eschief: "He told us that you guys would get a little round can that was a pound cake, and whoever had peaches would put them on top ... and that would be their birthday cake ... he got emotional."

It was a belated "peaches and pound" for Matsaw, whose birthday in Vietnam occurred during the Battle of Hue City so he never had his turn to have the traditional treat.

"The friendships we formed, the camaraderie we had and the good and bad times we shared will always be remembered," said Neas of the bond he shares with Chief and all the other Marines from his unit.

Submitted by SgtMaj Edward F. Neas, USMCR (Ret)

Rocky Hill, Conn.

Service, Sacrifice of WW II Female Marines Recognized, Honored

Seventy-five years after the Marine Corps officially opened its ranks to allow women to enlist during World War II, 11 remarkable women were honored for their service to country and Corps at the Connecticut Department of Veterans Affairs, Rocky Hill, Conn., Feb. 9.

Each veteran was presented with the WW II Victory Medal. At the end of the war, thousands of women servicemembers were rapidly discharged and sent home; many married and moved away from their home of record never knowing they rated the medal for which every member of the U.S. military who served between December 1941 and December 1946 is eligible.

Colonel Adele Hodges, USMC (Ret), pictured on the left, presented the medal to the veterans, one of whom was Veronica "Ronnie" Bradley, right, the subject of the iconic WW II recruiting poster "Be a Marine; Free a Marine to Fight," displayed on the easel behind the two Marines.

Two other WW II female Marines, Dorothy "Dottie" Dee and Julia Lynch Slocum, were present to accept their medals; four were not present due to health issues and four more were honored posthumously, proudly represented by family members who received the award on their behalf. In addition to the WW II Victory Medal, each Marine also was presented with the Connecticut Veterans Wartime Service Medal.

Connecticut Lieutenant Governor Nancy Wyman, U.S. Senator Chris Murphy, U.S. Congresswoman Elizabeth Esty and other



SAL V. SENA SR.

officials attended the ceremony, as did active-duty female Marines from Marine Corps Recruiting Station Springfield, Mass. The event was a collaborative effort among dedicated individuals from the Women Marines Association, the Connecticut Department of Veterans Affairs and the Marine Corps League.

Editor's note: Just a few short weeks after she was presented with the victory medal, Veronica "Ronnie" Bradley passed away. See "In Memoriam" on page 65.

Submitted by SgtMaj Jamie B. DePaola, USMC (Ret), and Sal V. Sena Sr.

Hayward, Calif.



COURTESY OF MICHAEL L. EMERSON

New Gold Star Families Memorial Monument is 29th in U.S.

For 94-year-old Marine veteran and Medal of Honor recipient Hershel Woodrow "Woody" Williams, pictured on the left, a Dec. 2, 2017, dedication ceremony at Lone Tree Cemetery in Hayward, Calif., brought him one step closer to his goal of ensuring that every state in the U.S. has at least one Gold Star Families Memorial Monument.

The construction of the monument, which is the 29th of its kind to be completed, was made possible through the hard work of Marine veteran Michael L. Emerson, pictured on the right, and other members of the Marine Corps League 1stLt Frank Reasoner Detachment #919. Emerson and his team helped raise the funds and coordinated the dedication event. It's the first in California and on the entire West Coast, and recognizes the deep sense of loss felt by all Gold Star family members whose loved ones made the ultimate sacrifice for their nation.

Submitted by Michael L. Emerson



COURTESY OF VINNIE HOWARD

Indian Harbour Beach, Fla.

Cpl Dustin Schrage Memorial Highway Signs Improved by MCL Det

Members of the Brevard County Detachment #513 of the Marine Corps League gave the memorials on Highway A1A North and South in Indian Harbour Beach, Fla., a "facelift" to honor their fallen Marine brother Corporal Dustin Schrage, who was killed in action in May 2004 while serving during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"I've driven by many times over the last two years and felt compelled to honor this hero," said Vinnie Howard, the detachment commandant, of the improvements the detachment made to the area surrounding each sign.

Submitted by Vinnie Howard

Arlington, Va.

Reunion Strengthens a Forever Bond

Boot camp buddies from Platoon 1040, Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, 1968, reunited in the summer of 2017 for a reunion at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., which included front row seats for the Sunset Parade at the Marine Corps War Memorial, Arlington, Va. From the left, Stephen Norpel, Douglas Trumbo, Rodney Seabert, Joe Channell, Brawley Lovelace Jr., Tom Busic, Gregory Cunningham, Clarence Burnough and James Grover enjoyed one another's company—and especially enjoyed the opportunity to fire all weapons at the Simulated Marksmanship Trainer III at Quantico.

"When we get together, it's like this band of brothers were never apart," said Stephen Norpel. "Everyone has his own stories about their time in the Corps, but we all remember boot camp and that is what bonded us forever."

Submitted by Stephen Norpel



COURTESY OF STEPHEN NORPEL

"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.rock@mca-marines.org. Submission does not guarantee publication, and we cannot guarantee the return of photos. 📷

Spring of 1918: Marines in the Trenches in France



Marines stand in a trench near the Verdun sector in the spring of 1918.

By J. Michael Miller
Photos courtesy of
Marine Corps History Division

“Why in hell can’t the Army do it if the Marines can?” lamented General John J.

Pershing after an inspection of the 4th Marine Brigade in February 1918. “They are all the same kind of men, why can’t they be like Marines?” The commander of the American Expeditionary Force made these laudatory comments to Brigadier General Charles A. Doyen, the commander of the Marine brigade. A U.S. Naval Academy graduate, Doyen served in the Spanish-American War and deployed to the Philippines, Cuba and the Dominican Republic. He had arrived in France in June of 1917 with the 5th Marine Regiment, but with his promotion to brigadier general, he assumed command of the 4th Marine Brigade. His replacement as the commander of 5th Marines was Colonel Wendell C. Neville; Col Albertus W. Catlin led the 6th Marine Regiment.

The 4th Marine Brigade was composed of the 5th and 6th Marine Regiments as well as the 6th Machine Gun Battalion. Many of the officers and enlisted men were national athletes and scholars—prime examples of the best young men in America. Prominent among the lieutenants were Albert P. Baston, a two-time college football All-American at the University of Minnesota; John W. Overton of Yale University, who was America’s best middle distance runner in track and



BGen Charles A. Doyen, USMC

field; and Richard H. Jeschke, a Big Ten wrestling champion from the University of Chicago. In the enlisted ranks, many of the young recruits were also athletes representing every sport in the country. Of 250 men in the 78th Company, 72 were over 6 feet tall.

With the first phase of training completed in March 1918, rumors of a move to the front reached a fever pitch with the issue of trench knives, trench boots

and supplemental clothing. On March 12, orders were given to pack up seabags and prepare for a move. The local French citizens had become friendly with the Americans. When Private Bacon assured them, “We’ll come back and visit you,” several burst into tears. They explained, “No one who leaves here for the front ever comes back here.”

The 4th Marine Brigade loaded onto railcars and entered its phase of front-line training on March 16, taking over a quiet sector of the trench lines near Verdun the following day. The area occupied by the Marines was on the west face of the St. Mihiel salient, near Sommedieu, southeast of Verdun. Fierce fighting took place in the area from the beginning of the war in 1914 until 1916, but since that time the sector remained a quiet place where both sides rested their forces for battle in other sectors of the Western Front.

The French 20-mile defensive front was divided into three sectors—all on the east bank of the Meuse River—and each held by a French infantry division. The front line began with the Toulon sector in the north where 1,000 yards of open plain separated the trench line. The lines then bent back toward the river in the Rupt sector where the trenches were in very close proximity in a forest. The French defenses ended in the Troyen sector on low ground, so close to the Meuse River that artillery and supporting arms were located on the far side of the stream.

German defenders dominated the Troyen sector from a forest overlooking

French Col Beraud-Reynaud transfers command of the Toulon sector to BGen Doyen, March 15, 1918.



the low ground. Each sector was a mass of supply and communication trenches studded with artillery lunettes zigzagging across the fields and forests to the front line trenches and outposts. The 4th Marine Brigade first drew the Toulon sector, assigned to support the French 33rd Division. On March 17, the 5th Marines took position in the French line at Les Esarges, followed by the 6th Marines the next day in the Bonchamp subsector. The 6th Machine Gun Bn deployed each of its four companies to support two battalions in each regiment. The Marine Corps faced the Germans for the first time in World War I.

"The night we went in the trenches it was raining and we were soon wet to the skin," Private Gerald B. Clark of the 47th Company, 5th Marines, wrote in a letter home. "We had to walk along a shell pitted road and the only time you could see a thing was in the flash of some big gun way back of the lines. One minute I would stumble over a rock in the road and the next I'd step in a water-filled hole. That was a journey I'll remember if I live to be a hundred years old. After we got nearer the flares sent up over no-mans land would light up things for a few seconds, but it would be darker than ever when they glimmered out. One of the nicest things of the whole works are the rats. They sure are birds for size and nerve. Some look as big as a dog (especially at night) and delight in sharpening their teeth on your "hob-nails" if you stand still long."

Both the 5th and 6th Marines began duty following the French traditional style of placing one battalion on the front line, another in reserve and the last in camp. The battalions rotated these three assignments every week to 10 days, so that the Marines limited time in the mud and filth of the front line trenches. Each of the four companies on the front placed one platoon on outpost duty, with the remaining three platoons in supporting distance. Daily activity proved to be the same routine of barbed wire repair parties, daily intermittent shelling across the lines and night raids across no man's land to search for prisoners for the intelligence officers to interrogate. Battalions in reserve kept busy primarily during the night with details for digging new and repairing old trenches.

The arrival of the Marines brought an immediate change to the region. Previously, the French and Germans established an unwritten truce with unnecessary fighting kept to a minimum. Private Onnie J. Cordes of the 17th Company was astonished to see several German soldiers calmly washing their clothes in a small pond between the lines. "These were the



Above: 6th Marines respond to a gas drill near Verdun, April 30, 1918.



Left: "Jimmy the Anteater," the 5th Marines' mascot, had been with the regiment for several years and accompanied the Marines to France in 1917.



last ones who washed their clothes there,” remembered Cordes, “We declared ourselves and assured the Heinies that we loved ’em not.” In return, the Germans retaliated with artillery fire to the Marine provocations. The historian of the 6th Marines commented on the lack of fight of the German infantry after observing the enemy across the lines. “The enemy artillery, however, showed a marked increase in activity,” he noted, “and endeavored to impress this regiment upon its first duty in the front lines. It gave the regiment a daily shower of shell fire, which proved rather ineffective.”

The French X Corps, 2nd Army set in motion the tutelage of the Americans. The French commanders interspersed the 2nd Division with their own units until the newcomers became proficient in holding the line. The following weeks of duty in the trenches allowed the Americans to become familiar to combat in a static defense. The success of the German spring

offensives to the north forced the French to withdraw some of their veteran divisions from the sector, allowing the Americans to expand their zones of control at the end of March, replacing the departing French forces.

Most importantly, many Marines experienced the sensation of being under fire for the first time. The raw conditions of the trenches soon became home to the Marines, who observed the shattered condition of what remained of the trees, which were described as “stumps looked like tombstones in a graveyard.” The dugouts where the men slept were in deplorable condition. “Just a half an inch below the wire netting under our beds there were several feet of stagnant water,” Private Cordes recalled, “There were many rats, who would run across us all night long and also sneak under our blankets and spend the night with us. It was terribly cold and damp.”

One of the legendary characters who

Below: Carrier pigeons, like the one being transported by this Marine, were used to deliver messages when regular communications proved to be challenging.



rose to meet the challenges of trench warfare was “Jimmy the Anteater,” one the mascots of the 5th Marines. Jimmy was a coati picked up during the occupation of Vera Cruz in 1914. Although the Marines labeled Jimmy an anteater, he ate anything but ants. Described as a cross between the curiosities of a raccoon, the faithfulness of a dog, and the agility of a monkey, Jimmy quickly bonded with the Marines, deploying with them to Haiti and entering the trenches facing an enemy worthy of his talents—the legions of trench rats who ran rampant within the Marine front lines. His battle in a darkened dugout with the huge leader of the local rat pack would become one of the epic legends of the regiment.

The rats did not take kindly to Jimmy’s interference with their free reign of the Marine positions, resulting in a showdown, waking the Marines from their sleep. The observers could barely make out the opponents in the struggle, which seemed to be a seesaw affair, judging from the sounds emanating from the battle. After several minutes of growling, hissing and yelps of pain, the struggle ended. Although cov-

ered with wounds, Jimmy proved victorious to the delight of the Marines who properly congratulated the bloody coat on his victory. No rat ever challenged Jimmy again.

On April 13, the 74th Company, 6th Marines rested in unprotected barracks a mile behind the front line, sleeping soundly in double tiers of bunks made from chicken wire covered with thin mattresses. A German mustard gas barrage struck the unsuspecting company with deadly accuracy, placing one shell into a barracks containing 60 sleeping Marines. The men awoke to suffocating fumes of gas, overwhelming the Marines before most could reach their gas masks. Many of those able to pull on their masks did so improperly or took them off before the gas dissipated, causing further casualties. Every officer fell victim to the clouds of deadly gas, sweeping through the entire company area. The first light of morning revealed 290 casualties—40 of those men eventually died.

More Marines would have perished if not for the work of Pharmacist's Mate 3rd Class Fred C. Schaffner and Hospital Apprentice 1st Class Carl O. Kingsbury. Both were struck by the mustard gas clouds but disregarded their own symptoms to care for the Marines of their company. Schaffner and Kingsbury treated and

evacuated more than 100 Marines before their own wounds became so severe they were shipped out as well. Both protested leaving their Marines, declaring they were "all right and not affected," but Navy surgeon Joel T. Boone ordered them removed to the hospital for treatment. Schaffner died on April 18, 1918, but Kingsbury survived his wounds. Each received both the Distinguished Service Cross and the Navy Cross.

By the end of April, the brigade suffered few casualties and gained time to learn the lessons of war. The Marines began to act like veterans. The month closed with the same routine as before, but with the addition of German infantry raids on the Marines who wished to find out more about the fighting qualities of the Americans. On the night of April 20, a German box barrage isolated the 84th Company outpost near the town of Villers. The "Hindenburg Circus," with flamethrowers and a shower of grenades, followed the shells into the barbed wire entanglements, but the Marines held firm and repulsed the attacks that left three dead in the wire and another wounded who died on the way to the aid station.

May brought orders to come off the line and into a training area for instruction on offensive combat. The 4th Marine Brigade passed the tests of a "quiet" sector

of trench combat, "where a maximum could be learned with a minimum of loss." Exposure to artillery, gas, trench raids, air attack and many other experiences proved the Marine brigade was ready to fight. BGen Doyen's brigade came together as a combat unit during their time in the Toulon, Rupt, and Troyen sectors.

Unfortunately, Doyen would not lead his brigade into the next battle. On April 29, 1918, MG Pershing informed him of the results of a medical board that would force his return to the United States. The new commander of the Marine Brigade would be Army Brigadier General James G. Harbord, MG Pershing's own chief of staff.

The next phase of combat for the Marines would come in the attack designed to break the stalemate of trench warfare. That test would occur in June 1918 at Belleau Wood, a place destined to become one of the iconic battlefields in Marine Corps history.

Author's bio: J. Michael Miller retired from the Marine Corps History Division in 2016 after more than 30 years of service, and is now writing a multi-volume history of the Marine Corps in World War I. The first volume of the series will be published in summer 2018, covering the battles of Belleau Wood and Soissons.



Marines of 3rd Plt, 96th Co, 6th Marines, rest in the village of Ronvaux.

THANK YOU



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In Every Clime and Place

Compiled by Sara W. Bock

CHONBURI PROVINCE, THAILAND Food in the Jungle: Cobra Gold Survival Training Tests Marines

U.S. Marines from 3rd Reconnaissance Battalion, 3rd Marine Division, and Republic of Korea Marines learned jungle survival skills from Royal Thai Marines during Exercise Cobra Gold 18 in Sattahip, Chonburi Province, Thailand, Feb. 19.

"Today we're teaching jungle survival to U.S. and Korea's reconnaissance Marines," said Master Sergeant Pairoj Prasansai, a jungle survival training instructor with the Royal Thai Marines. "Survival is an important skill for all troops to learn, especially troops who may only have experience in urban combat."

The class taught Marines basic skills to help them survive and thrive in a hot, dangerous environment.

"The course curriculum teaches troops how to find water sources, start fires, the differences in edible and non-edible vegetation and finding vines suitable for consumption and hydrating," Prasansai added. "They also learn about dangerous animals and insects, both venomous and non-venomous, that are native to Thailand and are suitable to eat."

Reconnaissance Marines gather vital intelligence and relay information up to command and control centers, enabling

leaders to act and react to changes in the battlefield—oftentimes sending them deep into enemy territory with limited backup.

"This training can be used during recon if we find ourselves far away from support options. Knowing what we can and can't eat is very beneficial," said Sergeant Stephen South.

Marines were given the opportunity to try some of the fruits, vegetables, herbs, insects and animals that can be found in the jungle and were shown how to safely capture, handle and consume both venomous and non-venomous snakes.

"In the wilderness you can drink the blood of a snake to stay hydrated," Prasansai told Marines while handling a cobra. "Snakes can provide you with both the food and the water you need to survive."

After preparing the snake, students were given the opportunity to drink the cobra's blood.

"It tastes like blood with a hint of fish," said Sgt Christopher Fiffie with a motivated grimace.

Overall, the Marines enjoyed the new experience and gained valuable knowledge to help them in the field.

"I've never done anything like this before and I didn't know you could eat

most of those plants," said Sgt William Singleton. "Seeing the different animals that you can eat is pretty mind-blowing. It will help us recognize [edible food sources] easier in the wilderness."

With new skills learned, Marines from both the U.S. and the Republic of Korea are now better prepared for future missions that may require them to enter the jungle.

Cobra Gold 2018 was the 37th iteration of the exercise conducted jointly by the United States and Thailand and represents the longstanding friendship that the two nations share. The exercise presents a unique opportunity for allied countries to advance interoperability and increase the capacity of partner nations with the common goal of peace and regional security.

SSgt Micaiah Anthony, USAF

MANAMA, BAHRAIN FASTCENT Stands Ready In Middle East

U.S. Marines assigned to Fleet Anti-Terrorism Security Team Company, Central Command (FASTCENT) stand ready to conduct rapid response expeditionary security operations in support of U.S. 5th Fleet and Naval Amphibious Force, Task Force 51/5th Marine Expeditionary Brigade.

"Based in Bahrain, FASTCENT provides platoon-sized forces capable of providing precision fires, employing crew-served weapons, non-lethal weapons, riot control formations and a greater level of expertise when it comes to defensive operations and fixed-site security," said Major Alex Luedtke, the FASTCENT company commander. "If you need a vital naval or national asset secured or defended in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations, a FAST platoon is an option that is now ready to accomplish the mission."

Since the unit's activation in 1986, FASTCENT forces have performed a wide range of missions related to deterring, detecting, mitigating and defending vital naval and national assets against terrorism.

According to Luedtke, FAST teams are predominantly made up of infantry Marines who complete a rigorous training before being assigned to a FAST platoon. Their specialized training begins at the Basic Security Guard Course in Chesapeake, Va., where they learn the individual



SSGT MICAH ANTHONY, USAF

Sgt Christopher Fiffie, a recon Marine with 3rd Recon Bn, 3rdMarDiv, drinks cobra blood during jungle survival training, during Exercise Cobra Gold 2018 in Sattahip, Chonburi Province, Thailand, Feb. 19. In a survival scenario, a snake's blood can be consumed to keep an individual hydrated, while the meat can be used as a source of nutrition.



SGT WESLEY TIMM, USMC

In Bahrain, Marine riflemen with FASTCENT demonstrate close quarters battle training as soldiers with the Bahrain Defense Force observe, Jan. 14. FASTCENT supports TF 51/5 by providing small-footprint expeditionary security operations forces aboard U.S. Navy vessels in the 5th Fleet Area of Operations.

skills required to perform the duties of a FAST Marine. Once they're part of a FAST platoon, they continue to build their lethality by training to collective tasks. The platoon's training culminates at a mission rehearsal exercise, during which the Marine Corps Security Force Regiment certifies them to deploy.

FASTCENT had the opportunity to test their skills early this year during Exercise Native Fury 18, a rehearsal in the United Arab Emirates that enabled U.S. Marines and Sailors to exercise maritime prepositioning force (MPF) capabilities. Marines were deployed aboard USNS *Seay* (T-AKR 302) and USNS *2ndLt John P. Bobo* (T-AK 3008) to provide security aboard the vessels for the duration of the exercise.

"Due to the unique nature of the MPF evolution, the ships needed to have some level of organic force protection to operate in the U.S. Central Command's often-contested environments," said Sergeant Shaun Bagby, a squad leader with FASTCENT.

Bagby explained that FASTCENT forces are scalable, usually have a small footprint and can act as a bridging force by getting to the objective, removing the immediate threat and buying time for a larger force such as Special-Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force or a Marine Expeditionary Unit to come in and relieve the initial force.

"Going back to the birth of the U.S.

Marine Corps, the whole reason the Corps was created was for embarked security aboard U.S. Navy vessels," said Bagby. "Not only for our military ships, but also civilian ships as we saw in the Battle of Tripoli. It feels good to come back and do what our forefathers did."

