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MAGAZINE OF THE MARINES

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**COVER:** This M1A1 tank landing on MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif.'s White Beach during February's Exercise Iron Fist demonstrates the tank's ability to weight the attack across the spectrum of combat. Read retired CWO-4 Randy Gaddo's story on tanker training beginning on page 30. Photo by SSgt Anthony L. Linan. Copies of the cover may be obtained by sending \$2 (for mailing costs) to *Leatherneck Magazine*, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134-0775.

**Leatherneck—On the Web** Delivering more scoop on the Internet. Look for this indication that additional content found online in our digital edition is available to subscribers and MCA&F members.



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# Sound Off

Edited by R. R. Keene

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 Anonymous letters will not be published.—Sound Off Ed.

## Letter of the Month

(*Leatherneck* will pay \$25 for the Sound Off Letter of the Month.)

Two summers ago I was traveling through Nashua, N.H. I noticed a large truck in the breakdown lane. I was compelled to stop to see if the driver needed help.

I had not noticed that on the side of the truck was a painting of the eagle, globe and anchor and a U.S. Marine Corps Color Guard in dress blues.

A second young man also pulled over to help. The truck driver said, "I'll bet you are both veteran Marines."

He went on to say his boss paid several thousands of dollars to have the mural painted on both sides of the truck. His boss, of course, was a member of the Corps and told the driver that there is no such thing as a former Marine. "And you can quote me on that," said the truck driver.

The driver said he had previous roadside troubles in Missouri and South Dakota, and both times local Marines came to the rescue.

Then he said something odd: "When you guys graduate from boot camp, do you belong to a fraternity?"

"No," I replied. "We are guided by two mottos: 'Once a Marine, always a Marine' and 'Semper Fidelis,' always faithful, often said as 'Semper Fi.'"

I'm certain that the truck is still in service and still breaks down occasionally. Has anyone seen this truck?

Ken Wire  
Nashua, N.H.

## A One-Year Enlistment! (With Dress Blues)

I enlisted in 1949 and was assigned to Platoon 37 at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C. The novelty of the enlistment was that it was for just one year.

Those of us who enlisted under that program were temporarily saddled with the acronym, USMC-V. I believe there was an attendant hitch in the Reserve required with the enlistment. I have been reading *Leatherneck* for years, and I've never

come across the term USMC-V again, nor have I heard of another time when a one-year enlistment has been offered.

I am wondering if you have other readers who enlisted under the USMC-V program and if any readers were members of Plt 37 in 1949. I remember that all members of that platoon were promoted to private first class and all were issued a complete set of dress blues. Both actions now seem a bit unusual for such a short initial enlistment.

It also would be interesting to learn why the Marine Corps offered a one-year enlistment at that time, and if such a program had ever been offered before or has been offered since that period. The Korean War came along in the middle of 1950 and put an end to the program.

LtCol Milton H. Jerabek, USMC (Ret)  
Muncie, Ind.

• *Good question. Perhaps some of our saltier readers have the answer?*—Sound Off Ed.

## Yes, It Is a Small Corps

I have to thank *Leatherneck* for making our trip to Washington, D.C., this past summer a very memorable one.

My son-in-law, Dave Berlinski, a New York state trooper, decided to take three old Marines, Gene Kasperski, Ken Baldwin and me, to Marine Barracks Washington, D.C., for the Sunset Parade and to the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Triangle, Va.

Here's where *Leatherneck* comes in. We remembered reading the articles about the Globe & Laurel Restaurant and about Major Richard T. Spooner, the owner.

This made our trip.

Not only was the food very good, but we had the privilege of meeting Maj Spooner. In talking to him, we learned he landed on Tinian during World War II, as did a cousin of ours. We asked "The Major" if he knew our cousin (whose last name is Kubiak). He not only knew him, he served with him and was with him when Kubiak suffered his injury.

How is that for a small world and small Corps? My cousin's boys hope to talk to

The Major about their dad, and if it weren't for *Leatherneck*, none of this would have been possible. Keep up the good work.