SGT Travis Jordan, USMC

FORT STEWART, GA. Unfamiliar Terrain Makes for Successful DFT

Marines with 2nd Tank Battalion, 2nd Marine Division conducted a deployment for training (DFT) exercise at Fort Stewart, Ga., Feb. 5-27. The DFT gave the Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C.-based



An M1A1 Abrams Main Battle Tank from 2nd Tank Bn, 2ndMarDiv maneuvers toward its firing position during semiannual qualifications as part of a DFT at Fort Stewart, Ga., Feb. 13. (Photo by Cpl Aaron Henson, USMC)



CPL AARON HENSON, USMC

Marines engage a target from an M1A1 Abrams Main Battle Tank with 2nd Tank Bn, 2ndMarDiv at Fort Stewart, Ga., Feb. 13. The DFT provided the battalion with the opportunity to overcome home station range limitations and exercise the battalion's capability to deploy equipment and personnel.

battalion the opportunity to overcome their home station range limitations as well as exercise the battalion's capability to deploy equipment and personnel.

The mission of 2nd Tank Bn is to close with and destroy the enemy using armor-protected firepower, and shock effect and maneuver, and to provide precision direct fires against enemy armor, fighting vehicles, troops and hardened positions.

To maximize overall training, the unit looked for a suitable location to implement their skills in an unfamiliar terrain.

"The significance of 2nd Tank Battalion's DFT to Fort Stewart is the closure of SR-10 at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina," said Master Gunnery Sergeant Randy Phillips, the battalion operations chief. "We looked through all of the East Coast and found Fort Stewart as a good base to not only fire, but also work on some of the other capabilities we have in the battalion."

Marines completed semi-annual day and night gunnery qualifications to sustain proficiency and enhance maximum operational effectiveness.

"This exercise allowed us to not only train tank gunnery but also machine gun tactics, logistic train convoys and establish a rear maintenance facility," said Phillips.

The maintenance facility provided the Marines a centralized location with the capability to maintain the various types of

vehicles and equipment used throughout the exercise. They also conducted non-live-fire force-on-force training, unstabilized gunnery training, a machine gun range, company lane training and tank gun tables three through six.

"The priority was training the tank crew gunnery rangers, then it was maneuver training for the tank platoons and company, and then we looked at how we can train the Headquarters and Service Company Marines," said Phillips. "We didn't only focus on tank gunnery and skills—we used this base to its full capacity and got training for the whole battalion, which includes 500 Marines and Sailors."

The exercise allowed Marines to strengthen unit cohesion and maintain a constant state of readiness to answer the nation's call in any clime and place.

"I'm always impressed with the Marines, especially being away from their families for 37 days," said First Lieutenant Charles Johnson, a tank platoon commander, during the DFT. "It's a test for the Marines, but so far, I have seen them persevere and rise to the occasion. The training has been a phenomenal opportunity and it's a benefit to the platoon, company and ultimately the battalion. I think we are leaving a better unit from here than when we arrived."

Cpl Aaron Henson, USMC

EAST CHINA SEA F-35Bs Join USS *Wasp* For Historic Deployment

A detachment of F-35B Lightning II aircraft with Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 121, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit landed on USS *Wasp* (LHD-1) in the East China Sea March 5, marking the beginning of the F-35B's first operational deployment with a MEU. The aircraft embarked on *Wasp* in advance of the 31st MEU's Spring Patrol 2018, a regularly scheduled patrol of the Indo-Pacific region with the ships of Amphibious Squadron 11, forming the *Wasp* Amphibious Ready Group.

"This is a historic deployment," said Colonel Tye R. Wallace, the commanding officer of the 31st MEU. "The F-35B is the most capable aircraft ever to support a Marine rifleman on the ground. It brings a range of new capabilities to the MEU that make us a more lethal and effective Marine Air-Ground Task Force."

Well-suited for the Marine Corps' amphibious and expeditionary focus, the F-35B can carry more firepower into more uncertain environments for longer periods of time with better survivability than any other aircraft in history.

The "B" variant of the F-35 is the only one capable of short takeoff and vertical landing. This capability allows the aircraft

to launch from and land on amphibious assault ships like *Wasp*, greatly increasing the F-35's range and deployability.

"The F-35B is a game-changer for the Marine Corps," said Lieutenant Colonel Richard Rusnok, the commanding officer of VMFA-121, who added that the squadron is honored to be the first to deploy the F-35B in support of a MEU.

The F-35B combines a variety of specialized capabilities in one aircraft, such as stealth, electronic attack, advanced sensors technology and high payload capacity, all while maintaining the agility that fighters are known for. The resulting flexibility allows a lone F-35B to accomplish missions that would otherwise require multiple aircraft.

With advances in sensors and networking technology, the F-35B is able to share a superior picture of the battlefield with other pilots flying different platforms like the F/A-18 Hornet or AV-8B Harrier. The result is a force-multiplying effect for the Marine Corps' existing fleet of aircraft that illuminates the battlefield for all friendly pilots in the sky.

"It's an unbelievable aircraft," said Major Michael Wyrsh, F-35B pilot and the executive officer of the VMFA-121 detachment. "We have seen firsthand in multiple exercises and training events where the F-35 has brought an entirely new level of capability and lethality to the Marines on the ground as well as the overall air fight."

2ndLt Ethan Treacy, USMC



SSGT JACOB OSBORNE, USMC

GySgt Brandon Dillard, MAGTF deployment distribution operations center chief, Command Element, SPMAGTF-CR-CC, speaks to Kuwaiti Marines during a Tactical Resupply Subject Matter Expert Exchange in Kuwait in December 2017.

KUWAIT U.S., Kuwaiti Marines Share Best Practices

Logistics Marines from the Command Element and Logistics Combat Element of Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force-Crisis Response-Central Command organized a three-day Tactical Resupply Subject Matter Expert Exchange at the Kuwait Naval Institute to share best

practices in logistics with the Kuwaiti Marine Battalion, Dec. 18-20, 2017.

"Whatever country someone comes from, those who serve in the Marines share the same mindset and spirit for protecting their country," said Major Andrew Harkins, logistics officer in charge, Command Element, SPMAGTF-CR-CC.

The subject matter expert exchange was one of multiple training engagements that SPMAGTF-CR-CC will conduct with the Kuwaiti Marine Battalion over the next year.

Kuwaiti Marines from both the infantry and logistics communities attended alongside the U.S. Marines from SPMAGTF.

"I like seeing a mix like this because the infantry and the logisticians must be able to communicate with each other for effective planning," said Harkins.

During the bilateral exercise, the U.S. Marines showed the Kuwaiti Marines how they conduct logistics and then took a turn observing how the Kuwaiti Marines conduct logistics. On the last day of the exercise, they all conducted a logistics tactical decision game together to practice what they learned.

"This was an incredible opportunity to engage not only a crucial partner nation, but their Marine warriors," said Major Michael Pigford, the future operations officer for the Command Element, SPMAGTF-CR-CC, who added that they look forward to building on their relationship with the Kuwaiti Marine Battalion.

The U.S. Marines involved in the training made an effort to pass training engagement opportunities on to the next rotation of SPMAGTF-CR-CC Marines so that both nations would continue to benefit from bilateral training.

On order, SPMAGTF-CR-CC conducts crisis response, contingency operations, theater security cooperation, enabling operations and all other missions as directed throughout the U.S. Central Command area of operations.

SSgt Jacob Osborne, USMC

OKINAWA, JAPAN Jungle Training Enhances Skills, Builds Unit Cohesion

The trees rustled and dew rolled off camouflaged tents as the Marines of Communications Company, Headquarters Regiment, 3rd Marine Logistics Group stepped out into the brisk morning air at the Marine Corps Jungle Warfare Training Center, Camp Gonsalves, Okinawa, Japan, Feb. 16. It was the final day of the grueling Basic Jungle Skills Course, which teaches basic combat skills in a jungle environment. As logistics Marines, this



CPL BERNADETTE WILDES, USMC

An F-35B Lightning II performs deck landing qualifications aboard USS *Wasp*, March 5. Marines with VMFA-121 embarked a detachment on F-35Bs in *Wasp* as part of the 31st MEU, marking the aircraft's first operational deployment with a MEU.



Marines with Comm Co, Headquarters Regiment, 3rd MCG, slide a "victim" down a hill at the Jungle Warfare Training Center's Endurance Course on Camp Gonsalves, Okinawa, Japan, Feb. 16.

LCPL JAMIN POWELL, USMC

training is important for teaching them how to properly augment the infantry.

"We're in a jungle environment," said First Sergeant Thomas W. Tabisz, the company first sergeant. "This training helps break up the everyday monotony of the operations we do back on base."

During the course, Marines practiced basic skills learned during recruit training and Marine Combat Training—including rappelling, knot-tying, patrolling and land navigation—and took them to the next level.

"This training gets us back to our true

north as far as our warrior ethos, the camaraderie, that esprit de corps that you can build here—that unit cohesion that only happens in an environment like this," said Major Brian Kerg, the Comm Co commander.

Kerg said the course prepares the unit to train and operate in many of the environments in the III Marine Expeditionary Force area of operations. It also inspires and motivates many of the Marines by bringing them back to their warfighting basics.

"Nobody's motivated to join the Marine

Corps to do inventories, inspections and paperwork," Kerg said. "That's not what drew all of these Marines out here and inspired them to be a part of this gun club. It was doing these basic Marine things. It's crawling through the mud, it's overcoming adversity with the best, with their brothers and sisters. This is what gives them that opportunity, out here at the Jungle Warfare Training Center."

True to form, the Marines were excited and ready to take on the Endurance Course on the final day.

"I'm motivated, I'm ready to go. This is what I was waiting for throughout this training," said Lance Corporal Daron Bush, a network administrator with the unit.

The 3.8-mile course was the culminating event, requiring the Marines to complete obstacles such as hasty rappelling, rope-walks, commando crawls, river runs, wall climbs and cargo net climbs. At the end of the course the teams, consisting of no fewer than 12 members, must complete a casualty evacuation through the grueling jungle course.

"I have definitely gained some trust for my coworkers," said Bush. "I feel like Comm Co and other units who have been through this training really gain unit cohesion by just being together through this course."

LCpl Jamin Powell, USMC



Marines begin their descent into the muddy water during an obstacle on the "E-Course" at Camp Gonsalves, Okinawa, Japan, Feb. 16. The "Pit and Pond" is an obstacle requiring low crawls through water-filled trenches and under walkways.

LCPL JAMIN POWELL, USMC

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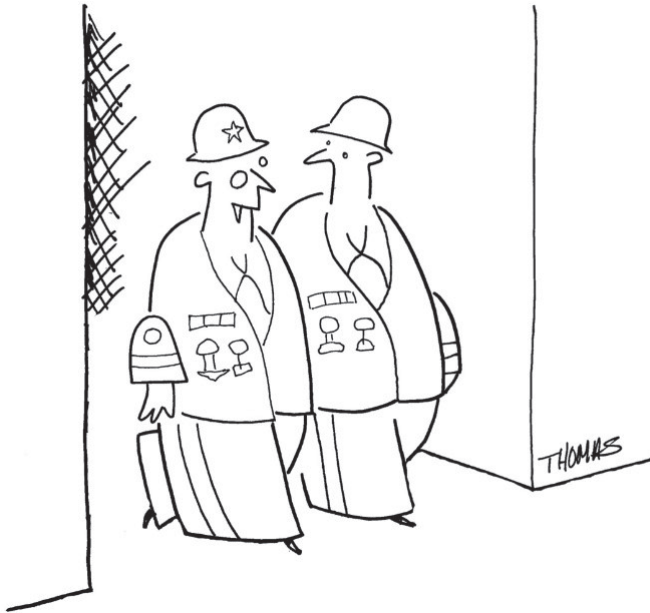


"Looks like we have a couple of volunteers for EOD."

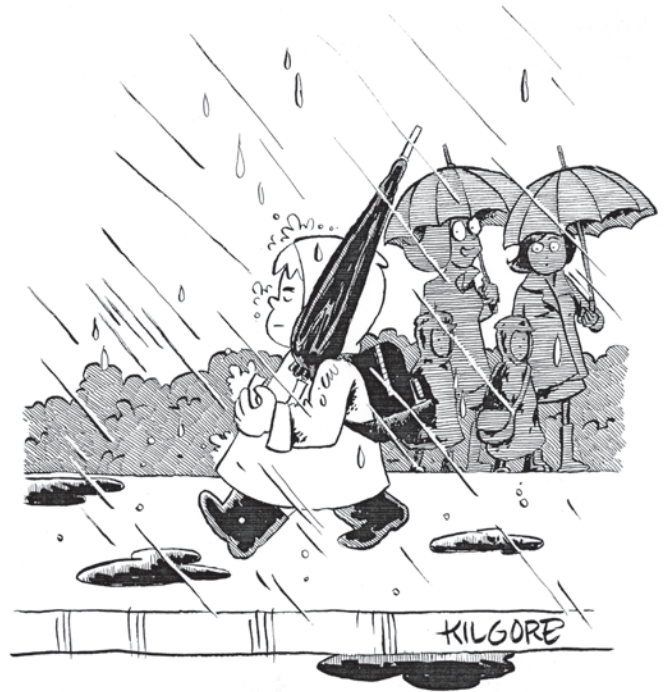


"Sir, the war is going to have to wait.
My laptop is still buffering."





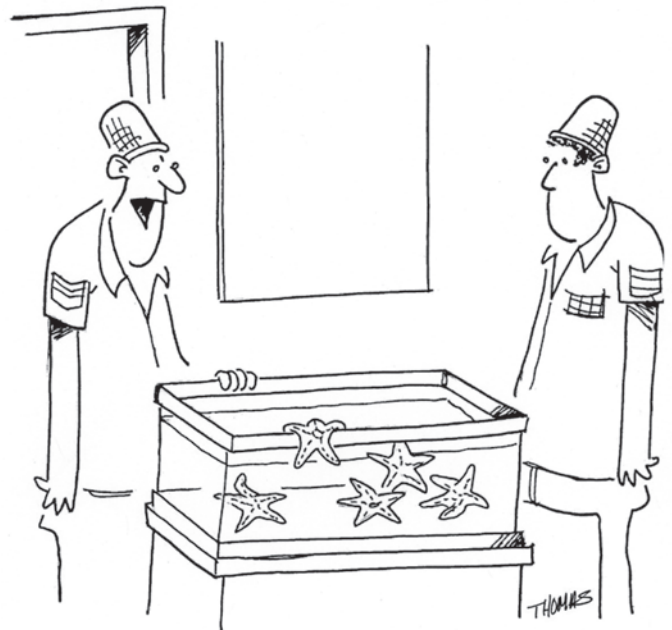
"I wanted to be a general ever since I got my first gold star in kindergarten."



"His mom's a Marine."



"I'll have a half decaf venti white chocolate mocha."



"It's the general's new aquarium."

Cheating Death in Vietnam

By Michael Dan Kellum

Few people know what it's really like to cheat death, but many Marines and Navy corpsmen posted to combat zones certainly do. Sir Winston Churchill put it best when he wrote, "Nothing in life is so exhilarating as to be shot at without result." Combat veterans probably would say, "amen" to that.

First Lieutenant Earl Masaji "Pineapple" Miyamoto, from Kaneohe, Hawaii, is an example of a Marine with multiple "exhilarating moments" in Vietnam during which he cheated death. He flew Sea Knight helicopters for HMM-364, the "Purple Foxes," from July 1970 to February 1971.

Pineapple was what other pilots called "a good stick"—a competent pilot with whom it was enjoyable to fly. But first he had to build up his confidence as a copilot under fire. In his early training, he was paired with experienced pilots like First Lieutenant Jerry "Weasel" White, 1stLt Art Blades and Major Neil R. Van Leeuwin, who flew with Pineapple on an early medevac run on Charlie Ridge, where they took roughly 24 to 28 hits to their aircraft.

"Van Leeuwin asked me as we approached the LZ [landing zone], 'OK, I think we'll go in high speed, low level. What do you think?' And I'm like, 'What are you asking me for? I'm brand new in country. I don't know anything about anything. I'm scared to death.' The major



Suddenly Pineapple heard this "THWACK! THWACK! THWACK!" sound over the roar of the engines. He asked, "What's that? What's that?" "We're taking fire," the major said calmly.

says, 'I think it's just over this ridge. What do you think?' I'm supposed to be the navigator but I was so awed at the time."

Maj Van Leeuwin did a button hook and popped up over the ridgeline. He put the helicopter in a 30- to 40-foot hover as the crew chief talked them down into the LZ. Suddenly Pineapple heard this

"THWACK! THWACK! THWACK!" sound over the roar of the engines. He asked, "What's that? What's that?"

"We're taking fire," the major said calmly.

"I tried to get as small as I could in my seat," chuckled Pineapple. "It sounded like bamboo whacking a carpet. The rounds went right through the thin skin of the helicopter.

"Understand this was the first time I had gone out and taken fire. One gunner got shot in the back and our crew chief took a round off the top of his helmet. We took out some treetops with our front and back blades to take a Marine casualty out of the zone."

As a newbie copilot, then-1stLt Miyamoto seemed to attract bad luck, drawing fire every time he went out on a medevac or reconnaissance team extract. He was given the nickname "Magnet Ass."

"I think that's why they made me a pilot, as no one wanted to fly with me as a copilot," Miyamoto said. He would finish his flying career with 22 Air Medals, 20 air missions equaled one Air Medal and if they were shot at, two Air Medals were awarded.

The events of Sept. 20, 1970, represented a typical day in Vietnam running medevac flights. Pineapple was the copilot on a mission to pick up two Marine casualties 25 miles southwest of Da Nang in a mountainous area. Marines on the ground were heavily engaged with the enemy and using a hoist was not an option; it would make



1STLT DOUG ORAHOOD, USMC

Above: Lt Earl Masaji "Pineapple" Miyamoto

Right: A Sea Knight from HMM-364, the Purple Foxes, heads out on a mission in Vietnam. The laughing Purple Fox on the tail was a welcome sight for 1st Recon extracts in contested hot zones.



COURTESY OF 1STLT MICHAEL DAN KELLUM, USMC



1STLT GEORGE TUCKER, USMC

Lt Miyamoto, pictured here flying the CH-46D Sea Knight in Vietnam, 1970, flew numerous medevac and extraction missions.



Marines and Navy corpsmen from Camp Lauer are transported by one of HMM-364's CH-46Ds to other areas of 2/1's area of operations. Marble Mountain is visible in the background.

saint" and philosopher revered in the Japanese culture for his use of two swords in duels, winning 60 sword fights before the age of 29. Pineapple's wife, Wendy Takagawa, also is descended from the samurais.

It only seems natural that the descendant of samurai warriors and the namesake of a famous expert two-sword fighter would end up flying a Sea Knight with its two sets of three 30-foot rotor blades atop of the helicopter in the front and back. Like Musashi, Pineapple's philosophy in the combat zone was to "conquer his fear," "do his job" and "accept dying, as it went with the territory."

Just 13 days before his squadron was to stand down from the war, Pineapple's aircraft was shot down by the enemy on Feb. 5, 1971. This was the third time he was shot down in Vietnam. He flew the lead aircraft on a medevac call to pick up a Korean Marine who had lost his legs to a 105 mm artillery shell on a road sweep on Highway 4 near Ha Nong Trung. Due to a low cloud ceiling of about 60 feet, he instructed his chase Sea Knight, flown by 1stLt Larry J. "Harvey Wallbanger" Thompson, to execute a "turn and burn" at LZ Baldy as he flew on with the two AH-1W Super Cobra gunships. After picking up the casualty, another medevac call came in to assist a Vietnamese woman peppered with shrapnel from a Bouncing Betty mine four clicks away near Nhi Kinh. He decided to pick her up as well, as it was on the way back to Da Nang and Charlie Med.

En route to the Vietnamese casualty, Pineapple flew along a river that came back on itself in a "C" shape and took fire from a large enemy element. The rounds severed a hydraulic line and damaged an aft transmission and mix box. Hospitalman John V. "Flyin' Doc" Kickham Jr., 21, from Berea, Ohio, was leaning over his patient plugging up his wounds as the rounds went right over his head. He was covered with hydraulic fluid and would have likely been killed if he raised his head.

Pineapple put out a distress call to Thompson and headed to the nearest friendly camp. He flew at about 125 knots (175-180 miles per hour) and 15-20 feet off the ground, riding his air cushion, with one engine knocked out and the other losing its hydraulics and about to seize up. He wrestled the sluggish controls. When he got to the Republic of Korea Marine

their two casualties easy targets for the enemy. Pineapple and his aircraft commander worked as a team to coordinate the approach to a suitable LZ under the cover fire of a UH-1N Huey gunship. They successfully took on the two wounded Marines and flew them to Da Nang. Pineapple received an Air Medal and a Bronze Star with the citation noting that the Sea Knight crew flew two more emergency medevacs that same day.

When asked how he got the nickname "Pineapple," Miyamoto explained, "Some people called me 'Pineapple' and others called me 'Samurai' due to my Japanese heritage. 'The Go For Broke' 442nd Army Combat Team won a number of honors in World War II and were called 'Pineapples,' so it was a distinction to be called that for those Japanese-American troops primarily from Hawaii. I had a little pineapple painted on the back of my helmet for luck."

He admitted that as an Asian-American, he feared the "special attention" the enemy might give to him should he ever be captured. Ancestors from both sides of his family came from the samurai warrior class in Japan. A namesake ancestor, Miyamoto Musashi, was a famous "sword

John V. "Flyin' Doc" Kickham Jr. was leaning over his patient plugging up his wounds as the rounds went right over his head. He was covered with hydraulic fluid and would have likely been killed if he raised his head.



**Hospital Corpsman
"Flyin' Doc" John V. Kickham Jr.**

MICHAEL DANKELLUM

COURTESY OF JOHN V. KICKHAM JR.

The Purple Foxes Return to the United States



As an official final ceremonial exclamation point to the end of the Purple Fox squadron's combat missions in the Vietnam War—spanning May 1, 1964, to Feb. 15, 1971—commanding officer of HMM-364, Lieutenant Colonel Henry A. Steadman, and Sergeant Major A. J. Rappold flew several laps around the Marble Mountain Air Facility (MMAF), in Da Nang.

LtCol Steadman was CO from Sept. 16, 1970, to Feb. 24, 1971, when he was relieved by Major Neil R. Van Leeuwen, who brought the squadron back to the continental United States.

On Feb. 25, 1971, all HMM-364 aircraft were towed to the Da Nang Deep Water Pier and loaded onto the USS St. Louis (LKA-116) for their shipment from Vietnam. This mission concluded their vital role in the Vietnam War.

The squadron's colors, escorted by key personnel, left Da Nang by air on March 12, 1971, and arrived at Marine Corps Air Facility Santa Ana March 14, 1971. On March 22, 1971, the squadron colors were folded and HMM-364 was officially decommissioned.

The personnel and equipment aboard the St. Louis arrived on March 31, 1971. Upon arrival in the United States, the squadron prepared for their deactivation. The Purple Fox squadron's command chronology noted that the squadron flew more than 45,000 combat hours in Vietnam, including 16,000 medevac missions. The squadron transported 10,000 tons of cargo and nearly a quarter of a million passengers.

The squadron was reactivated on Sept. 28, 1984, and participated in the Gulf War and its rich history continues into 2018. A realistic display at the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Triangle, Va. portrays the "Laughing Fox" insignia on a CH-46's tail, capturing a meaningful piece of Marine Corps history to share with generations to come. October 1970 will long be remembered by the pilots of HMM-364. By Oct. 28, the monsoons were in full swing and rivers were overflowing their banks. The Purple Foxes rescued more than 1,500 people over the next few days during the worst flooding in the Da Nang area in the past six years. The squadron rescued 400 civilians on Oct. 29 and the following day, the Purple Foxes flew 58.5 hours rescuing 988 people, despite flying in zero/zero weather without gunships. On Oct. 31, the flood waters started to recede but



LtCol Henry S. "Swift 6" Steadman, CO, HMM-364, was awarded the Silver Star for saving two Marines who were trapped in their helicopter after it crashed and burst into flames on Dec. 19, 1970.

COURTESY OF 1STLT MICHAEL DAN KELLUM, USMCR

there were many hours of emergency resupply to be flown.

The squadron finished with 1,096.7 hours representing 4,130 sorties and 1,321 tasks. The next two months HMM-364 flew 2,190.4 hours carrying 19,740 troops and 426.7 tons of cargo. On Dec. 19, an aircraft was lost to enemy fire resulting in eight emergency medevacs.

Christmas Eve rolled around and HMM-364 had the honor of flying Bob Hope and his cast around Da Nang during his South Vietnam USO Tour. The next day the Purple Foxes delivered Christmas cheer in the form of containers of cold beer to the troops in the field. The squadron provided a static display for the new Commanding General, III MAF, on his visit to MAG-16. The arrival of the New Year brought word that HMM-364 would be standing down and eventually deactivated. As a result the squadron started losing personnel and aircraft to MAG-16 and other units. With only 16 aircraft and only 12 flight crews, the Purple Foxes flew 1,191 hours during the month of January 1971. The squadron lost another aircraft on Jan. 23, 1971, with six Marines being killed. The crew escaped with minor injuries. HMM-364 stood down on Feb. 16 in preparation to return to CONUS and deactivation. From Dec. 10, 1968, when the squadron joined MAG-16, to Feb. 16, 1971, the Purple Foxes have flown a total of 119,309 sorties for 33,413 hours performing 39,167 tasks carrying 243,084 passengers more than 10,000 tons of cargo and 16,368 medevacs. This gives the squadron more than 45,000 hours on its third tour in Vietnam and a total of nearly 70,000 hours of flying in the Republic of Vietnam since its first tour in 1964.

Michael Dan Kellum



SGT JAMES E. CONNOLLY, USMC

Miyamoto's helicopter burns after sustaining heavy damage to its controls from enemy fire.



SGT JAMES E. CONNOLLY, USMC

Marines check out the burned hulk of the Sea Knight.



SGT JAMES E. CONNOLLY, USMC

Enemy fire caused Miyamoto to crash his Sea Knight into a large pond.

The Sea Knight pancaked mostly in a large pond with some on shore. The blades began hitting the water then the helicopter flipped onto its starboard side.



1stLt Tom Dewitt

Corps (ROKMC) compound at an old French fort, he flared to land. His controls froze up, sending the Sea Knight into the clouds. Then, after losing lift, the aircraft dropped like a rock. He told his crew to brace themselves for a crash landing as he continued to fight the controls.

"I remember thinking this time I had bought it. I'm not going to get out of this one. My life didn't flash before my eyes. The only thing I remember thinking was that I hadn't told Wendy I loved her the last time we talked. I closed my eyes and braced for it and made one of the nicest landings I'd ever done."

The Sea Knight pancaked mostly in a large pond with a portion of the helo on shore. The blades hit the water then the helicopter flipped onto its starboard side. Pineapple helped to unstrap his copilot, 1stLt Tom Dewitt, and looked back into the helicopter, as his crew began to crawl out of the aircraft. Miraculously, they all had survived the crash.

Up on the side of the Sea Knight, Pineapple was joined by one of the gunners, and Corporal J.R. Jones, a Marine photographer and correspondent from Marine Air Base Squadron-16 (MABS-16) who had left Thompson's chase helicopter at LZ Baldy to join Pineapple's crew thinking the lead helicopter would get more action. He got his wish and more. Cpl Charlie W. Hansen, the crew chief, emerged from the wreckage and was in shock as he sloshed ashore.

Flyin' Doc Kickham, soaked in hydraulic fluid, stayed inside with his Korean



SSGT M.S. MERRIMAN, USMC

A CH-46 Sea Knight of HMM-364 drops boxes of rations to Marines of Co K, 3rd Bn, 1st Marines, 1stMarDiv, during Operation Uphur Stream.

patient and saw the three men waving for him to come out of the large square escape window. Kickham handed the Korean to Pineapple who grabbed him by his arm when the fuel tanks exploded and a ball of fire set Doc Kickham on fire. Pineapple and the other two men were thrown off the helicopter by the force of the blast. Though Pineapple had his visor down on his helmet, his eyebrows were still singed.

Doc Kickham lost his hold on the Korean and staggered back toward the cockpit area, waving his flaming arms. He fell through a window under the water and decided to swim out, only to get entangled by barbed wire under water. He managed to extricate himself from the barbed wire and swim away from the helicopter. Three ROK Marines jumped in the water to help Doc Kickham. Unfortunately, Kickham's patient did not survive the blast and ensuing flames.

For Doc's attempt to save his patient, Pineapple recommended him for the Navy Cross; he was awarded a Silver Star. He sustained second-degree burns to his face, hands, back and leg, as well as various other minor injuries. Pineapple did not receive a medal for his actions, nor did he seek one, as he felt he had put his crew at risk

and therefore was not worthy of a medal.

Pineapple was impressed to see Thompson arriving without gun cover shortly after the explosion. He took Pineapple and his crew out to the hospital ship *USS Sanctuary* (AH-17).

Back at Marble Mountain Air Facility the next morning, Pineapple was so sore that he felt as though he had been beaten in an alley. He gazed out at the South China Sea as the sun rose outside his hooch, simply taking a breath, letting it out, taking a breath and letting it out again.

"You know, I never realized how nice it was just to breathe. Life is so short and precious. You never know what's coming around the corner. I gained such an appreciation for life and being able to just breathe." The "samurai" pilot with nine lives flew two more missions on Feb. 7 and 10. The squadron flew its last combat mission on Feb. 15, 1971. HMM-364's commanding officer, Lieutenant Colonel Henry W. "Hank" Steadman, sent Pineapple for temporary duty to Japan to continue flying by ferrying repaired Sea Knights to the base at Kyoto, Japan.

Miyamoto and his flight crew earned a unique place in the Purple Fox squadron's combat history in Vietnam, as their air-

craft was the last HMM-364 Sea Knight to be shot down during the Vietnam War.

After returning from Vietnam, he and Wendy made their home in Kaneohe, Hawaii. He was no longer able to fly due to complications with his vision and was forced to take an administrative position.

He retired and became involved in the civilian aviation industry briefly before going back to the Marine Corps as deputy chief of staff, Marine Corps Forces Pacific and later as a civilian.

His job was to visit Marine bases on the West Coast, assess their needs and see that they got the support they needed. He proudly noted he was the first Japanese-American to hold such a post. He thought that would have made his father proud.

Author's bio: Michael Dan Kellum is the author of Books I and II, American Heroes: Grunts, Pilots & "Docs." This story comes from Book I and is condensed from two chapters on retired Major Miyamoto. Kellum and Miyamoto became friends as enlisted Marines at Camp Pendleton in 1968 and both were commissioned officers through the Enlisted Commissioning Program in the TBS class of C-69. 🇺🇸

SEA STORY OF THE MONTH

Parris Island Waiter

When I was in boot camp at Parris Island, S.C., in August 1963, we had to perform kitchen patrol (KP) duty for one week.

Because I was a college graduate, my drill instructor assigned me as a waiter for officer meals, hoping I would perform satisfactorily. I had to run from table to table, trying to serve impatient officers.

During one meal, a cockroach appeared on the dining table. A major, seated in his dress uniform, called to me and said, "Hey, boy! Kill that roach!"

I was so nervous, I quickly grabbed the first thing I saw which was a small milk carton, and slammed it on the roach. Unfortunately, the milk carton was open and the milk spilled all over the major's uniform.

Joe Zimbone
Reading, Mass.

A Shortage of Silver Bars

In December 1957, along with a number of other second lieutenants assigned to the First Marine Brigade located at Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, I learned that we were selected for promotion to first lieutenant. I don't recall the total number of "butter bars" in the brigade included on the promotion list, but considering that the brigade consisted of a Marine Air Group (MAG), an infantry regiment, an artillery battalion, a service battalion and various supporting units, it was a fairly large number. There were at least seven of us in 2nd Battalion, 4th Marines alone.

Those of us in the battalion were informed

that the commanding officer, Lieutenant Colonel Foster C. Lahue, wished for us to appear in his office later that week where he would personally appoint us to our new rank. Upon receiving this good news, we immediately proceeded to the Post Exchange (PX) located in the regimental area to purchase our new silver bars. Imagine our disappointment, however, to

**We immediately
proceeded to the
Post Exchange
located in the
regimental area to
purchase our new
silver bars.**

learn that there were none available. It appeared that the sudden large demand for these items had exceeded the supply.

At the appointed time we arrived at the battalion command post (CP) and discussed among ourselves how we were going to mitigate our embarrassment at not being prepared to wear our new rank. Upon entering the CO's office, however, we were immediately made aware of at least part of the reason for the shortage of first lieutenant bars at the PX. On his desk were neatly lined up boxes of the highly sought devices which LtCol Lahue had personally purchased.

Prior to pinning each of us with our new rank, LtCol Lahue mentioned that he had never worn the silver bars of a first lieutenant. At the time he was selected for the rank he was heavily

engaged as a platoon leader and eventually company commander with the 1st Raider Bn on Guadalcanal. There were no PXs. By the time he was in a position where first lieutenant bars were available, he had been promoted to captain.

Needless to say, we very much appreciated the CO's gesture and were relieved not to be embarrassed by our lack of foresight.

One of our newly promoted group members collected the no longer needed "butter bars" and had them chrome plated in Honolulu. Supply problem solved!

Lieutenant General Lahue retired as Chief of Staff, HQMC in 1974 and passed away at his home in Ormond, Fla. on Feb. 12, 1996, at the age of 78.

Col Richard H. Stableford
USMC (Ret)
Dumfries, Va.

The General's Inspection

In the 1950s I was the mess sergeant at the Noncommissioned Officer Leadership School at Camp Lejeune, N.C. One of the messmen said he could paint and would paint something on the inside of the Butler Building.

Creating scaffolding by stacking mess tables on top of each other and making a wall of cardboard, the messman painted a wonderful picture of the flag raising on Iwo Jima.

Shortly after, there was an inspection by General Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller. I was the last sergeant in the lineup followed by the school executive officer, the sergeant major and various instructors.

Gen Puller approached me, put his hand out to shake mine and said, "My name is Puller." I of course

gave him my name, rank and serial number. He asked for my MOS and I replied, "Mess sergeant, Sir." He then asked to see the mess hall. The general was impressed when he saw the painting as we entered the mess hall. So much so that he said to the sergeant major, "This would be a great place for a beer party! Can you get us some beer?" And that's what he did.

That was the extent of the inspection and we passed with flying colors.

GySgt Charles Setzer
USMC (Ret)
Washington, D.C.

Stick 'Em Up!

The year was 1954. The place, Naval Air Station Atsugi, Japan. The outfit, Marine Air Group (MAG) 11, First Marine Air Wing. I was a "Beebe Stacker" (aviation ordnanceman) in H&MS-11, the headquarters squadron.

East Camp, the Marine portion of the NAS, had its own guard company separate from the "spit and polish" outfit at mainside. Although our provost marshal and sergeants and corporals of the guard were permanent personnel, the peons who walked posts were guys from various squadrons doing "on four, off eight" guard duty stints.

Even though scuttlebutt around East Camp was that all the surrounding villages were lousy with Communists, there was absolutely nothing in the way of potential aggressor infiltration for us to be concerned with. Each sentry walked his post armed with a 12-gauge riot gun with four brass case 00 buck shells in the tubular magazine. Walking the guard post for four hours was extremely boring.

One night, while assigned to walk post on the 2400 to 0400 watch, it seemed like the only sure way to stay awake was to “shoot the breeze” with the sentry on an adjoining post. My closest guard duty neighbor was an aircraft mechanic named “Mac.” Like most jarheads, we each thought of ourselves as authorities on any subject so conversation came easy.

About a half hour into our tour, a group of Mac’s squadron buddies passed our posts after working the night shift. Mac pointed his riot gun at them, waving it back and forth and hollered, “Alright you guys, stick ‘em up!” When his cronies were out of sight, I gave Mac a piece of my mind saying, “... Are you nuts pointing a loaded weapon at those guys?” Seemingly unimpressed he replied, “Oh that’s nothing. If you really want to scare somebody, pretend you’re puttin’ a round in the chamber like this.” Then I heard, click, clack, BOOM! When his

“If you really want to scare somebody, pretend you’re puttin’ a round in the chamber like this.”

12-gauge discharged, Mac turned white as a ghost and started shaking all over. He stammered out, “What the hell am I gonna do?”

My butt wasn’t in a sling so I could think clearly and quickly. I said, “Get on the field phone to the sergeant of the guard and tell him you saw some guy sneak through the fence and yelled Halt three times, then fired a round over his head just before he disappeared into the brush.”

Mac took my advice and

minutes after he cranked the phone, the area was full of guard company jeeps and a half dozen flood lights sweeping the other side of the fence.

The next time we stood formal guard mount a voice bellowed out his name shouting, “Report to the Provost Marshal’s office on the double!” As he scampered out of ranks, I heard, “I’ve really had it now.” After the guard mount was dismissed I ran into Mac and asked how he made out. With a sheepish look and a red face he confided, “They congratulated me on being an alert sentry.”

Sgt Edward D. MacIntyre
USMC, 1953-1956
Phoenix, Ariz.

Field Day?

On our second or third day of Officer Candidates School, Gunnery Sergeant Hoyt Whitaker, our platoon sergeant, announced that we were going to have a field day. I was considering running the 220 yard dash or the 440 which were my best events in college. Imagine my surprise when we were issued buckets, mops and brushes. I never did learn who had the best time for these events.

Col Malcolm S.
Underwood, USMCR (Ret)
Stuarts Draft, Va.

No Sleep for the Tech Sergeant

It was June 1957. I was one of 86 recruits in Platoon 126, Company C, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, Parris Island, S.C. My battalion commander was Lieutenant Colonel Fenton. Our drill instructors were Technical Sergeant Forestall Bowman, Staff Sergeant Glenn and Sergeant Madson.

It was 0500 and we were getting our bunks made up. We were always up well before the field music played his merry tune. I had the top bunk and Private Causey had the bottom one.

“You entertained us last

night, Whitten,” Causey said as he tightened the blanket on his bunk.

“You mean my snoring?” I asked.

He laughed, “Yeah, that haaak, haaak, haaak, is the loudest in the squad bay. But there was more last night.

“We had been in the racks about two minutes when Bowman came in, switched on the lights and yelled for us to hit the deck.”

“We had been in the racks about two minutes when Bowman came in, switched on the lights and yelled for us to hit the deck.”

“Did he?” I asked. “I don’t remember that.”

“I know you don’t. That’s the story. Bowman sauntered in and began to amble down the line of men in skivvies and flip flops. When he got to me he stopped because I was standing alone. I had punched you but you didn’t move.

“Bowman looked around me and heard you, ‘Haaaaaak, haaaaak, haaaaak!’ He yelled, Hit the deck!”

Causey laughed, and Pipkin, on the next bunk, joined him.

“You didn’t budge. Bowman ambled over and yelled in your ear, ‘Hit the deck!’

“Haaaaaack, haaaaaack!”

“He took his leather-covered swagger stick and tapped you on the head. ‘Haaaaaak, haaaaaak!’

“He poked you in the arm and rapped your foot. No response except for your snores. The good sergeant used the lord’s name in vain

as he returned to center stage and said softly, ‘Get in the racks, men.’”

Bowman switched off the lights but he didn’t leave. We could hear him breathing and expected those lights to come back on, but they didn’t. After two minutes he said softly, “Good night, men.”

The squad bay resounded with our “Good night, Sir!”

Dr. David O. Whitten
USMCR, 1957-1963
Dumfries, Va.

Hoist the Sail

In the summer of 1963 I was a private first class in Camp Lejeune, N.C. During my free time I took sailing lessons taught by the wife of a Navy officer at the Wallace Creek boat house.

One day I was sailing on a Sunfish which is like a large surf board with a mast and sail. The instructor was sailing next to me and shouted, “You would go a lot faster if you would hoist your sail all the way to the top of the mast.” Then the Navy wife showed that she understood the philosophy of the Marine Corps when she added, “Just like a Marine, always doing things the hard way.”

MGySgt Tom Milhausen
USMCR (Ret)
Richmond, Va.

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! 🍷



Replenishment at Sea Aboard USS *San Diego*

Sailors aboard the amphibious transport dock ship USS *San Diego* participate in replenishment at sea in December 2017. The 15th MEU recently returned from their deployment aboard USS *San Diego* where they were in support of maritime security operations.

By 1stLt Maria Arnone, USMC

A single bead of sweat dripped from the furrowed brow of a Marine, travelling down the rest of his face in a single, straight line, mirroring the line he was standing in. A line that had been formed by Marines and Sailors of USS *San Diego* (LPD-22) and the embarked 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit to begin resupplying the ship during a replenishment at sea, Dec. 22, 2017.

A replenishment at sea (RAS), also known as an underway replenishment (UNREP), is a method of transferring fuel, munitions and stores from one ship to another while underway. This is a common occurrence for *San Diego*, but this particular RAS was unique.

Usually an underway replenishment is done as

a vertical replenishment (VERTREP), where helicopters deliver pallets of food from one ship to another, or a connected replenishment (CONREP) where liquids such as fuel and fresh water, along with ammunition and break bulk goods are exchanged. *San Diego* pushed the boundaries by doing both.

"This RAS was varsity level," said Navy Lieutenant Sam MacAvoy, supply officer aboard *San Diego*. "It was a CONREP and a VERTREP. Not only did we do both methods of at-sea replenishments, but the *Washington Chambers* replenished three ships at the same time. This was the big leagues."

The USNS *Washington Chambers* (T-AKE-11) delivered more than 160 pallets of food, mail and ship store supplies along with 80,000 gallons of



PO3 JUSTIN A. SCHOENBERGER, USN

Below: Fruits and vegetables are transferred to USS *San Diego* during the ship's resupply Dec. 22, 2017.



1STLT MARIA ARONE, USMC



CPL JEREMY LABOV, USMC

Left: *San Diego*'s officer and enlisted Marines and Sailors work together to unload new supplies for the ship during replenishment at sea, Dec. 22, 2017.



1STLT MARIA ARONE, USMC

Above: The Navy-Marine Corps team aboard *San Diego* used a modified assembly line to assist in unloading and transferring supplies to storage areas Dec. 22, 2017.



1STLT MARIA ARONE, USMC

Above: Capt David Few with VMM-161 (Reinforced) attached to the 15th MEU moves supplies aboard *San Diego*, during an earlier replenishment on Oct. 26, 2017.

For more information on 15th MEU, visit:

www.facebook.com/15thmarineexpeditionaryunit
www.twitter.com/15thmeuofficial
www.dvidshub.net/unit/15thmarineexpeditionaryunit

For more information on USS *San Diego*, visit:

www.public.navy.mil/surfor/LPD22
<http://www.facebook.com/LPD22>



fuel to *San Diego*. While the delivery is an arduous task, the unloading and transfer of pallets within the ship can be just as complex.