Charles Kwiatkowski  
Olean, N.Y.

• *Thank you, sir, you just made our day.*—Sound Off Ed.

## Correction to the Number of WIAs In the Shoot-Out at Hsin Ho

"In Memoriam" in the February issue paid tribute to one fine Marine: First Sergeant Herb Newman. Speaking for all members of Company C, 1st Battalion, Fifth Marine Regiment, China, April 4 and 5, 1947, at the Hsin Ho Ammunition Supply Point, thanks for remembering Herb.

I also would like to make a correction. We had a total of 18 men wounded in action, not 16, as have most reports of the "Hsin Ho Shoot-Out." I do not have the date of Herb's Purple Heart citation, but the 18th recipient is Corporal Joe Perkins. His citation is dated Dec. 1, 1997, and signed by General Charles C. Krulak, 31st Commandant of the Marine Corps.

Lloyd Remus  
Holt, Mich.

## Leadership *Déjà Vu*

As part of my Vietnam experience, I did a tour with a Marine infantry battalion in 1968 as a forward air controller. We went on a sweep operation, culminating in a publicity stunt (Marines return to Khe Sanh) parade down the old runway.

Although we expected some contact, there was almost no sign of the North Vietnamese Army. From there we moved up just below the Demilitarized Zone and established a fire base in five miserable rainy days where I had to medevac more than 100 guys for trench foot; you just could not get your feet dry.

Through that first couple of weeks, we still saw no contact, and all indications were that the NVA had pulled back weeks before us.

About this time, the *Pacific Stars and Stripes* paper came out with the announce-

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ment that because of the great successes at the Paris Peace Talks (after eight months they had almost decided what shape table to have the actual negotiations around) and, as a "gesture of good faith," we were going to stop all bombing above the DMZ. As an officer, it wasn't my place to question, but it did cross my mind as to what planet our leaders thought they were living on and, even more so, I wondered what the enlisted guys out on the perimeters could be thinking about this kind of news, since they endured the brunt of the daily hardships of life in a combat zone.

Almost immediately, the daily radio chatter was about visual sightings and river crossings because now the NVA didn't have to move only at night; they were now free from any fear of being bombed. I think if our recon planes had the photographic resolution we have now, there would have been pictures of the NVA troops flashing us the middle-finger gesture of good faith. We began having constant contact, ambushes and booby traps. The last month of my tour was pretty constant, war as war is, and the consolation of Paris Peace Talk successes was lost in the perspective of the ever-present reality.

Now, I hear talk of good-faith gestures to the Taliban; maybe Iran, North Korea and al-Qaida. Obviously, all judged to be more trustworthy, honest and reliable than the NVA were; or are we just as dumb and naïve as we were in the '60s and incapable of learning from history? Tough call. We abandoned the South Vietnamese people, but saved face; that worked out really well. Now we are abandoning the people of Iraq and Afghanistan as a re-election ploy. Hopefully, the elections will get us leaders who have the guts to make the right decisions and actually lead.

Capt R. D. Ramsay, USMC  
Steger, Ill.

## Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, A Purple Heart?

I agree with Lance Corporal Franklin O'Rourke's basic contention that the award of the Purple Heart to every individual exposed to the horrors of war, and who has felt emotions such as LCpl O'Rourke listed in the February issue of *Leatherneck*'s "Sound Off," would not be appropriate.

But I believe there should be exceptions to that rule. Just as there is a wide range in the degree of physical trauma suffered by those whose bodies have been torn and concussed in war, so there is a wide range in the degree of damage suffered by those with post-traumatic stress disorder, including many with no outward signs of physical harm.

Some returning combat veterans have

suffered serious mental and emotional damage and, because of those injuries, are not likely to live what most of us consider normal lives. Don't we owe those individuals something more? I believe that in such cases the award of a Purple Heart and comprehensive government-funded professional intervention and care is morally indicated. We owe them that much.