“When everyone works together like the Marines and Sailors on this ship do, that’s when a job is done best,” said Senior Chief Culinary Specialist Richard O’Connell, lead chief petty officer of the supply department aboard *San Diego*, and a Bristol, R.I., native. “The teamwork is what makes it a successful evolution.”

Working an assembly line of sorts, the Marines and Sailors passed boxes of beets, blueberries and buns with mechanical efficiency hour after hour until all the pallets were broken down and properly stored on ship.

“We were like a well-oiled machine passing boxes so fast,” said Corporal Aaron Anthony, from Hattiesburg, Miss., a mortarman with Battalion Landing Team, 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment.



“Everyone was working together. There were no frowns on the entire line of people working.”

The enormous supply of frozen food, fruits, vegetables and equipment was unloaded to the ship all before lunch.

“Seeing hundreds of Marines and Sailors out there in line, listening to music, having a good time, all while unloading boxes shows how much everyone cares about our ship,” said O’Connell.

With all of the supplies accumulated during the RAS, the Marines and Sailors will have plenty of food and treats throughout the deployment.

“Underway replenishments really are motivating,” said MacAvoy. “Hurdling that last logistical mile and getting all the supplies to the crew is a great feeling. When we pull alongside the RAS ship and receive all the food and supplies, I feel like a kid on Christmas morning.”

USS *San Diego*, with the embarked 15th MEU,

deployed to the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations in support of maritime security operations to reassure allies and partners and preserve the freedom of navigation and the free flow of commerce in the region.

Editor’s note: The 15th MEU returned from their successful deployment aboard USS San Diego in February.

Author’s bio: 1stLt Maria Arnone is a communication strategy and operations officer with I Marine Expeditionary Force. She deployed with the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit, where she served as the deputy communication strategy and operations officer. She was commissioned a Marine Corps officer in 2015 after graduating from the United States Naval Academy and majoring in English.



CAPT Pete Collins, CO of the amphibious transport dock ship USS *San Diego*, oversees an underway replenishment with USNS *John Lenthall* (T-AO-189) and the amphibious dock landing ship USS *Pearl Harbor* (LSD-52) on Dec. 19, 2017. (Photo by SN Dalton D. Caples, USN)

Major General Charles F. Bolden Jr., USMC (Ret) Hard Work, Perseverance Launched His Dreams Into Motion

By Sara W. Bock

Major General Charles F. Bolden Jr., USMC (Ret), sat down with Leatherneck for an exclusive interview at the Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center in Chantilly, Va., the companion facility to the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum, Feb. 5. A year had passed since he retired as NASA Administrator, a position in which he served for nearly eight years. Add to that 34 years as a Marine officer—14 of which were spent in NASA's Astronaut Corps—and you have an individual with an incredible record of service to his country and Corps.

He may not have wanted to be a Marine or an aviator, but when young Charlie Bolden closed his eyes and imagined his future, there was only one place he could see himself: the United States Naval Academy.

Inspired by a television program called “Men of Annapolis,” 12-year-old Bolden was mesmerized by the crisp white uniforms worn by the midshipmen and longed to participate in the activities around “the Yard.” But despite six years of writing to his South Carolina members of Congress in hope of securing a nomination, the reality of life as a young African-American in the segregated South hit home. One after another, the

congressmen replied, “Forget it.” “Not going to happen.” “Not in our lifetime.”

For many young people, the sting of rejection would have extinguished the dream, but not for Bolden. Instead of giving up, he persevered.

“I thought about it for a little while and I said, ‘No, my mom and dad didn’t teach me to give up that easily,’ ” said Bolden. He got out a piece of paper and wrote a letter to President Lyndon B. Johnson, who he had corresponded with when he was Vice President. Within weeks, a Navy recruiter showed up at his house and a retired federal judge came to Bolden’s hometown of Columbia, S.C., looking for young men of color who were deserving



NASA Administrator Charles Bolden watches the final launch of Space Shuttle *Discovery* from the firing room at Kennedy Space Center, Cape Canaveral, Fla., Feb. 24, 2011.

NASA



NASA

Above: During his first spaceflight, Charles Bolden mans the pilot's station on Space Shuttle *Columbia*'s flight deck prior to re-entry in January 1986.

Left: Piloted by Bolden, the Space Shuttle *Discovery* launches on April 24, 1990, to deploy the Hubble Space Telescope. Two of Bolden's four spaceflights as an astronaut were aboard *Discovery*, which now is on display at the National Air and Space Museum's Udvar-Hazy Center in Chantilly, Va. (NASA photo)



Mission commander Charles Bolden and the crew of STS-45 have a little fun on the KC-135 zero-gravity-simulating aircraft while preparing for their March 1992 mission aboard Space Shuttle *Atlantis*. (NASA photo)

of service academy nominations.

Before long, he was in Annapolis, wearing the coveted uniform and living the long-awaited dream that had finally come to fruition—but it wasn't everything he had imagined.

"After wanting to be at the Naval Academy forever, I got there and I hated it," recalled Bolden, who was one of seven black midshipmen out of 1,400 in the class of 1968. "It was hard, and people didn't want me there."

In the moments when he wanted to quit, he would call home and talk to his father, a World War II Army veteran. "Hang in there one more day," his father would say.

It all came full circle for Bolden decades later when his son Ché, now an active-duty Marine colonel, followed in his father's footsteps and arrived at the Naval Academy to begin his introductory "plebe year." He, too, found himself struggling to adjust and would call his dad on the

hardest of days, looking for advice.

"Look around the company," Bolden would tell his son. "I know you're having a hard time. Everybody's having a hard time. Find somebody in your company who you think is having a harder time than you are and see if you can get them through the day."

To this day, when Bolden runs into his son's classmates, many of them will say that Ché was the only reason they made it through.

Displaying empathy in the face of adversity and fortitude when the cards seem stacked against you is easier said than done; but for Bolden, instilling in his son the values that got him through his own hard times paid dividends, and brought back to the forefront the personal transformation he underwent during his own four years in Annapolis.

"When I came to the Naval Academy, the only two things I knew for certain

were that I was not going into the Marine Corps and I was not going to fly airplanes," said Bolden, chuckling at the irony. As he struggled through his first year, the mentorship of his first company officer—a Marine major—was so crucial to his success that Bolden eventually decided that he too wanted to be a Marine officer.

Then, during The Basic School at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., Bolden realized he wasn't cut out for life in the infantry and decided to take advantage of the aviation option he had selected "on a hunch" when he commissioned.

"The first time I got in an airplane I fell in love with it, and after that it was on to other things," he said.

Sitting in the McDonnell Space Hangar at the Udvar-Hazy Center, where the Space Shuttle *Discovery* takes center stage, the retired Marine Corps major general shares the story of how he ended up here. An aviator with more than 100 combat



Above: Then-Col Charles Bolden and Gen Carl E. Mundy Jr., 30th Commandant of the Marine Corps, visit with Bolden's son Ché, left, and his fellow Marines at the "Bravo" Company Mess Night at The Basic School in 1994.

Left: In 1991, this official astronaut portrait of Bolden was taken between his second and third shuttle missions.

missions in the A-6 Intruder during the Vietnam War, a graduate of the elite U.S. Naval Test Pilot School, an astronaut with more than 680 hours in space on four shuttle missions—two of which were on board *Discovery*—and NASA's first African-American Administrator, his accomplishments are many. But what really shines through is his devotion to Marines, his optimism about the future of the space program and his steadfast belief that if you work hard and believe in yourself, you can accomplish anything you set your mind to.

He speaks candidly about the times he doubted himself, sharing that he almost didn't apply to become an astronaut because he was afraid of failure.

"I was intimidated—I knew that I would not be selected and I just did not want to have somebody else tell me no, so I told myself no," said Bolden.

But Charles Bolden was destined for space flight: it's apparent in the way his eyes light up when he talks about the view from the space shuttle, attempting to put into words the indescribable. Though it's been 24 years since his final shuttle mission aboard *Discovery*, he paints a picture with his words and expressions that would make any listener think he returned just yesterday.

As Bolden recounts the effects of the shuttle launch and Low Earth orbit on the senses, *Discovery* rests just a few feet away, quiet and motionless. Once a "magic machine," as Bolden affectionately refers to it, the massive shuttle is now a relic—albeit an important one—that

will serve as a source of inspiration for generations to come. But as inanimate as *Discovery* is now, it comes to life in the imagination as Bolden explains the feeling of the vibrations from the rocket boosters below and the incredible sensation of weightlessness once the shuttle reaches the proper speed and altitude.

"But then you look out the window, and earth from that vantage point is unlike

anything you've ever seen in your life. The vivid colors and the image of the planet from that vantage point is just mind-boggling," said Bolden, adding that photographs and even IMAX films can't adequately capture the beauty he observed from the shuttle during each of his four spaceflights, the longest of which spanned nine days. "Just the vivid colors and detail and the fact that there's no evidence that



Toward the end of his tenure as NASA Administrator, Charles Bolden promotes his son, Ché, to the grade of colonel on Feb. 1, 2016.

Below: As NASA Administrator, Bolden spent time volunteering with the D.C. Cares program at the Park View Recreation Center in Washington, D.C., Dec. 14, 2009. Bolden shared his experiences as an astronaut and NASA administrator with the students, encouraging them to stay in school and study math and science. (NASA photo)



Left: Charles Bolden testifies during a U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation hearing in Washington, D.C., March 7, 2012.

we live here! That's the other thing. You see this incredibly beautiful planet and no signs of life."

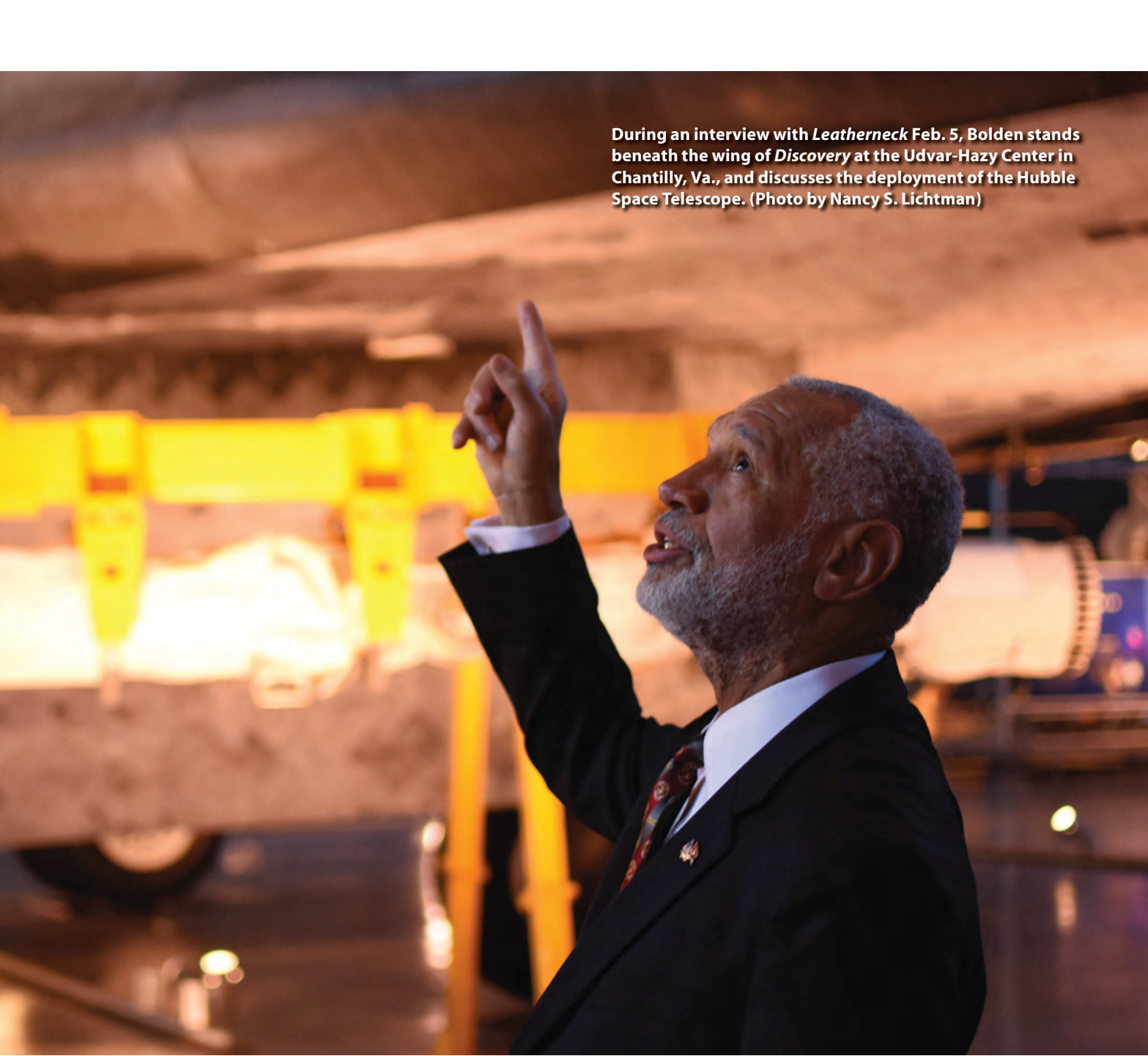
Seeing the earth from that vantage point, he said, never gets old. Given his success as a pilot and an astronaut, it's hard to believe that at one point, he nearly let the fear of failure hold him back from experiencing something so profound. For Bolden, it was a dream set in motion with the fulfillment of an aspiration he first

realized during flight school: becoming a test pilot. It's part of the traditional career progression for military pilots who aspire to be astronauts, and an opportunity for which Bolden had to apply more than a dozen times before he was accepted.

Shortly afterward, in 1978, NASA selected its first group of shuttle astronauts. Among them was Ronald McNair, a young African-American physicist from South Carolina. McNair and some other newly

selected astronauts spent a weekend at Patuxent River, Md., where Bolden was assigned as a test pilot. The two hit it off right away and McNair regaled Bolden with stories about astronaut training.

"He [McNair] asked me if I was going to apply for the space program. I said, 'Not on your life!' And he looked at me really strangely because he thought he'd convinced me," Bolden recalled. "I said, 'They'll never pick me.' And he said,



During an interview with *Leatherneck* Feb. 5, Bolden stands beneath the wing of *Discovery* at the Udvar-Hazy Center in Chantilly, Va., and discusses the deployment of the Hubble Space Telescope. (Photo by Nancy S. Lichtman)

“That’s the dumbest thing I’ve ever heard. How do you know if you don’t ask?” ”

Bolden couldn’t argue with that, so he applied, was called to Houston for a week-long screening and interview process, and then waited for a phone call that would change his life. Out of thousands of applicants, he made the cut. With his wife and two small children in tow, he headed to Houston for what would turn into a 14-year assignment with NASA.

Over the course of his four shuttle missions, Bolden and his crew deployed the SATCOM KU satellite and the Hubble Space Telescope, conducted various experiments and measurements and used a variety of cameras, including the IMAX in-cabin and cargo bay cameras, for Earth observations.

As remarkable as those opportunities were, Bolden doesn’t stray from discussing the more difficult aspects of the job—primarily the strain his involvement in the space program had on his family. The 1986 Space Shuttle *Challenger* disaster, which occurred only 10 days after Bolden landed from his first shuttle mission, hit the Bolden family hard. Among the astronauts lost in the tragedy was Ron McNair, who had been instrumental in Bolden’s decision to apply for the Astronaut Corps.

In 1993, as he prepared for his fourth and final shuttle mission, Bolden began to ponder what he wanted to do when he left the space program. While he had spent more than a decade away from the operating forces, being a Marine had

remained central to his identity. But a voice in the back of his head repeated the things he’d been told when he left for test pilot school, and again when he joined the space program.

“You know, we don’t take people back,” people had said about returning to the fleet. “You’ll go be a test pilot for however long you do and then you’ll get out and go do something, but it won’t be coming back to the Marine Corps.”

In an attempt to counteract these claims, Bolden had made a concerted effort while part of the Astronaut Corps to work with Marine recruiters and visit Marine Corps installations as often as possible.

“I never left the Marine Corps, to be quite honest,” he said. As he weighed his options, a surprising phone call offered

Bolden welcomes home STS-127 astronauts Dave Wolf and Christopher Cassidy at NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Fla., shortly after the Space Shuttle *Endeavour* and its crew landed, July 31, 2009.

him what seemed to be a foot back in the door. Would he consider returning to the Naval Academy as the Deputy Commandant of Midshipmen?

Bolden accepted, and found himself right back where it all began: this time from a different vantage point. Just a year later, he was selected for brigadier general and went on to serve in a variety of billets until his retirement from the Marine Corps in 2003.

He's a strong believer in the mantra "every Marine a rifleman," stating that the infantry training he received at The Basic School was vital as he flew combat missions in Vietnam—which he said were far more challenging than any mission he flew in space.

"There is nothing that equips you better to be able to put bombs on target ... than to know that there are young Marines down there who are counting on you to understand their maneuvering," said Bolden. "It's absolutely essential for an aviator, particularly if they're going to be putting bombs or rockets on the ground close to Marines. I think it's essential that



we have been there at least in training and know what they're going through."

Bolden recalls the overwhelming sense of pride he felt when, as the commanding general of 3rd Marine Air Wing, his idea of a "Wing run" with all of the 3rd MAW Marines stationed at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., came to life.

"We started out on the flight line at Miramar, and as we ran, you could look

back. You could see thousands of Marines, all running, one unit and everything—and I said, 'Damn, this is good,' " Bolden related with tears in his eyes.

The loss of *Challenger* during his time in the space program wasn't his only bad day in the Corps. He tells the story of losing a young Marine in a freak accident during an exercise; a 2002 KC-130 crash in Pakistan, which killed the entire crew;

Inside the Space X processing facility in Florida, NASA Administrator Charles Bolden announces new milestones in the nation's commercial space initiatives, Aug. 23, 2012. One of the things that excited him most during his tenure with the Obama administration was the opportunity to foster NASA's partnership with Space X and other commercial ventures. (NASA photo)



and the loss of a CH-53E in the mountains of Afghanistan the same year. He felt those losses—and a sense of responsibility for them as wing commander—deeply, and they continue to impact him today. He was, and still is, a Marine to the core.

Decades of hard work and persistence culminated for Bolden in 2009, when, after phone calls and visits to Washington, D.C., he was nominated by President Barack Obama to be the 12th Administrator of NASA.

Bolden recalls a particular visit to Washington prior to the nomination, during which he had the opportunity to sit down with President Obama and talk about the future of the space program. He laughs as he says that getting to meet the President was the only reason he agreed to travel from Houston to Washington on that occasion—“I’d never forgive myself for saying no!”

President Obama picked Bolden’s brain about various NASA-related topics before telling him of his own experience being inspired by the space program as a young child growing up in Hawaii with his grandparents.

“He remembered his grandfather putting him up on his shoulders and taking him down to see the Apollo astronauts coming in on the aircraft carriers, and he really wanted to make sure that kids in the U.S. had that same opportunity that he had,” said Bolden of Obama, adding that during that visit, there was no mention of the fact that he was being considered for NASA Administrator. “Just asking questions and talking, and it was incredible,” he added.

When Bolden finally was presented with the opportunity, it was impossible to pass up. After being confirmed by the U.S. Senate in July 2009, he got right to work.

Tasked with turning around the exploration program and guiding the transition from space shuttle missions to utilization of the International Space Station, he worked to reinvigorate the development of aeronautics technology. During his tenure, which lasted through both of President Obama’s terms, the Curiosity rover made its groundbreaking landing on Mars, the Juno spacecraft was launched to Jupiter and technology was developed that will enable the journey to Mars.

“The things we were doing were just more and more exciting every day,” he said of the administration’s second term, which he characterized as “fun.”

He was especially enthusiastic about the opportunity to team up with commercial space companies like Space X and Orbital ATK, who would carry cargo to the International Space Station and were instrumental in collaborative efforts to



Charles Bolden greets a young aspiring astronaut during a stargazing event in Arlington, Va., Nov. 7, 2013. While NASA Administrator, he enjoyed meeting with children around the world, taking every opportunity to encourage them to work hard and pursue their dreams.

set forth a path for the future of aeronautics. Bolden also enjoyed expanding international partnerships, traveling to every continent except Antarctica, and in particular the opportunity to meet with kids everywhere.

He’s encouraged by the renewed interest in space exploration he sees among young people today, referencing the record-breaking 18,300 applications that NASA received for its 2017 astronaut class. Bolden believes the release of big-budget films like “The Martian,” “Hidden Figures” and “Gravity” in recent years has helped fuel the dreams of America’s youth.

To them, his advice is simple. “Study

hard, work hard and never be afraid of failure.”

For someone who has come so far from where he started, he still remembers clearly what it’s like to be a young person with a dream. And while Charlie Bolden ended up fulfilling dreams his younger self didn’t know he’d ever have, it all began with one goal—and the determination to make it happen—that set in motion a life beyond his wildest imagination.

Author’s bio: Sara W. Bock joined the Leatherneck staff in 2008 and is presently the magazine’s only full-time writer. She has a bachelor’s degree in English and is the wife of a Marine aviator. 🦅



COURTESY OF MARINE CORPS HISTORY DIVISION

George C. Connor, seated, shown in his YMCA field uniform poses with Cpl George Deane of Squadron C.