William P. Crozier  
USMC, Korea, 1951  
North Weymouth, Mass.

I take umbrage to the comments of Lance Corporal Frank O'Rourke. He made rather cavalier comments with regard to post-traumatic stress disorder and those of us suffering with it. I am not advocating that the Purple Heart be awarded to those suffering with PTSD.

PTSD is recognized as a disease and an injury. I suggest that LCpl O'Rourke and others with this nonchalant stance check out "Tears of a Warrior" by Vietnam veteran E. Anthony Seahorn and his wife, Dr. Janet Seahorn. It is a great book for veterans and their families. It doesn't matter which war or what the circumstances, PTSD exists and has existed throughout history with other names.

SSgt Dennis N. Schwarten  
USMC, 1966-69  
Grafton, Wis.

• *Former LCpl Gary L. Hamilton, former Sgt Paul D. Smith and retired Capt Robert W. Tuleya all stated that veterans with PTSD need and must receive help, but not a Purple Heart.—Sound Off Ed.*

## When Possible, Let's Get Back to Service Uniforms

Marines always have been the standard to which everything else is compared. What happened?

Today's world is definitely upside down when compared to the past. In the February issue of *Leatherneck*, there were comments about gate guards in "cammies" instead of service uniform. Years ago gate guards always wore an appropriate uniform, complete with a sidearm.

Today, we are wearing this 9/11 thing to death. Gate guards are the first impression one has upon arriving at a Marine installation. They should look like Marines. A properly uniformed and armed guard should be capable of responding to a terror threat. Marine security guards at embassies are always prepared for those trying to violate U.S. sovereign ground. We were ready and sharp years ago. When we were on duty, we looked like Marines.

In the February issue there was a photo



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**MARINE RESERVE**



on page 50 of Brigadier General Loretta Reynolds, Commanding General, Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C., and Master Sergeant Ramon Gallimore cutting the ribbon for the 6th Marine Corps District's new Recruiting Historic Exhibit, both wearing "cammies." Absolutely, not the time to be wearing utilities.

We are out of step with our traditions that caused greatness: no self-control, no personal responsibility, no craftsmanship, no pride, all excuses.

Cpl Greg Lordi  
USMC, 1967-69  
St. Regis Falls, N.Y.

In the February issue there were letters asking what happened to our uniform of the day? Additionally, there was a picture of Lieutenant General Richard P. Mills [in camouflage utilities] awarding Silver Stars to two outstanding Marines. The picture was taken at the National Museum of the Marine Corps, Triangle, Va.

Utilities are for field use and on base where the work environment requires. To see Marines off base and/or in public appearances in utilities is not a Marine Corps tradition. We have the best-looking and most distinctive uniform of all the services.

I firmly believe, and I am not speaking

only of my opinion, but many others, that our senior command and noncommissioned officers have to start setting the rules. The public expects our Marines to be the epitome of what military personnel should look like. If they can't abide by this, then use civilian clothes as opposed to utilities. As an example, I brought this to the attention of a two-star general after he showed up at several public events in his utilities. He never realized what the public reaction would be if he showed up at a public/semiformal affair in utilities. The American public has a hard time distinguishing our servicemembers when they are in utilities. They always know when they see a Marine in the uniform of the day.

Let's hope our senior leadership will come down hard on the use of utilities in public and off base.

Col Peter J. O'Hagan, USMC (Ret)  
Morristown, N.J.

While I abhor the use of utilities in a Stateside environment other than for training, I found as a platoon commander, company first sergeant, company training officer, and officer of the guard, etc., that the wearing of utilities evoked a standard of alertness and readiness to do combat in protection of government property, mil-

itary personnel and weapons and ammunition storage areas.