“Echoes from Armageddon”

The World War I Recollections of George C. Connor

By Ben Kristy

Author's note: In his manuscript, George C. Connor freely jumps from topic to topic and from one period of his life to another. I have used selected excerpts of Connor's writing for purposes of this article. To preserve the integrity of the original work, most of the spelling and terminology was left as written.

Prologue

In July 1918, marketing and sales agent George Carpenter Connor left his home in Philadelphia for service in France. At age 45, Connor was too old to serve as part of the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF), so he joined the more than 26,000 paid staff and 35,000 volunteers who supported the AEF's war effort as part of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) during World War I. The YMCA operated 1,500 post exchanges and canteens and 26 “leave areas” across France. The organization also provided humanitarian services for more than 5 million prisoners of war and performed a myriad of other support functions.

Once in France, Connor served as a hospital stretcher bearer in Paris and Calais before being reassigned as the camp director for a YMCA canteen and recreation hut attached to the four squadrons that made up the First Marine Aviation Force, which had recently arrived and was setting up operations outside of Dunkirk. Assigned to the United States Navy's Northern Bombing Group (and redesignated as the Marine Day Wing), these four squadrons operated a mixture of British- and American-built two-seat light bombers and primarily flew what is known today as interdiction missions, striking rail yards and logistical centers, in northern France and Belgium. Connor stayed with the Marine Day Wing from August through December 1918, when the unit returned home and Connor was reassigned to Paris. He returned to America in February 1919.

In 1962, George Connor donated artifacts from his time in France to what was then called the Marine Corps Museum at Quantico, including a collection of hundreds of his own poems and dozens of postcards and photographs depicting scenes of France in 1918-1919. He also donated a book-length manuscript entitled “Echoes from Armageddon,” which he wrote in the months immediately prior to America's entry into World War II in response to the emotions he felt reading and listening to news reports of spreading war in Europe across some of the same towns and cities he had been in just 20 years prior.

The Archives Branch, Marine Corps History Division, now holds Connor's photographs and writings, which he dedicated to Major Alfred E. Cunningham and the men of the First Marine Aviation Force. They reflect the

undiminished affection that Connor had for “his Marines” who he supported in 1918 and provide a unique perspective on the activities of this remarkable group of U.S. Marines and the impact of the war on the surrounding land and lives of the local civilian population.

From the Writings of George C. Connor

With the Marine Fliers in Flanders

It became the destiny—or duty—of many men in World War First to be pushed and shoved around, landing in strange places sometimes on their feet and sometimes on their heads, owing to the exigencies of these boisterous times. My duty led me to run a one-man hospital and post exchange in the muddy, bloody fields of Flanders, where I served with the First United States Marine Aviation Forces, Day Bombers, Northern Bombing Group in the British lines during the Channel Ports campaign of 1918.

It was chance again that threw me in with the aviation forces and I kept quiet with these joyful and boisterous crew of some 1,800 young fellow in four squadrons ... And camp seemed like home after all. Plenty to eat, the same old things to do, the inexorable routine; one bugle blast followed another. Re-call followed chow and chow followed

reveille. Sick call, police call, first call, assembly, then re-call, chow, guard mount with one bugle for the band, parading before the squadrons to the great amusement of all and to the open mirth of the pilots who didn't go in for this kind of stuff, but the ground forces had to drill as infantry, toting their rifles around with them both in camp and in the machine shops under gigantic circus tents, set up amongst the Lombardy poplars lining the road and in the apple orchard, where the tents of the soldiers

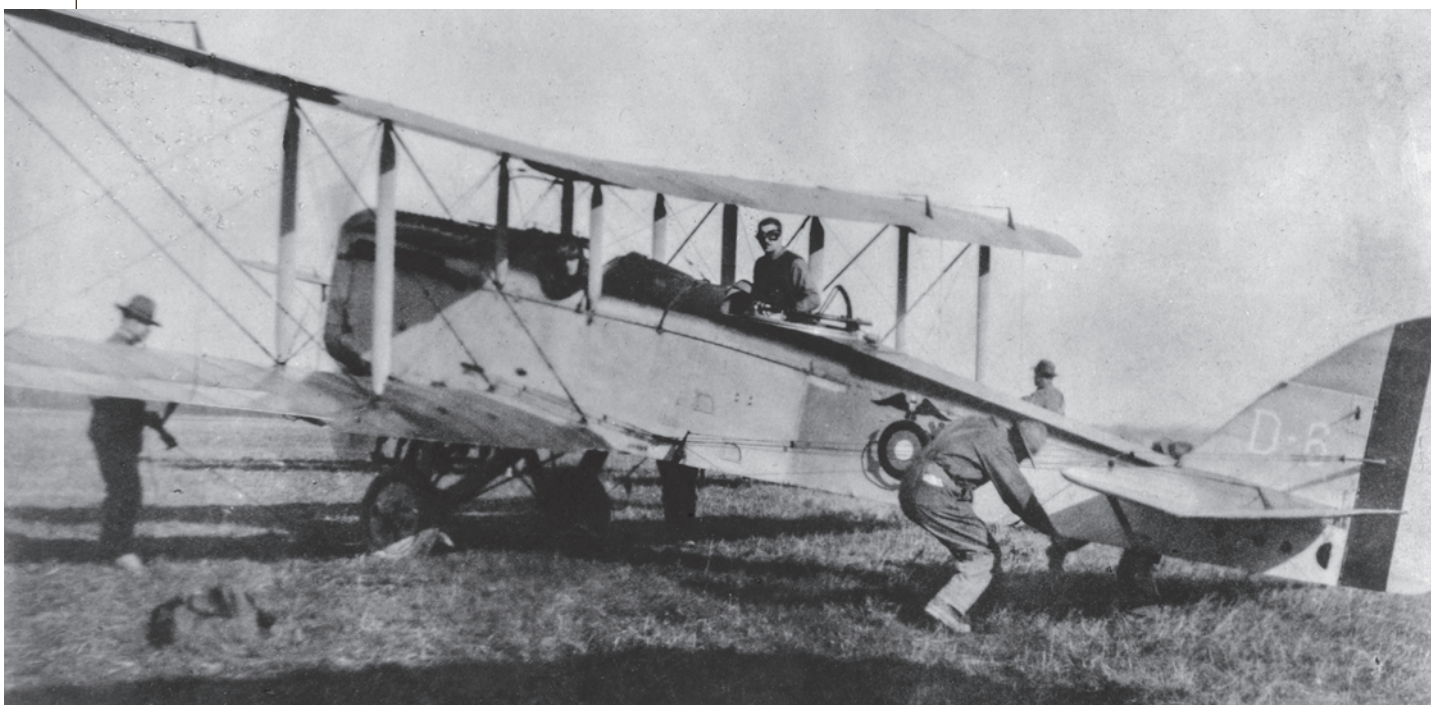
**... one would reach out
gingerly and get hold of the
propeller blade and at a
given signal of “Now!”
they would give her a jerk
and fall backward.**

were judiciously set up, largely hidden from the eyes of the enemy above.

... I used to watch them starting up a ship after the pilot was all set to give her the gun. Two Marines would take hold of hands tandem fashion; one would reach out gingerly and get hold of the propeller blade and at a given signal of “Now!” they would give her a jerk and fall backward. The engine would take hold and the big paddles would spin with a roar that deafened one.

Men had arms, fingers, and in several cases, heads chopped off by these flying propellers. It reminded one of the way cowboys would approach a nasty pony in the West at rodeos. Very gingerly and leaning well forward with an eye cocked for the terrible front kick which these horses could deliver in the winking of an eye. These bi-planes create the same kind of sudden kick—and it only took one to do the trick ...

The rear cockpit had a Browning gun mounted on a tripod set in the rear decking and the observer could use this in 50 percent of an arc. Some of the lads used to sit on an inch-thick plate of steel to keep from being shot from underneath; no one seemed to wish to get shot in the pants as it were. There was a strong bond of fellowship, which ran down to the lowliest ground man in dirty dungarees; the fact that discipline was more or less lax—at least among the fliers—was due to the fact that they represented the advance of a new arm—the sky battalions—and they took leave to do much as they pleased; very little saluting when in camp; addressing each other by their first names or nick-names, which were pinned on through any unusual or out-standing qualifications such as “Kewpie” Todd [Second Lieutenant Charles B. Todd, a pilot with Squadron C], because his face looked like a Kewpie [a popular cherub-faced child's doll] ...



COURTESY OF MARINE CORPS HISTORY DIVISION

This image of an American built Dayton-Wright DH-4 light bomber from Squadron D readying for takeoff was taken by the only man allowed to take photos—the unit's map sergeant.

There were plenty of ships downed though, through one cause or another, and there were many accidents—crack-ups—in which the victim couldn't bail out. The captain stayed with his ship if she went down or stayed up. The skill of these young men and the resourcefulness of their handling a damaged ship was something to behold; crashing in half a ship sometimes occurred and the pilot survived. I have heard the late Major [Douglas E.] Roban, who commanded the Third and Fourth Squadrons and

from our own sergeant photographer, who was rather careless about the whole thing, but who seemingly didn't care, as he was the only one who openly worked a camera. Cameras were as scarce as flags and brass bands in Flanders. We had one grand big silken flag which we broke out when we buried our men, who were either killed or died of flu. [The global influenza pandemic of 1918 claimed 24 Marines from the Marine Day Wing—far more than were lost in combat.] At these times we would

ace—when he went west himself right on the home grounds. [2ndLt Ralph W. Talbot and his observer/gunner GySgt Robert G. Robinson were the first Marine aviators to receive the Medal of Honor.]

Dixmude and the Valley of the Yser River

Author's note: In October 1918, German forces pulled back from their defensive lines in northeastern France and western Belgium. George Connor tagged along on a multi-day reconnaissance mission of the newly abandoned areas looking to find a new flying field for the Marine Day Wing to operate from closer to the front lines.

The sense of loneliness and desolation in the Yser Valley follows where land and water is churned up into an indescribable welter filled with wrecks of airplanes, jumbles of wagons, guns, implements, tangled wire, smashed pillboxes and roads destroyed by great cavities. The Yser section was only a replica of hundreds of other sections where the devastation was as great, but having spent some time in any one place like this, the scene grows on one as you come to realize it and what has happened there.

... I had the luck to rate myself in a reconnaissance wagon with a score of other Marines on a special mission and it was right over this makeshift road we went and rolled into what was left Dixmude [Diksmuide—in northwestern Belgium]—merely fresh red earth regurgitated from the very bowels of mother earth; where the countless Allied shells had been plowing for months. Across these 6 miles of terrain, nothing lived; not even a sparrow... The grass was scorched and dead; trees twisted and shot away with saw edges, new and bright, sticking up like lightning-shattered telegraph poles. Everywhere were bits of equipment; broken rifles, canteens, parts of uniforms, packs discarded; every conceivable sort of stuff strewn along the road and at the roadside, piles of rubble, which one denoted the presence of a house. Everything had a burned out and seared appearance as though a hot blast from heaven had withered and killed all in its inferno intensity. We looked for some sign of life but life in any form was not there; that which could, had long since fled. Only the dead remained as evidenced by the many new graves by the roadside as we drew up into higher country away from the road that ran through the Yser.



GEORGE C. CONNOR

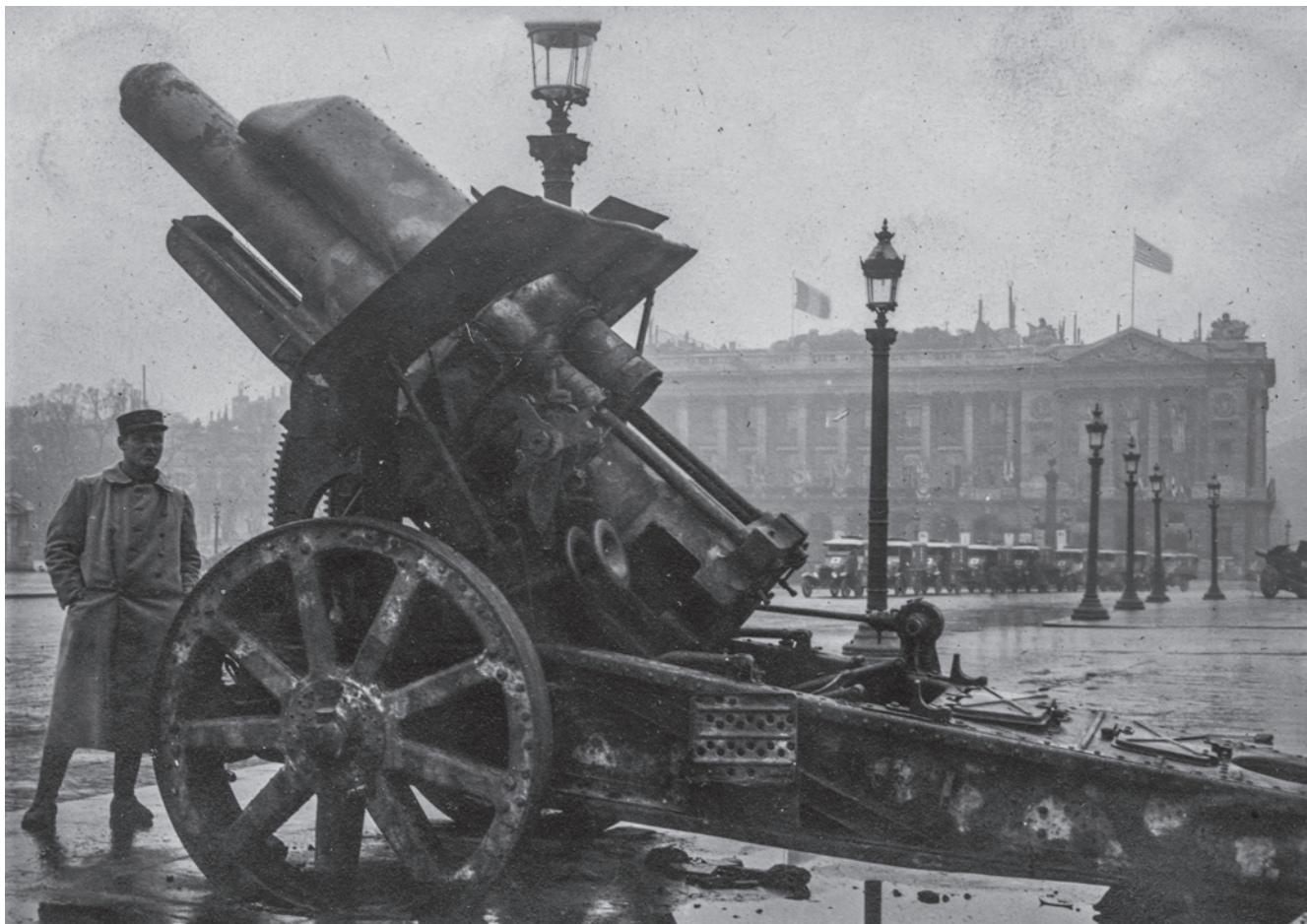
American Sailors take time to pose for a photo while out on the town in Paris.

who died of the flu in the field, I have heard him, I say, give several of the lads a lacing for getting out of alignment when on a bombing mission. "Such a thing is liable to disrupt the whole squadron and cause a disaster," he said and when the only mode of communication between ships was wig-wagging tails and tillers or simply following the leader, or even waving of arms to "come on" or something, it will be seen how quickly a squadron could become disorganized, especially if the Fritzies were riding one and shooting at you.

... We accumulated our photos through devious ways. The French soldiers had more leeway than we foreigners and I dealt with one most every week, who mysteriously produced a few pictures, absolutely authentic, from under his blouse for which I would have to pay him a franc each, small or fairly large and all in the battle area. I got a couple

We laid Ralph Talbot away, among others. Talbot's ship crashed and he was burned to death under his engine.

dress in our best blues and go down to the sandhills abreast Calais where, in the little cemetery, with an English minister performing the Church of England ceremony, we would place our dead in rows in a long trench dug in the sand and cover them over while Jerries sometimes roared overhead with the barrage shooting at them. T'was thus that we laid Ralph Talbot away, among others. Talbot's ship crashed and he was burned to death under his engine. He had shot down three Heinies and had two more to go in order to become an



GEORGE C. CONNOR

With restrictions lifted on the use of personal cameras at war's end, George Connor photographed the massive displays of captured German equipment laid for miles along the Champs-Élysées in Paris as part of the victory parade.

Thus, we drove into Dixmude. We drew up before a model little house with a toy front yard, hidden beneath tall trees, which somehow seemed to have weathered the storms of men and nature. On the front porch stood in a row several sets of sabots [wooden shoes], caked with mud. We entered the office. There was a desk with several kitchen chairs. On the wall hung a German calendar with each day in October blacked out with lead pencil, showing that each day lived down was another one off the list. The last day blacked out was October 18, 1918. This was October 19. They had just left. Pens and inks, blotting paper and pads were on the table. The orderlies detailed there kept everything neat and clean, but the sabots, which the officers wore when out in the mud, were caked with yellow clay. They stepped out of the office in their shiny boots and slipped into the sabots for any wandering around. The Heinies were hell for efficiency and neatness—the officers at least ... This was a staff headquarters of some kind. We found out by examining some papers left behind ... One could trace the days and almost the

day's activity there-on by the notes, words, drawings and idle markings and finally the day-to-day black-outs of the dates. It was apparent by this calendar that they knew they were going away from there before the first of October. The evacuation had now become a rush to withdraw the lines from the North Sea, out of Belgium and Northern France, with the Allies in relentless pursuit. The end was in sight and all seemed to know it ...

Up in the tops of a bunch of trees, which hung over the little office, was an observation post, skillfully hidden from enemy view. We went up the little ladder to the top and entered the nest from where we could look down the road we had followed from Nieuport and command the whole situation. We could see where the Yser turned and came up to the sea-locks. It was a wonderful range-finding place and we wondered at the cautious eyes that had peered down our way during the past several years; always the same scene; dangerous but monotonous looking. Each day just a few more men killed. A stalemate or deadlock for three years

is something to marvel at. Yet here it had been just that ...

The air round about was psychic with unknown fear. A fear of skulking spirits, which made one suddenly look sharply over one's shoulder. Probably the air was still filled with the disembodied. Dim shades having no place to go and still hanging around the battlefields for want of a better place ... The prevalence of death daily and at night and on so short notice left many things uncompleted and not done. The departed were uneasy and full of unrest and turned to watch their comrades whom they have loved in a man's way with men—and not with women ...

... After we rolled out of what was left of Dixmude, we soon came to where there was some semblance of human life, away from the immediate vicinity of the battle line ... We pulled in the first day out at a roadside estaminet [restaurant] and went into the place to get water and make coffee, and we, of course, carrying our own rations—just like a picnic. There were several scared looking peasant-type people in there who, when our leader spoke, didn't



COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE MARINE CORPS



COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE MARINE CORPS

Above left: George Connor collected this 1915 Prussian infantryman's helmet from an overrun prisoner stockade outside the French border.

Above right: The wooden propeller is purported to be from the Dayton Wright DH-4 light bomber in which 2ndLt Talbot and Cpl Robinson engaged eight German fighters on Oct. 14, 1918.

answer—just looked. It was funny We took charge of the place and pushed half a dozen tables together, drew up chairs, then spread our food, opening cans and starting our coffee on the portable gasoline stove. You should have seen their eyes pop out when we rolled out several chunks of canned butter that would choke several horses ... Boy did [they] look when we dumped 10 pounds of granulated sugar in a can on the table, then opened several cans of milk with a bayonet, reamed out 5-pound cans of bully beef, tender and delicious, with beans out of a can. Say what you please, bully beef, known today as canned corned beef, is good. Only a fool says it isn't.

Well, we fell too and these half-starved folks couldn't believe their eyes. They watched us with hungry longing—now just wait a minute and I'll tell you what we did! I think that the odor of good strong coffee nigh killed them; butter was bad enough to face, but coffee! Not chicory with a dash of saccharine therein when they could get it—but here was the real, rich, odoriferous stuff bubbling away and filling the estaminet with an odor that it hadn't contained in the last five years. Ye Gods! No wonder they all liked to dropped dead! So, we whacked up with them. They hadn't seen a piece of

butter ... or milk in five years, nor wheat bread and here they had suddenly come into a fabulous fortune. The crumbs and bits left on the table were already being gobbled up by children ...

...We stopped at a little rise in the ground where there was a shallow trench some hundred feet long. He who could read the picture as he ran saw that there had been a short and sharp fight here. The gravel was all torn up with the marks of booted and hob-nailed feet, both leading up to the trench and in it and out the other side. Broken rifles were scattered about; odd bayonets; bits of soggy clothing and some distance away a dozen hastily dug graves, with guns stuck into the ground by their bayonets and helmets thereon. The place had been a prison camp held by the Germans. We went into the stockade and examined the wooden stalls, arranged very much like chicken pens, 4 feet from the ground on pilings so that a man by stooping could go under the houses. There were 2-inch cracks between the rough, heavily nailed boards, something like a cattle car, so that all times the guards could see what going on in each enclosure. Everything was empty and cleaned out and the expert sign-readers could see by this that the pursuing French had tackled the trench, vanquished the defenders and taken the corralled prisoners along

with them, because there wasn't a thing left in the prison camp of value, while the number of Heinie helmets hanging on the reverse rifles were 10 or more to the several French, who had been hastily buried away from them for the time being.

And So, Back to Camp

... Getting the boys out of the trenches by Christmas looked as though it was going to be a reality and when the order came down the line from the Day Wing headquarters ... to "cease bombing" there was something like a feeble cheer raised, after which life went on just the same in camp, except that there was more shore leave to Calais and the Marines let themselves go a bit. Inasmuch as the French charged us for everything we used, land for camp and field, a jag of firewood or a turnip out of the field—we virtually set our camp on fire before leaving. Miles of stone road built through the mud of Flanders in order to make life easier for the five-ton trucks to and from the camp were torn up with the same back-breaking labor on the part of these young Marines that they expended in putting the roads down. All our benches, chairs, boxes and crates and every conceivable thing that was not shipped home was burned to the utter horror and despair of the

surrounding sugar beet country peasants who, while they tolerated us in the neighborhood, loved the Tommies more, having live[d] with them for four years longer than with the Americans ...

... I was the last man to leave [La Fresne] camp near Adres. I saw my Marines roll away in trucks to take ships back at Calais in December with a lump in my throat. I wanted to go back with them but was ordered to report to headquarters in Paris—where I arrived along with President Wilson and where for some strange reason he got a bigger reception than I did, although I don't know as to whether he had any better time out of it!

... Some of us had come aboard [the TSS Rotterdam, a Holland-America Line cruise ship on which Connor sailed for New York along with several thousand returning soldiers, half of whom were African American] with curious emotions; feeling of mingled joy at going home and a rather surprising regret at leaving the land of turmoil, bloodshed and mud over which we had tramped, fought, and lived a precarious life for many months past and now all these things passed away leaving us only our memories, still very much alive and we still under the spell of the booming guns and crash of bombs to be

followed by a vast silence. Something held us to these things with an invisible, indefinable bond, something akin to, what shall I call it? Love or a devotion to a Cause?

... Thus the days rolled along and soon we raised the Sandy Hook lightship and then into port, where we received a tremendous welcome from flag-

**I was the last man to leave
[La Fresne] camp near
Adres. I saw my Marines
roll away in trucks to take
ships back at Calais in
December with a lump in
my throat.**

bedecked ships tooting their whistles and even that grand lady standing on Bedloe's Island winked at us as we barged along ... One thing I have learned that I oftentimes had thought about; it was the feeling of Americans who having been long away from these shores, almost fell to their knees and wept when they again beheld Liberty and her flambeau in the harbor ... I saw tears alright; but soldiers through discipline

are taught not to be demonstrative. Some never cracked a smile nor lighted an eye with a gleam—a glow—of gladness. Others gazed a while then looked down into the water and spat tobacco juice which smacked down on the turgid harbor water with a flat smack. Home, eh? Well, what of it? I could have kissed the ground under her feet, but I patted the old *Rotterdam* as I left and went up the gangplank at Hoboken where we docked and where we were assailed by a bunch of gals handing out candy, cigarettes, slaps on backs and nice welcome home words; reception committees with flags and bands tooting both on accompanying ship up the harbor and on land. After all, it made one feel like something ...

Author's bio: Ben Kristy has served as the aviation curator at the National Museum of the Marine Corps since 2006, overseeing the museum's collection of 170 aircraft. A museum curator for 20 years, he previously worked at the Cavanaugh Flight Museum in Addison, Texas; the American Airlines C.R. Smith Museum in Fort Worth, Texas; and the Evergreen Aviation & Space Museum in McMinnville, Ore. He lives in Montclair, Va., with his wife and son. 🐦

As the TSS Rotterdam approaches Hoboken, N.J., George Connor's service in France came to a close.



COURTESY OF MARINE CORPS HISTORY DIVISION

Marines Prepare for Future Battles

A new partnership between the Marine Corps' Installations and Logistics Department and the University of California, San Diego (UCSD) led to the first-ever Hybrid Logistics Symposium, which was held at the UCSD campus Feb. 26-March 1.

Along with civilian personnel, more than 100 Marines and Sailors, from junior enlisted to officers, joined UCSD students to discuss concepts and equipment that will support the Marine Corps' logistics community in achieving success into the year 2025 and beyond.

In a release announcing the conference, Lieutenant General Michael G. Dana, Deputy Commandant for Installations and Logistics, said, "Moving toward a Hybrid Logistics model will require a logistics community that questions conventional

wisdom without ignoring the realities of the modern battlefield."

Hybrid Logistics incorporates proven logistics tasks with groundbreaking methods of supporting Marines in combat. The tactics consist of five areas—additive manufacturing, also known as 3-D printing; unmanned logistics systems; smart logistics; expeditionary energy and expeditionary medicine.

The symposium consisted of multiple briefs, panels and breakout groups. Top researchers and faculty from UCSD, Microsoft, Satori and Department of Defense labs led the discussions.

Lance Corporal Eli Dzurino, a Marine reservist and mechanical engineering student, was excited to see the innovation and understand how the Marine Corps move forward to improve various processes.

"In the near future, I have skills that I can take back to my reserve unit to help to implement some of the things we have talked about here," said Dzurino, adding that the skills he gained during the symposium can help him solve design problems or identify big-picture planning consideration.

Based on the Marine Corps' current trajectory, training opportunities like the symposium will help prepare the future, smaller logistics force as it supports dispersed operations over potentially hundreds and thousands of miles, said Colonel Edward Bligh, the head of the Logistics Vision, Strategy and Innovation Branch, Headquarters Marine Corps.

"It is allowing the Marines to see the art of the possible," said Bligh during the symposium. "They are certainly learning a lot from their fellow participants ... people who think like they do and are willing to challenge the status quo and question how things can be better."

LCpl Megan Roses, USMC

Marines Bring Hiker to Safety

Late in the evening of Jan. 7, the Hawaii Police Department search-and-rescue teams located a lost hiker on in the mountains near Waimanalo, Hawaii. However, the helicopter team could not land in the vicinity due to the presence of power lines.

The rescue was put on hold until the next morning when ground personnel could reach the hiker during the day. When Marine Sergeant Jeffrey Igleheart, a signals intelligence analyst with 3rd Radio Battalion, III Marine Expeditionary Force, heard about the lost hiker from one of his Marines and the delay in bringing the woman in, he took the initiative to lead the rescue efforts that would bring her home safely that night.

"... I get a call around 8:30 p.m. from my sergeant asking if I could help find a missing person, to which I agreed," said Lance Corporal Jacob Baker, a cryptologic linguist with 3rd Radio Bn. "After receiving a rough grid coordinate from the hiker's family member, myself and two other sergeants began the hike up the Waimanalo Mountains an hour later. Off the bat, we could tell the weather would not be easy on us, with rain pouring on us."

Baker and the group traversed over high and low terrain, eventually going off trail to reach the hiker's last known location.



LCPL NOAH RUDASH, USMC

A presenter displays an unmanned logistics system to Marines, Sailors and UCSD students during the first Hybrid Logistics Symposium on the UCSD campus in San Diego, Feb. 28. The symposium opened a discussion of concepts and equipment that will support the success of the Marine Corps logistics community into 2025 and beyond.



CPL JESUS SEPULVEDA TORRES, USMC

Above left: Sgt Jeffrey Igleheart, a signals intelligence analyst with 3rd Radio Bn, is awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal at MCB Hawaii, Feb. 16. He was one of three Marines who conducted a successful search-and-rescue mission for a lost hiker in January.



CPL JESUS SEPULVEDA TORRES, USMC

Above right: LCpl Jacob Baker, a cryptologic linguist with 3rd Radio Bn, receives a Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal from LtCol William Osborne, the battalion commanding officer, at MCB Hawaii, Feb. 16. During the rescue of a lost hiker, Baker and two other Marines covered 10 miles at an elevation of 3,000 feet under rainy conditions, eventually returning the hiker to safety.

“After a frustrating six hours, we were starting to get exhausted and thought we’d never find her, so Sgt Igleheart gave one last whistle call,” said Baker. “After a long silence, we heard a faint noise in the distance and immediately moved toward it. After hours searching the mountainside, we finally found her. She had her legs wrapped around a stump on a ravine, only feet from plunging off.”

It took the group three more hours of careful downhill hiking to get back to safety but Igleheart said it was all worth it.

“I think, as Marines, we should have a biased reaction—not saying jump into any dangerous situation that’s not worth the risk, but for this case, the risk was higher for the stranded hiker so we took the initiative ourselves,” said Igleheart. “Sgt Brandon Ned, who was the other Marine with us, said it best: ‘If it was my sister, I wouldn’t leave her up there.’ ”

The three Marines were awarded with Navy and Marine Corps Achievement medals for their dedication, initiative and perseverance in bringing the hiker home.

Cpl Jesus Sepulveda Torres, USMC

Marine “HITTS” Ground Running Toward Better Future

A puff of powder followed the sound of a loud clap as Chief Warrant Officer 3 Enrique Laguna wrapped his fingers around the cold bar placed at his ankles. With a swift motion, he brought the bar over his head, and then dropped it, making a loud clang on the floor of the High Intensity Tactical Training (HITT) Center

at Ironworks Gym on Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan, March 6.

During working hours, Laguna provides communication services as the MCAS Iwakuni telephone systems officer, but before and after work—and even during lunch—he can be found in the HITT Center.

“It initially started as a hobby,” said Laguna. “I started working out at the

HITT Center by myself. Marines saw what I was doing and joined. After that, I began teaching and helping people with their fitness and nutrition. I prepare Marines for challenges that the Marine Corps puts in front of them, physical and mental.”

Laguna starts his day honing special skills. At 5:30 a.m. he’s usually teaching proper form for weightlifting. He strengthens his endurance with a high-



CPL GABRIELA GARCIA-HERRERA, USMC

CWO-3 Enrique Laguna executes an overhead squat during a HITT training session at MCAS Iwakuni, Japan, March 6. In addition to his duties as the air station’s telephone systems officer with H&HS, Laguna instructs HITT classes three times a day to help people achieve their fitness goals.



CPL GABRIELA GARCIA-HERRERA, USMC

CWO-3 Enrique Laguna, pictured here at MCAS Iwakuni, Japan, March 6, was once placed on the Marine Corps' BCP program and now has made it his mission to help others overcome obstacles to fitness and remain positive.

intensity workout during lunch, and he finishes his day with weightlifting and stretching.

"In different stages of my life, fitness has meant different things," said Laguna. "When I was a younger Marine, fitness was about image. As I got older it became about doing well to get ahead in my career, and now it's about increased work capacity. It's about bettering myself and living a healthy lifestyle."

In 2005, Laguna went through a series of surgeries that limited his duties as a Marine. He was placed on the Body Composition Program (BCP), which he said was a wake-up call.

"It hit me hard, and from that moment on I told myself I was going to get past it no matter how hard it was," said Laguna, adding that the biggest obstacle was overcoming negativity and dealing with the effects of BCP on his reputation.

"The challenges in that instance were trying to stay positive and to not let them get to me or make me feel like I couldn't get out of BCP," said Laguna. "I overcame it by putting in the extra work. I controlled what I could."

Despite challenges in the past, Laguna's passion for fitness continues to grow. He said he faces new difficulties every day, and his wife helps him overcome them.

"Motivation is like coffee," said Laguna. "You drink it in the morning, but by the afternoon the caffeine is out of your system. Marines should find someone who inspires them. For me, that's my wife. She showed me that running wasn't the only way to get fit. Find someone who inspires you, because inspiration will last a lifetime."

Cpl Gabriela Garcia-Herrera, USMC

First Female Students Arrive At SOI-West for MCT

School of Infantry-West, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., welcomed its first-ever female Marine students to begin the first phase of Marine Combat Training (MCT), March 6. Upon their arrival, they took their place alongside their male counterparts in the first integrated MCT Company on the West Coast.

"It is important—one team, one fight—and at the end of the day, it's to show



LCPL MARK LOWE II, USMC

COMMON BOND—Len Maffioli and Damaso Sutis, veterans of the Battle of Iwo Jima, share stories and laughs with active-duty Marines from Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron (VMM) 363 at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., Feb. 16. The two were part of a group of Iwo Jima veterans who visited the air station in commemoration of the 73rd anniversary of the battle. At the air station, they spent time eating and visiting with active-duty Marines, including Col Jason G. Woodworth, Commanding Officer of MCAS Miramar, and SgtMaj Michael Walton, the station sergeant major.



LCPL DYLAN CHAGNON, USMC

the Marine Corps can produce [Marines] regardless of gender, and complete any mission,” said Sergeant Ambar Gonzalez, a combat instructor with “Lima” Company, SOI-West.

Previously, female Marines attended

MCT exclusively at Camp Geiger, Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C. Presently, Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C., remains the only depot at which female Marines attend basic training. An additional benefit of

PFC Kira Kozik, right, the first female Marine student to undergo training at School of Infantry-West, listens to instruction alongside members of the first integrated MCT company at MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif., March 6.

the integration is providing families from the West Coast the opportunity to see their Marines graduate.

“If families had wanted to observe their daughter graduate from boot camp or any entry-level training school, they would have to travel across the country,” said Lieutenant Colonel Dennis L. Hager II, the commanding officer of Headquarters and Support Battalion, SOI-West.

MCT consists of a 29-day course where entry-level Marines in non-infantry related military occupational specialties are taught the basic skills needed to function in a combat environment. Upon completion of MCT, every Marine will have the knowledge and ability to deploy and operate as a basic rifleman.

Cpl Andre Heath, USMC



Crazy Caption Contest

Winner



SGT ALLY BEISWANGER, USMC

“If your sergeant can see you, so can the enemy.”

Submitted by
Sgt Andy “Bags” Hefty, USMC
Orange Park, Fla.

This Month’s Photo



CPL JOSEPH JACOB, USMC

(Caption) _____

Name _____

Address _____

City/State _____ ZIP _____

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.

The Return



Above: On Aug. 8, 2017, SgtMaj Edward Neas presented LCpl David Freed's dog tags to the brother of the fallen Marine. Below: SgtMaj Neas bought Cpl Freed's dog tags from a street vendor during a visit to Vietnam.



"A merchant was selling war trinkets. On a tray lay the Red Stars worn by North Vietnamese Army on their helmets, old pieces of shrapnel, spent bullets and casings rusted over time—but what caught my eye was a dog tag."



SgtMaj Edward Neas and fellow veterans stand in front of Joan of Arc Church in Vietnam where MOH recipient Sgt Alfredo Gonzalez was killed on Feb. 4, 1968.

By SgtMaj Edward F. Neas
USMCR (Ret)
Photos courtesy of the author

Background

It was early morning on Feb. 28, 1968, with no Vietnamese in sight. It was quiet—too quiet. We were on patrol, going in and out of houses along the canal. The Phu Cam Canal was a place of stress and tension—nothing like the small celestial pagoda that overlooked it.

From experience, we had quickly learned that casualties were inevitable. Marines were lost almost daily in that area. As the platoon sergeant, Josef Burghardt, and I watched, a fire team rushed across the small bridge in front of the pagoda. Suddenly, I went down—shot through the shoulder. Burghardt also went down; another Marine in the fire team was shot in the knee as he rushed across the bridge.

A haze overcame me at that moment. I could hear Marines yelling unintelligible orders. Bullets repeatedly hit the pagoda, chipping away at the back wall. The sounds of small pieces of concrete falling to the ground resonated from bullets piercing sacred images. We were enveloped in chaos. As we lay there, the first words I said to Burghardt were, "I'm hit." His response: "Alfie, I can't move." ("Alfie"

was the nickname given to me by my squad just after I arrived in Vietnam.)

Intuitively, I knew Sgt Burghardt was paralyzed. His wound paralyzed him for life.

I will never forget that day—one that would forever change both of our lives. I have a vivid memory of lying against the wall of the pagoda, unable to see what was happening.

The corpsmen reached Burghardt and carried him to a Jeep; he ultimately returned to the States. I rode shotgun in the front of the Jeep, holding onto his stretcher as we journeyed to the Hue City stadium to be medevacked out for treatment. I was transported to a hospital and spent time in Cam Ranh Bay and Japan.

After recovering for 30 days, I returned to "Alpha" Company outside of Khe Sanh for the start of Operation Pegasus. I served nine more months in Vietnam and returned home to New York with three Purple Hearts. Over the years, I stayed very close to many men with whom I served, especially Josef Burghardt.

Returning to Vietnam

Forty-eight years later, I revisited Vietnam with the support of the College of the Ozarks Patriotic Education Program. This program enabled a group of 12



SgtMaj Neas, foreground, stands to the left of the bridge in front of the pagoda where he and Sgt Josef Burghardt were wounded on Feb. 28, 1968.

Vietnam veterans and 12 college students to explore Vietnam's geography and learn about the history of the war directly from those who had fought there.

With the group of students and fellow veterans, I walked along the same canal as I had in 1968 and entered some of the same buildings in which I had fought decades ago. Almost all of them have been rebuilt.

Our group explored and shared our own stories of the fierce battles we fought. From South Vietnam, starting at Can Tho, through Saigon and up to Hanoi, we visited locations like the Rex Hotel in Saigon, Chu Chi Tunnels, Qui Nhon, Chu Lai, Hoi An and Da Nang, stopping at Red Beach and China Beach. We drove through Hai Van Pass and cruised on the

Cua Viet River. We stopped at former bases and stayed overnight in Dong Ha.

Two nights were spent in Hue City, where I served during the Tet Offensive of 1968. We stayed in the Hotel Saigon Morin on Le Loi Street, just in front of the Truong Tien Bridge that crossed the Perfume River, which separates the north from the south of Hue City. In 1968, the hotel Saigon Morin was the Hue University.

I sought out the Saint Joan of Arc Church where my fellow Marine, Sergeant Alfredo Gonzalez, was killed. I met Sgt Gonzalez when I arrived in Vietnam as a member of 1st Platoon. I was not with Gonzalez when he died on Feb. 4, 1968, after sustaining severe wounds. I was in another building, but the news traveled quickly through the company.

In December of 1967, he had been transferred from 1st to 3rd Platoon to serve as their platoon commander. He was awarded the Medal of Honor and a Navy destroyer was commissioned in his name in October 1996. Many of us who had served with him were there that day.

Prior to the trip back to Vietnam, I prom-



Marines from "Golf" Co, 2/5 in 1968 on Le Loi Street near Hue University.



This photo was taken in 1968 near the An Cuu Bridge over the Phu Cam Canal. Back row, left to right: Sgt Josef Burghardt, Hoffman, "Doc" Tura, Holmes and 2ndLt Donnelly. Front row center: Edward Neas.



A Vietnam veteran and a college student participating in the College of the Ozarks Patriotic Education Program's tour of Vietnam inspect equipment left behind from the war.

ised Sgt Gonzalez's mother that I would look for the church where her son died, and call her if I found it. At about 11:30 p.m., I found it. I called and spoke to Mrs. Gonzalez. She started crying and so did I.

We stopped at the Demilitarized Zone and walked on the Hien Luong Bridge over the Ben Hai River. This area separated North Vietnam and South Vietnam during the war. Decades after serving in battle there, I found myself walking it without fear and in the company of friends.

The Dog Tag

Outside the museum at Khe Sanh, a merchant was selling war trinkets. On a tray lay the Red Stars worn by North Vietnamese Army on their helmets, old pieces of shrapnel, spent bullets and casings rusted over time—but what caught my eye was a dog tag. It was the only dog tag that I had come across during my two-week visit to Vietnam. At first, I was a little doubtful of its authenticity and thought that it could be a replica. I

had heard stories of tourists deceived by such trinkets.

After closely examining the flat piece of metal engraved with "D.B. Freed," I realized that it was a United States Marine Corps dog tag. It looked exactly like the one I was wearing around my neck. After about 20 minutes of negotiation with the vendor, the dog tag was in my hand.

I returned to the bus and showed the college students what I had found. That night, I conducted some research from my hotel room in Hue City, and some of the college students traveling with me did the same. We determined that Lance Corporal David B. Freed had been killed in action on Sept. 19, 1968, while serving in "Fox" Company, 2nd Battalion, 26th Marine Regiment. This young Marine, whose dog tag I held in my hands, was from Montclair, N.J.—just 20 miles from where I live today. I was struck by the magnitude of the moment, as I thought about the series of events that led me 8,000 miles away to a country in which I had served 48 years ago, to find the dog tag of this Marine who never made it home.

When I returned to the United States, I discovered that LCpl Freed was buried on Long Island, N.Y.

I wish I could share that I quickly reunited the dog tag with the family, but like my long-awaited return to Vietnam, it did not happen "on the double." It took me a year and half to track down and reunite the dog tag with Freed's family. It was not as easy a mission as I anticipated it would be. Freed's parents had passed away and his siblings had grown up and moved away from New Jersey. I found the telephone number of his brother Brian on a graves registration website and made two phone calls. I left two voice mail messages, but heard nothing in response. Although I had discovered two other siblings' names, I could not make contact with them. I had hit a dead end.

As luck would have it, another event would lead me to eventually finding the family of the lost Marine. I was the guest speaker at a Marine Corps League Mess Night in Connecticut, and I shared the story of the dog tag I acquired on my trip to Vietnam. After my speech, a fellow Marine named Ray, seated next to me, told me that he knew of someone who might be able to help. In two days, I had the names of one of LCpl Freed's brothers and three sisters and the cities in which they resided.

Lacking phone numbers, I called the local police department of Magnolia, Texas, where David Freed's brother lived. The woman on the other end of the line was very helpful when I explained the story. She had a son in the Navy and a brother who had fought in Vietnam. She

Books Reviewed

A DOUBLE DOSE OF HARD LUCK: The Extraordinary True Story of a Two-Time Prisoner of War: Lt. Col. Charles Lee Harrison. By Leo Aime LaBrie with Theresa McLaughlin. Published by Page Publishing, Inc. 131 pages. \$11.66 MCA Members. \$12.95 Regular Price.

Lieutenant Colonel Charles L. Harrison was one of only two Marines to have suffered the pain and violence of captivity as a prisoner of war (POW) in two separate conflicts. His amazingly interesting career is the stuff of Marine legend and countless sea stories.

Charles Harrison was born in Tulsa, Okla., on March 21, 1921. Growing up during the Depression, he contributed to the family income and worked on a small farm. He was the official photographer for his high school newspaper and a fine athlete who helped form an ice hockey league and kept a scrapbook devoted to the famous skater, Sonja Henie.

In 1939, he enlisted in the Marine Corps. The new recruit was welcomed in San Diego, Calif., by a mean-looking drill sergeant. He recalled, "We were converted right there from raw civilian kids to the first phase of becoming a Marine." After receiving his uniform and 782 field gear, the new recruit "snapped in" on the base rifle range. To the end of his life, Harrison could rattle off the serial number of his prized Springfield .03 service rifle.

When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941, the young Marine was a part of the garrison defending Wake Island in the Pacific. That same day, "general quarters" was sounded, and the Marines found themselves at war.

Manning Battery D, the Marine helped fight off the first Japanese landing effort and helped sink the enemy destroyer, *Hayate*, while damaging two others. The gallant defense of the island cost 49 Marines killed and 32 wounded before the surrender on Dec. 24. For the duration of the war, Charles and other Wake veterans would be "guests" of the Japanese Empire.

Being a prisoner of the Japanese was, in a word, horrific. The food, treatment by the guards, and living conditions were shocking. Dysentery became epidemic

and many prisoners found themselves too weak to crawl to the slop buckets. Cruel and egotistical guards beat and abused their charges. Pitiless torture of the captives was a common occurrence. Shipped from camp to camp, many of the prisoners were literally worked to death.

In August 1945 the war came to an end and food, supplies and letters were air dropped into the POW compound. Private First Class Harrison was first shipped to a hospital in Guam, then on to Hawaii, and finally back to the States. Returning home, Charles married his sweetheart, Mary. Promoted to sergeant, the young Marine reenlisted.

On the morning of June 25, 1950, 90,000 North Korean troops attacked south across the 38th Parallel. A new war was on. By November, the 1st Marine Division was attacking north toward the Chinese border and up to the Chosen Reservoir. Staff Sergeant Harrison, now a part of the ill-fated Task Force Drysdale, was again captured. In the grips of the Siberian winter, the Chinese marched the prisoners north, almost reaching Manchuria.

At a POW camp near the small town of Kanggye, many prisoners suffered and died from severe bouts of amoebic dysentery.

Unlike the Japanese, the Chinese attempted to indoctrinate their captives. They used standard Communist brainwashing techniques coupled with hours of propaganda-filled lectures as they encouraged the Americans to think of them as their friends. They focused on prisoners that they felt were easy to persuade.

Harrison considered the ongoing propaganda campaign to be comical. On May 24, 1951, SSgt Harrison and some other captives made their escape during an artillery bombardment. Members of the 7th Recon Company of the 7th U.S. Army responded to their aid and rumbled to their rescue. Harrison recollected, "The tanks looked beautiful."

In comparing the Japanese to the Chinese, Harrison recalled: "The [Japanese] hated our guts and were just plain mean. I admired them for this because they really believed in their cause and was loyal to it." On the other hand,

he loathed the false friendship and deceit of his Chinese captors.

After receiving his commission, Lieutenant Harrison served with the First Provisional Air-Ground Brigade in Kaneohe, Hawaii, and later with 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marines in Vietnam during Operation Double Eagle. Of Harrison's gallant actions, his boss, LtCol Horn wrote, "Displayed exceptional qualification for the field command by aggressively and adeptly leading the Bravo element where it was in direct contact with Viet Cong forces."

Harrison retired as a lieutenant colonel on June 30, 1969. His incredible military career spanned three wars and included four years spent as a prisoner of war. He and his wife retired in California where he assisted his local community in several interesting capacities until his death in 2015.

Here's another excellent Marine history volume to add to your ever-growing military history library.

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.

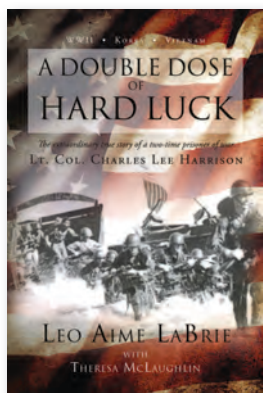
"SISTERHOOD OF SPIES: The Women of the OSS." By Elizabeth P. McIntosh. Published by Naval Institute Press. 320 pages. \$17.96 MCA Members. \$19.95 Regular Price.

"OSS OPERATION BLACK MAIL: One Woman's Covert War Against the Imperial Japanese Army." By Ann Todd. Published by Naval Institute Press. 280 pages. \$25.16 MCA Members. \$27.95 Regular Price.

Heralding the Unsung OSS Heroines of World War II

Before Sesostri the III, or Senusret, the popular pharaoh of Egypt from 1878 B.C. to 1843 B.C., perfected the craft of deploying spies and saboteurs among invading armies to render carnage and casualties, secretly gathering information on enemy troop movements and dispositions was an essential wartime strategy.

During the intervening 4,000 years prior to World War II, warring military leaders throughout the globe insisted that collecting facts, news, and knowledge



behind hostile lines by audacious special agents skilled in subterfuge, silent killing, and sophisticated cloak-and-dagger activities reduced human and material losses during physical battle.

The fledgling art and science of covert warfare was born. By the fall of 1945, the top-secret American OSS (Office of Strategic Services) employed some 30,000 daring young specially trained intelligence-reconnaissance undercover operatives, more than 4,000 of whom were women. Most spied in countries where they had to move cautiously. Error meant penalties of unbelievable torture and death.

In the recently published "Sisterhood of Spies: The Women of the OSS" and "OSS Operation Black Mail: One Woman's Covert War Against the Imperial Japanese Army," military professionals and enthusiasts, as well as the general non-initiated, are not only introduced to Elizabeth P. McIntosh, a long-neglected, unsung, authentic OSS heroine, but also get a remarkable and riveting glimpse into our nation's first national intelligence agency.

In "Sisterhood of Spies," the author draws upon her own hazardous encounters, as well as those of more than 100 OSS women who served all over the world, in her book detailing the thousands of women who served in the OSS.

Elizabeth "Betty" McIntosh was a veteran of, and sensitive to, both the OSS and CIA secrets and operations, as virtually were all the women she interviewed and chronicled later. Especially intriguing are her vivid recollections while serving as a war correspondent under Admiral Chester Nimitz, Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet.

In 1943, after being recruited by the staff of "Wild" Bill Donovan, who, in addition to creating the Office of Strategic Services served as its director, McIntosh eagerly joined the OSS and was immediately assigned to conduct morale-sapping operations against the Japanese in Burma and China.

The second book, Ann Todd's sterling biography of Betty McIntosh, deftly handles the heroine's combat savvy and near-death experiences. Todd brilliantly integrates family relationships and background with postwar CIA and later life

anecdotes and vignettes. Coupled with McIntosh's reflections and introspections, Elizabeth and her closest friends and associates come to life, breathing and behaving naturally as we read on. Even minor players are so refreshing they easily step into Betty's limelight.

Incidentally, Ann Todd deserves a biography of her own. In addition to being able to narrate beautifully, she is a contributing author and consultant for the National Geographic Society, and has been given rare permission to officially lecture on OSS World War II activities. She also has served as a historian for the National Museum of the Marine Corps.

In short, if read back to back, first, "Sisterhood of Spies," immediately followed by "OSS Operation Black Mail," every scene, almost every paragraph, add to the cumulative creation of a single new definition that combines honor, bravery, and courage in America's wars.

Don DeNevi

Author's bio: Don DeNevi, a regular contributor to Leatherneck magazine, has written more than 35 nonfiction books. Since retirement two years ago, he has attempted historical fiction, writing four novels.

JOHN R. ANGSTADT, USMC: CHINA HORSE MARINE: American Legation, Peiping, China 1934-1937. By E. Richard Bonham. Published by Schiffer. 192 pages. \$54 MCA Members. \$59.99 Regular Price.

"Well, I'm Captain Jinx of the Horse Marines, I feed my horse on corn and beans; I court young ladies in their teens;

MENDOZA'S FLEET

BASED ON A TRUE INCIDENT
FROM THE SECOND
NICARAGUAN CAMPAIGN



A NOVEL BY MARTIN KOPPY

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I'm a captain in the Marine Corps!"—old drinking song, "Capt Jinx."

E. Richard Bonham's new book, "China Horse Marine" might easily take a permanent place on one's living room coffee table. If any book may be judged by its cover, this volume, with its handsomely crafted crimson protective cover, may well do the trick.

Early in the 20th century, Marines fielded mounted horse detachments in both Nicaragua and Haiti but the truly evolved model of the mounted detachments came to center stage in pre-World War II China. When "ol' salts" spoke of the "Horse Marines," they were speaking about this



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distinctive mounted unit which served in China in the first half of the century.

As a result of the Opium Wars, various foreign countries established trade legations in the ancient and picturesque China. After the turn of the century's Boxer Rebellion, Marines guarded the American Legation in Peiping.

Consistent with what leathernecks do all over the globe, China Marines performed needed security duties with the highest regard for military professionalism. The Mounted Detachment from the China Marines policed and patrolled the Legation zone around the streets of Peiping. Additionally, the Horse Marines were tasked with the protection of Americans and their property from roving bands of Chinese thieves who operated throughout the countryside.

The book's author leaned heavily on two extraordinary sources. Amazingly preserved and skillfully photographed are a unique collection of Corporal John R. Angstadt's uniform and riding gear.

Cpl Angstadt served with the Mounted Detachment from 1935 to 1937. This rare

photo collection is also supported by a collection of period snapshots of Angstadt, his buddies, and of course, his trusted horses, "Good Chance" and "Braum." The book also incorporates a host of excellent period drawings sketched by none other than Colonel John W. Thomason Jr. who

was a decorated WW I veteran who served in China between wars. Many of Thomason's drawings became the basis for his popular book, "Fix Bayonets." Many of his Marine-related sketches were featured in various periodical publications of the day, including *Scribner's*, *American Mercury*, and *Saturday Evening Post*.

Also included in this volume are examples of period news articles and other written descriptions of these magnificent mounted warriors. A section of the book is assigned to the presentation of the detachment's weaponry and assorted riding gear. Pictures of the modification to the McClellan saddle, the saddle mountings for the Patton saber, and the saddle carrying case for the .03 rifle are expertly photographed and displayed.

Chapters are devoted to the second

Sino-Japanese War, the Marines' sporting activities, dogs of the Mounted Detachment, and some interesting snapshots of the social life of these old Corps Marines.

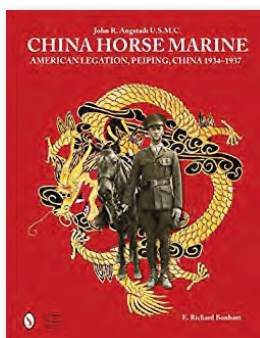
One excellent section of this volume is committed to formal portraits of the members of the detachment standing tall next to their mounts. The horses needed for this extreme climate and the associated rough work were small, but hardy, Mongolian ponies.

The highlight of this fine book is the spectacular care taken to feature the 1930s China Marines and their uniforms. Taken together, these photos alone are worth the price of this outstanding volume.

Packed with period photos of old China and the salty leathernecks who served in the China Horse Marines, this book skillfully highlights the grand days of one of our Corps' most exotic duty stations. So, Mac, order a copy of this book, and then speedily clear the deck on your coffee table: "One more Old Corps' history book reporting, Sir!"

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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Passing the Word

Compiled by Sara W. Bock

TAPS Launches Institute For Hope and Healing

The Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS), a national nonprofit organization that provides compassionate care for those grieving the death of a military loved one, expanded its reach to grieving civilian families with the launch of the TAPS Institute for Hope and Healing in Arlington, Va., March 5. Headlining the event was Jon Stewart, former host of “The Daily Show” and noted supporter of the military and first responders.

Since its founding in 1994, TAPS has become the leader in providing peer-based emotional support, hope and healing to more than 75,000 bereaved family members. Through a partnership with the Hospice Foundation of America, a leader in professional grief and loss education, the new institute will serve as a resource and training center and a hub for professionals working in the community.

“The TAPS Institute for Hope and Healing brings decades of experience in supporting military families to support all those grieving the loss of a loved one,” said Bonnie Carroll, President of TAPS, who founded the organization after losing her husband in an Army plane

crash in 1992. “Already positioned to be a national and international leader in the field of grief, the institute will offer high-quality workshops, seminars and panel discussions for bereaved individuals, grieving military and civilian families, and grief professionals alike.”

The institute launched its programming during the March 5 event with a forum of leading experts in the area of grief and loss. For more information about TAPS and the resources its new institute provides, visit www.taps.org.

TAPS

Pentagon Releases New Policy On Nondeployable Members

In February, the Defense Department released a new policy on military retention for nondeployable servicemembers as it seeks to provide more ready and lethal forces.

“The situation we face today is really unlike anything that we have faced, certainly in the post-World War II era,” Robert Wilkie, the undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness told the Senate Armed Services Committee’s personnel subcommittee, Feb. 15.

On any given day, about 286,000 serv-

icemembers—13 to 14 percent of the total force—are nondeployable, Wilkie said during a hearing on military and civilian personnel programs and military family readiness.

Last July, Defense Secretary James N. Mattis tasked the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness with developing policies to ensure everyone who enters the military and those who remain in the military are worldwide deployable.

Servicemembers who have been nondeployable for more than 12 consecutive months will be processed for administrative separation or referred to the disability evaluation system, said Mattis.

“This new policy is a 12-month ‘deploy-or-be-removed’ policy,” Mattis added, noting that there are exceptions, such as pregnancy and postpartum conditions. Medical boards will review the medical status of those who have been wounded. “We need to look at the force holistically. We have to ensure given the climate that this country faces that everyone who signs up can be deployed to any corner of the world at any given time, and that is the reason for the change in policy.”

The new policy became effective immediately. Military services have until Oct. 1 to begin mandatory processing of nondeployable servicemembers, according to Patricia Mulcahy, the director of DOD’s officer and enlisted personnel management office.

Servicemembers could be nondeployable for any number of reasons, she said, such as falling behind on annual medical exams or due to combat- or training-related injuries. Only a small percentage of those who are nondeployable have been in that status for more than 12 months.

Each servicemember’s case will be individually reviewed, said Mulcahy, and the secretaries of the military departments are authorized to grant waivers to retain members. The purpose of the policy is not to separate members, but rather to get members back into a deployable status if possible, she emphasized.

“I think it’s important to know that there is the balance between readiness and helping our members who are not going to be able to heal adequately to be deployable, to help them with the next phase of their lives as well,” Mulcahy added.

“The policy is meant to improve readiness and ensure servicemembers are



COURTESY OF TAPS

Jon Stewart, former host of the “The Daily Show,” speaks to attendees at a grief and loss forum during the opening of the new TAPS Institute for Hope and Healing in Arlington, Va., March 5.

deployable worldwide to carry out the mission of safeguarding the nation and fighting and winning the nation's wars," she said. "Since Secretary Mattis has been on board, readiness and lethality of the forces has been [the] absolutely No. 1 priority for him, and thus for the department."

Lisa Ferdinando, DOD

American Girl, Red Cross Support Marine Families

During an event at the Marine Corps Family Team Building office, Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, S.C., the American Red Cross donated American Girl dolls to families of Marines who were preparing to deploy.

"None of the families were expecting this to happen," said Jimmie Woods, the Family Readiness Officer (FRO) for Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 115. "We wanted to keep this event as much of a surprise as possible. So when the kids walked in, to see their faces when they realized what was happening—there is no purer form of excitement."

The process to make the event possible started months ago when American Girl donated several hundred dolls to the Red Cross with the stipulation that they go to families of active-duty troops. The FROs of Marine All-Weather Fighter Attack Squadron 533 and VMFA-115 reached out to the Red Cross about receiving some

of the dolls for their families. After the Red Cross agreed, the FROs just had to set up a time and place to give out the dolls.

"I love events like this that can bring Marines and their families from numerous units together with one purpose: to make children happy," said Staff Sergeant Darren Caster, a maintenance controller

with VMFA-115. "The Marine Corps is a family. We look out and take care of our own so when there is an opportunity to make the families of Marines already deployed or about to deploy happy, we will do so without hesitation."

Cpl Benjamin McDonald, USMC



Team Georgia moves to center stage during the 2018 Marine Corps Trials opening ceremony on Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., March 17. The Marine Corps Trials promotes recovery and rehabilitation through adaptive sport participation and develops camaraderie among recovering servicemembers (RSMs) and veterans. It is also an opportunity for RSMs to demonstrate their achievements and serves as the primary venue to select Marine Corps participants for the DOD Warrior Games.

CPL JUAN MADRIGAL, USMC



Karen Cook, the regional program manager for the Red Cross, presents American Girl dolls to children of deployed Marines at MCAS Beaufort, S.C., March 1.

CPL BENJAMIN McDONALD, USMC

In Memoriam

Compiled by Nancy S. Lichtman

MSgt Elsie M. Anderson, 94, of Kensington, Md. Her 20-year career in the Marine Corps began in 1953. Following her retirement, she worked as a CPA. She was a member of the Woman Marines Association, serving as treasurer of her chapter.

Maj Mordecai "Mawk" R. Arnold, 94, of Fairhope, Ala. He began his 34-year career in the Marine Corps as a radar technician on Guam and Peleliu during WW II. He was called back to active duty during the Korean War and again in 1960. He completed training as a public affairs officer and was later assigned to Camp Lejeune, N.C.; Da Nang, Vietnam; and Parris Island, S.C. He was a mentor to young Marine Corps journalists, and after his retirement, he taught public relations and journalism courses.

He was a member of the USMC Combat Correspondents Association, serving in various capacities including as president and chaplain. He also was a member of the MCL and was a longtime friend of *Leatherneck*.

Wayne Barham, 93, in Sioux Falls, S.D. He was a BARman with the 3rdMarDiv during WW II. He saw action in the South Pacific, including on Guam, where he was wounded by a Japanese grenade. His awards include three Purple Hearts.

GySgt Lacy R. Bethea Jr., 88, of Tucson, Ariz. He was a Marine veteran of the Korean War who saw action at the Chosin Reservoir. He later was an active volunteer in his church and with Boy Scouts of America.

SSgt Leo T. Biernacki, 90, of Dolton, Ill. He served from 1944-1952. During WW II, he was with the 1stMarDiv in the Pacific. His awards include the Purple Heart.

LtCol Joseph F. Bishop, 97, of North Andover, Mass. He was commissioned a second lieutenant after his 1941 graduation from Boston College. He was a company commander in 3rd Bn, 5th Marines, seeing action on Guadalcanal and Peleliu.

Cpl Veronica B. "Ronnie" Bradley, 95, of New Milford, Conn. She enlisted during WW II and was featured on a well-known recruiting poster that encouraged women to join the Women Marines to "Free a Marine to Fight."

Editor's note: See Corps Connections on page 8 for more about Cpl Bradley.

1stSgt Albert H. Cheese, 82, of Hampstead, N.C. He enlisted on his 17th birthday, hoping to be sent to fight in

Korea. Instead, he served in Morocco as a gate sentry. He left active duty three years later and was attached to a reserve unit. He returned to active duty and served on Okinawa. Later, he was part of the MarDet aboard USS *Blue Ridge* (LCC-19).

Thomas Constantinovich, 89, of Boardman, Ohio. He was a U.S. Navy corpsman who served with 5th Marines during the Korean War. He was wounded during the Inchon landing.

PFC Carl S. DeHaven, 91, of Bridgeport, Pa. He was a motor-transport Marine with the 5thMarDiv during WW II. He saw action on Iwo Jima and later was assigned to 8th Marines in Nagasaki. After the war, he had a 26-year career in law enforcement.

Capt Stuart W. FitzGerald, 89, of Wisdom, Mont. He enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1946 and served in China. He later served on Guam and in Japan. In 1962 he was selected for warrant officer. During the Vietnam War he served at Chu Lai. He retired in 1969.

Sgt Robert L. "Bob" Frey, 96, of Gilbert, Ariz. He enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1940 and was serving on Wake Island on Dec. 23, 1941, when the Japanese invaded. His 45 months as a POW was chronicled in "Sergeant Robert Leroy Frey, USMC: WW II Wake Island Defender and POW Survivor" in the February 2017 issue of *Leatherneck*. He later had a career in law enforcement.

Dale G. Gibbs, 80, of Belen, N.M. He served as a Marine and was an avid outdoorsman.

William H. "Bill" Holz, 73, of Cape Carteret, N.C. He was a naval flight officer assigned to an F-4 Phantom squadron in the Vietnam War. He completed more than 400 combat missions.

SSgt David D. Huffman, 89, of Phillipsburg, N.J. He was a Marine who served in the Korean War.

Maj Alvah E. Ingersoll Jr., 87, of San Diego. He was a veteran of the Korean War who saw action at the Pusan Perimeter, Wolmi-do and the Chosin Reservoir. During the Vietnam War he participated in Operation Starlite. He retired in 1978 after having served 30 years.

John S. Lamb, 93, of Issaquah, Wash. During WW II, he was with MAG-23 in the Pacific. After the war he completed college and had a career in urban planning.

David F. Lynott Jr., 89, of Westbury, N.Y. He was a Marine Corps veteran who later served 40 years in the NYPD.

Col Bruce A. Martin, 84, in Cape Neddick, Maine. He was a Marine Corps aviator who flew 235 combat missions in Vietnam in the F-8 Crusader and the A-4 Skyhawk. In his 30 years of service, he accumulated more than 5,000 hours. His awards include the Defense Superior Service Medal, three awards of the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Purple Heart, numerous Air Medals and the Navy Commendation Medal with combat "V."

SgtMaj Richard "Mac" J. McGee Sr., 80, of Jacksonville, N.C. During his 26 years in the Marine Corps, he served three tours in Vietnam. His awards include two Purple Hearts. After his retirement, he was an active volunteer with several charitable organizations in his community.

Robert J. "Bob" Mierzwa, 98, of East Moline, Ill. During WW II, he saw action on Okinawa.

GySgt Vincent E. Mosco, 93, of Belen, N.M. He retired from the Marine Corps after 20 years of service.

Cpl Milton Nielson, 91, of Blairsville, Ga. He served with Co E, 2nd Bn, 27th Marines, 5thMarDiv in the fighting on Iwo Jima, where he was wounded.

Donald G. Nordlie, 94, of Litchfield, Minn. He was a Marine who served in the South Pacific during WW II. He saw action on Saipan, Tinian and Iwo Jima. After the war he had a successful career in banking.

Gabriel L. Ortega, 77, of Albuquerque, N.M. He served in the Marine Corps.

MSgt Charles E. Pagan, 82, of Taneyville, Mo. He enlisted in the Marine Corps after his 1953 graduation from high school. He served two tours in Vietnam and retired in 1976.

Leonard J.S.T. Pecchia, 96, in Carlsbad, Calif. He served with Co H, 3rd Bn, 26th Marines, 5thMarDiv in the South Pacific. He saw action on Bougainville, Guadalcanal and Iwo Jima.

He was awarded the Silver Star for his actions during the fighting on Iwo Jima. According to the award citation, while engaged against a strongly defended ridge on March 2, 1945, after a fellow Marine was wounded in enemy territory, he "courageously went to the aid of a fallen comrade and succeeded in treating and evacuating him before he himself was wounded."

Col Marvin F. Pixton, 78, of Fredericksburg, Va. He was commissioned a second lieutenant following his 1963 graduation from the University of Maryland. He was

a Marine aviator who flew both fixed-wing and rotary-wing aircraft during separate deployments to Vietnam. He completed 872 combat missions and made 650 carrier landings. Following his retirement from the Marine Corps, he had a successful career in business. His awards include the Legion of Merit, Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star with combat "V" and Navy Commendation Medal.

LtCol Kenneth Radnitzer, 91, in Urbana, Ill. He received the Silver Star for his actions during WW II when he was a member of a demolition squad in 2nd Bn, 5th Marines, 1stMarDiv on Okinawa. According to his award citation, "Volunteering with another Marine to reduce an enemy machine-gun position which had been causing heavy casualties and holding up the advance of his unit, [he] dashed 75 yards to the mouth of the cave protecting the Japanese position and, despite intense machine-gun fire, placed a demolition charge which resulted in the complete destruction of the enemy emplacement."

Sgt John L. Schoenecker Jr., 97, of Cocoa Beach, Fla. He was a quartermaster supply sergeant with 1/7, 1stMarDiv on Guadalcanal. He also saw action in the battles of New Guinea and New Britain. After the war, he had a 35-year career

with the federal government, retiring from the Defense Logistics Agency. He was a member of MCL Det. 1311, the VFW and the 1st Marine Division Association.

Victor E. Sizemore, 92, of Wilmington, N.C. He was a Marine who served in WW II and the Korean War. He had a 31-year career with the federal government. He was a member of the MCL, DAV and the American Legion. He was an active volunteer with Toys for Tots.

Sgt William A. "Bill" Stephenson, 96, of Aurora, Colo. He was with 4thMarDiv in the South Pacific during WW II. He fought on Roi Namur, Saipan, Tinian and Iwo Jima. He later had a career in the music industry.

Capt Charles L. Stitt, 87, of Kansas City, Mo. He served in 3rd MAW. He also had assignments at MCRD San Diego, MCRD Parris Island and was the CO of B/1/6, 2ndMarDiv at MCB Camp Lejeune. After leaving the Marine Corps in 1965 he went to law school and later was elected as a magistrate judge in Jackson County, N.C., where he served for 30 years.

Maj Frederic J. Swango, 79, of Moline, Ill. He had a 21-year career in the Marine Corps. After his retirement, he taught at the university level.

Cpl Albert C. Ulrichny, 92, of Middlesex, N.J. During WW II he served

with E/2/29, 6thMarDiv. He saw action in the Battle of Okinawa.

Capt William M. Webster, 96, of Albuquerque, N.M. He served with the 1stMarDiv in China in 1945. He had a career as a chemist with the USGS and the Atomic Energy Commission, where he specialized in the field of radioactive waste disposal.

Sgt Robert D. Wenger, 73, of Cottonwood, Calif. He was a Marine who served from 1963-1966. He was stationed with the 1stMarDiv at MCB Camp Pendleton and at the 12th Marine Corps District in San Francisco. He was an advocate for veterans and served on the boards of several veterans' organizations. He was a friend of *Leatherneck* and had several poems published in the magazine.

In Memoriam is run on a space-available basis. Those wishing to submit items should include full name, age, location at time of death (city and state), last grade held, dates of service, units served in, and, if possible a published obituary. Allow at least four months for the notice to appear. Submissions may be sent to *Leatherneck Magazine*, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, Va., 22134, or emailed to leatherneck@mca-marines.org or n.lichtman@mca-marines.org. 🇺🇸



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SOUND OFF
[continued from page 7]

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In my original letter I did not imply, as Murphy suggested, that I had later failed promotion. After my promotion to corporal, and during my short time left in reserve, I would not have attended a subsequent promotion board. Sometime after I left the reserve, I became aware that I was still an E-3, but an E-3 lance corporal. It may be that since I had left the reserves and was no longer qualified for future promotions, my rank as corporal had been “acting” and I simply reverted to E-3 lance corporal.

Regardless, ego aside, I was satisfied with my separation rank of E-3 lance corporal. I realized the Marine Corps knew far more about such matters than I.

George Collias
Venice, Fla.

In reference to the Sound Off letter in the March *Leatherneck* by Major James L. Murphy, USMC (Ret), his comment on the new rank system, I will tell him just as I wrote to Sound Off a couple years ago that the Marine Corps has completely forgotten the men and women that served in the Cold War between 1955 through 1960. We got shafted from every direction.

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My complaint in the past was the issue of the National Defense Service Medal. Even though we signed on the same dotted line as the Marines before and after the above time period, it was a time period ribbon.

I was deployed three times, was issued the China Service Medal, yet not eligible for the National Defense Service Medal. Thanks to the Army, we were issued a certificate signed by General Colin Powell.

My second comment to the major is the new rank system. I made sergeant (E-4) Sept. 1, 1958. The Commandant did not come up with the new rank system until November 1958. I was relieved from active duty April 2, 1959. I walked off that base with three stripes on my sleeve. In my duffel bag was my promotion to sergeant (E-4) permanent in the Marine Corps. I was never told about any such thing as acting sergeant. I was told we would not lose a stripe and would hold that rank until our next promotion.

I was transferred to inactive reserve. There was no way I would be able to make another rank, yet when I received my discharge certificate and DD-214 it showed corporal (E-4) and showed me as being promoted on Sept. 1, 1958.

I tried for eight years to get a copy of my military records. I was sent two pages that

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showed where I was reduced in rank from private first class to private in 1956. And it showed I was deployed for Operation Strong back in the Philippines in 1958.

That was my record for four active years in the Corps. It showed no promotions, no letter of commendation from my battalion commander, no sea duty for two years, but it did show I qualified with an M1 and .45-caliber pistol five times at El Toro. Problem is I was never in El Toro.

I have had a love for my Corps for 63 years, but as I wrote above, the Corps forgot about the Cold War Marine. But they did remember they took a stripe.

You can see why I am discouraged about the way we were and are treated. They were trying for 25 years to get a Cold War Victory Medal, but DOD (Department of Defense) won't approve it. But you look through the book of medals and there is one for everything from the MOH to cleaning up after a hurricane.

I wrote to *Leatherneck* a couple years ago about the National Defense Medal and was told by the *Leatherneck* Ed to stop my crying and be glad I was privileged to wear the uniform of the Marine Corps.

Sgt Frank Rinchich, USMC
Loris, S.C.

• That was the previous *Sound Off*

editor who told you, "You earned the title Marine, an Honorable Discharge, the G.I. Bill and VA privileges. You want eggs in your beer?" While he does make a valid point, I am a bit more empathetic about the lack of recognition for those Marines who served in the late 1950s.—Editor

Let's Go Charlie!

I note that HMM-163 is mentioned in the article, "Let's Go ... Charlie!" in the March issue. I served in 163 for the majority of my Marine Corps career.



However, I see the photograph on page 49 is of a 362 bird showing the YL code. 163 were YP. Any article with a HUS, later H-34, catches my eye and any mention of 163 gets my interest into high gear.

Three of us old Ridge Runners got together last September for a reunion. We were last together in 1962.

Many wonderful memories were discovered and remembered.

Cpl Glenn "Sam" Bass, USMC
Sonra, Calif.

Correction

In our April issue the Sea Story entitled, "It's Better to Be Lucky Than Good," should have read: "a spare F-18D replaced the damaged jet."

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







Happy Mother's Day

She's been there from your first breath to your first day as a United States Marine. Don't leave her out now. Give her the gift of connection this Mother's Day with a membership to the Marine Corps Association & Foundation. She'll receive *Leatherneck* Magazine of the Marines and have even more reasons to be proud of her own Marine.

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Special Events

• **USMC Combat Correspondents Assn. Professional Development and Training Symposium**, Aug. 20-23, New Bern, N.C. Contact Jack T. Paxton, (352) 748-4698, usmccca@cfl.rr.com.

• **MCA&F Ground Awards Dinner**, May 3, Arlington, Va. Contact Sarah Cohen, (703) 640-0174, s.cohen@mca-marines.org.

• **MCA&F Ammo Tech Awards Reception**, May 23, Woodbridge, Va. Contact Sarah Cohen, (703) 640-0174, s.cohen@mca-marines.org.

• **MCA&F Acquisition Awards Dinner**, Aug. 23, Springfield, Va. Sarah Cohen, (703) 640-0174, s.cohen@mca-marines.org.

• **MCA&F Intelligence Awards Dinner**, Sept. 20, Arlington, Va. Sarah Cohen, (703) 640-0174, s.cohen@mca-marines.org.

Reunions

• **West Coast Drill Instructor Assn. (SgtMaj Leland D. "Crow" Crawford Chapter)**, Sept. 13-16, San Diego. Contact Gregg Stoner, (619) 884-9047, greggstoner22@aol.com, or CWO-3 Chip Dykes, (760) 908-2322, www.westcoastdi.org.

• **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 Engineer Assn.**, Sept. 26-29, San Diego. Contact Maj Charlie Dismore, USMC (Ret), (512) 394-9333, www.marcorengasn.org.

• **2nd Force Recon Co Assn.**, May 16-19, Sneads Ferry, N.C. Contact Phil Smith, 1830 Walhalla Hwy, Pickens, SC 29671, jarhed73@yahoo.com.

• **7th Engineer Bn Vietnam Veterans Assn.**, Sept. 20-23, New Orleans. Contact Norm Johnson, 6100 Cochrane Rd., Marlette, MI 48453, (989) 635-6653, nwgj@outlook.com.

• **Seagoing Marines Assn.**, Sept. 11-15, Colorado Springs, Colo. Contact Bob Sollom, (540) 840-9310, soll36@msn.com.

• **Chosin Few, U.S. Army Chapter (Navy/Marine Corps Corsair Pilots, Ground Crews, MAG-12 and MAG-33 welcome)**, May 22-26, Springfield, Mo. Contact Ron Strickland, (417) 755-3217, grayhorse234@gmail.com.

• **Men of Chosin**, June 17-19, Reno, Nev. Contact Stanley Galewick, 5091

Dapple Grey Dr., Redding, CA 96002, (530) 221-1496.

• **1/3 (all eras)**, Sept. 11-16, Colorado Springs, Colo. Contact Don Bumgarner, (562) 897-2437, dbumc13usmc@verizon.net.

• **1/7 (RVN) Reunion and Monument Dedication**, May 16-19, McLean, Va. Visit www.17marines.com.

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

• **2/3 (RVN)**, Sept. 26-29, Colorado Springs, Colo. Contact Art Ferguson, (623) 780-1819, clydesdadfergy@aol.com.

• **"Stormy's" 3/3 (1960-1962)**, Oct. 15-19, Las Vegas. Contact Burrell Landes, 2610 West Long Circle, Littleton, CO 80120, (303) 734-1458, bhanon@comcast.net.

• **Battery Adjust, 3/11 (all eras)**, Sept. 19-23, Orlando, Fla. Contact Doug Miller, (402) 540-9431, dwmiller48@gmail.com.

• **B/1/5 and C/1/5 (RVN, 1966-1967)** are planning a reunion. Contact SSgt Jim Proulx, USMC (Ret), (904) 343-4850, bertojoto1@gmail.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.

• **3rd 155s, M/4/12, 3rdMarDiv**, Sept. 9-13, Nashville, Tenn. Contact Alex Jablonowski, (248) 505-2183, 3rd155s.m4.12@gmail.com.

• **Support Co, 3d Engineer Bn (RVN, 1967-1968)**, Sept. 11-13, Ocean City, Md. Contact A.J. Folk, 215 Sweetwater Lane, Newmantown, 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.

• **Youngstown, Ohio Marine Reunion**,

MCL Det #494, Aug. 18, Youngstown, Ohio. Contact Chester Kaschak, (330) 533-6084.

• **Subic Bay Marines Survivors**, Aug. 22-26, Nashville, Tenn. Contact A.J. Allen, (208) 941-3345, aj@mikebrowngroup.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 NWS Yorktown**, Aug. 10-12, Yorktown, Va. Contact David Greene, marinebarracksyorktown@gmail.com.

• **105th OCC, 1st Plt, Co C, December 1977 (staff NCOs, officers and commissioning female Marines)**, Oct. 18-21, Quantico, Va. Contact Debbie Thurman, (434) 929-6320, 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 K, 9-68**, is planning a reunion. Contact Jim Stiger, (206) 999-1029, jimstiger@earthlink.net.

• **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, bertojoto1@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 329, Parris Island, 1967**, is planning a reunion. Contact Thomas Payne, 2220 Flat Branch Rd., Ellijay, GA, 30540, (706) 635-4540, corap@ellijay.com.

• **Plt 340, Parris Island, 1963**, is planning 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 1096, San Diego, 1968**, Oct. 4-8, San Diego. Contact Dan Hefner, (312) 504-4658, drh818@msn.com.

• **Plt 1098, Parris Island, 1970**, is planning a reunion. Contact Michael Shea, (786) 280-8202, mkek2709@comcast.net.

• **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 3041, San Diego, 1968**, July 2018. Contact Dan Kirkman, (206) 383-9018, teager2@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>.

• **MACS-9**, Aug. 8-11, Colorado Springs, Colo. Contact Tom Boyle, (319) 631-1912, tboyle621@aol.com.

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

• **VMFA-323 "Death Rattlers" (75th anniversary reunion)**, Aug. 2-5, San Diego. Contact T.C. Crouson, vmfa323reunion2018@gmail.com.

Ships and Others

• **USS Canberra (CA-70/CAG-2)**, Oct. 10-14, St. Louis. Contact Ken Minick, P.O. Box 130, Belpre, OH 45714, (740) 423-8976, usscanberra@gmail.com.

• **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.

• **USS Iwo Jima (LPH-2/LHD-7)**, Oct. 10-13, Jacksonville, Fla. Contact Robert G. McAnally, 152 Frissell St., Hampton, VA 23663, (757) 723-0317, yujack46709@gmail.com.

• **USS John R. Craig (DD-885)**, Sept. 5-9, Bloomington, Minn. Contact Jerry Chwalek, 9307 Louisiana St., Livonia, MI 48150, (734) 525-1469, jermail@ameritech.net.



Jim Carnley

COURTESY OF BRITTANY STEELMAN

Mail Call

• Brittany Steelman, (478) 251-2645, bcsteelman@yahoo.com, to hear from anyone who knew or served with **James "Jim" CARNLEY**, pictured, who served in the **Navy in Southeast Asia/Vietnam in the 1960s**.

• Jim Bailey, 30 Oakdale Rd., Wilmington, MA 01887, 125assoc@gmail.com, to hear from any **former members of 1/25** who are interested in joining the new **1st Battalion, 25th Marines Association**.

• **CWO-3 Chip Dykes, USMC (Ret)**, (760) 908-2322, www.westcoastdiorg, to hear from **present and former drill instructors** interested in becoming members of the **West Coast Drill Instructors Association, SgtMaj Leland D. "Crow" Crawford Chapter**.

• Cpl Robert C. Fuller, (414) 332-9842, to hear from **members of Plt 117, San Diego, 1961**, and Marines who served with **2/3, Camp Schwab, Okinawa, Japan, 1962-1963**.

• John Narde, (585) 216-9165, jnarde2@rochester.rr.com, to hear from members of **Plt 33, Parris Island, 1950**.

• Daniel Owen, (509) 778-4884, to hear from anyone who served on **USS Vernon County (LST-1161) from 1962 to 1964**. He also would like to hear from anyone who can provide the names of the **four seamen killed on USS Tom Green County (LST-1159)** while tying down vehicles on the tank deck, as well as the dates those events occurred.

• Ralph "Gil" Gilbertsen, 415 Armstrong Blvd. N, Apt. 405, St. James, MN 56081, (320) 226-8329, to hear from or about **Marine veteran Dennis "Denny" CLARK** of Texas, who was a member of **Plt 185, Parris Island, 1960**.

Wanted

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

• Alex Martinez, (559) 936-2421, a.martinez1303@sbcglobal.net, wants a **platoon photo for Plt 3096, San Diego, 1984**.

Sales, Trades and Giveaways

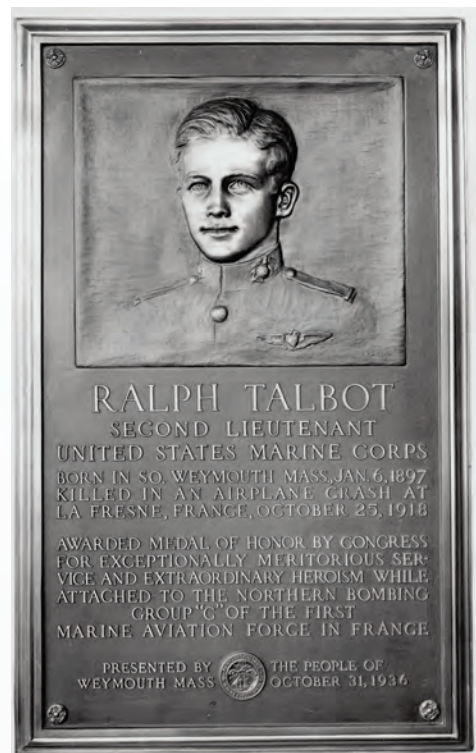
• Richard Newton, widgittl@gmail.com, has a **recruit graduation book for Plt 1010, San Diego, 1969**, that he will give to anyone willing to pay the shipping costs.

• Carl Withey, P.O. Box 145, Elbridge, NY 13060, (315) 689-3653, crwithey@twcny.rr.com, has **recruit graduation books for Plt 386, Parris Island, 1957; Plt 289, Parris Island, 1970; and Plt 3313, Parris Island, 1977**, that he will give free of charge to any member of the applicable platoon.

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.rock@mca-marines.org, or write to Reader Assistance Editor, *Leatherneck* Magazine, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134. 📧

Saved Round

By Nancy S. Lichtman



USN

WORTHY OF HER NAMESAKE—USS *Ralph Talbot* (DD-390) is shown here off of Mare Island in October 1942, having just undergone repairs for damage sustained in the Battle of Savo Island. The ship was named in honor of Medal of Honor recipient and World War I aviator, Second Lieutenant Ralph Talbot. (Editor's note: Read "Echoes from Armageddon" on page 44 for more about Talbot and his fellow WW I aviators.)

USS *Ralph Talbot* was heavily engaged in World War II from the enemy's opening strike on Dec. 7, 1941—she was moored at Pearl Harbor when the Japanese attacked the U.S. Navy fleet there. While her crew worked to get her underway, her guns brought down two enemy aircraft.

Ralph Talbot saw action in the Pacific throughout the war, earning 12 battle stars, and was designated for use as a target during atomic tests conducted at Bikini Atoll in 1946. Due to contamination, she was decommissioned and sunk in the deep water off Kwajalein in 1948. 🇺🇸

COURTESY OF NATIONAL ARCHIVES