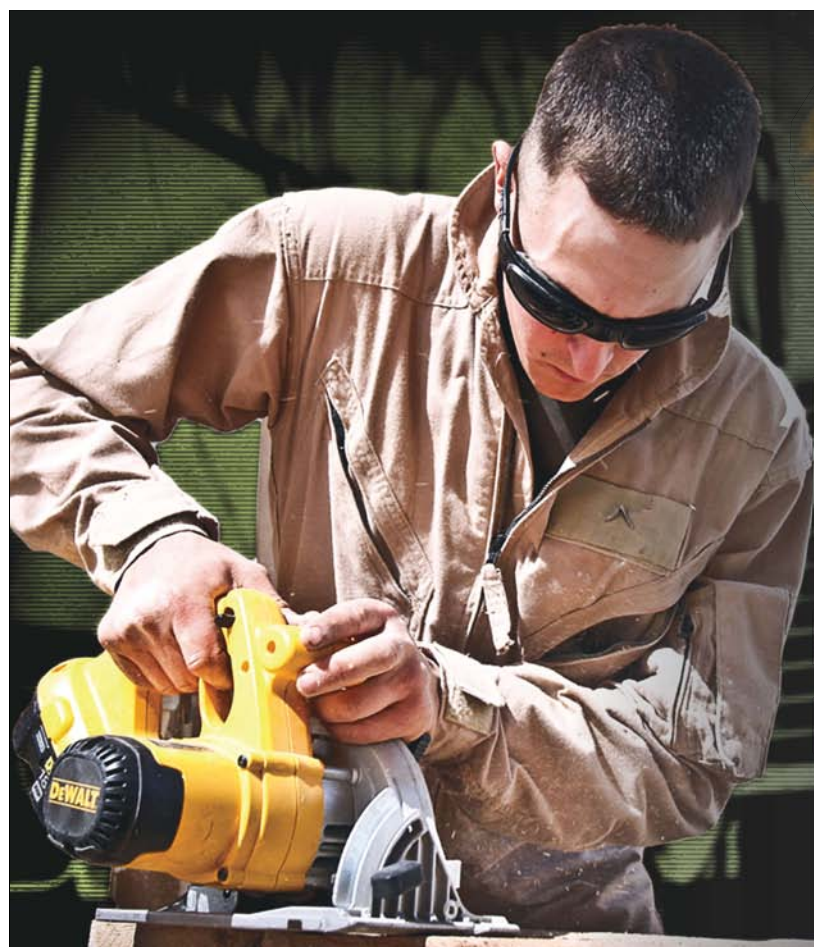
I also found that while doing guard support to airport security in times of emergency, the utility uniform caused several people to become more aware of their surroundings and to report suspicious packages to the guard force.

In times of national emergency and national threat from external forces to our nation, I concur with General Alfred M. Gray, 29th Commandant of the Marine Corps, that we should wear our ready-for-action Marine-pattern utilities whenever posted to a guard position, whether on base or off base, in support of local emergency entities.

Limit the use of service uniforms and dress uniforms to those places and times where such a dress uniform is required. A lightly pressed set of utilities with clean boots, squared-away cover, sharp haircut and clean shave says a lot about Marines.

GySgt John Hudson, USMC (Ret)  
Vancouver, Wash.

For a number of years I have hesitated to voice an opinion on uniforms now worn by Marines. I didn't want to sound like some old guy who thinks everything was better 60 years ago. That is not the case. Today's Marines are so well-trained, -con-



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ditioned and -equipped that I dare say they are probably the strongest force the Corps has ever put in the field.

Unfortunately, as was pointed out in the February issue of *Leatherneck* ["Sound Off"] by First Lieutenant Bernie Eveler and Sergeant John Cavallero, there seems to be a decline in the dress code.

We Marines are very lucky; we have two very handsome uniforms—blue dress and service "A" green uniforms. Not every Marine has an opportunity to wear blues on a regular basis, and I'm not suggesting any increased use. However, every Marine has a set of greens. When well-tailored and properly maintained, they are, in my opinion, the best-looking uniform worn by any of our military services.

While I'm on a roll, I'd also like to say that the blue trousers and short-sleeve shirts worn in the summer are a disgrace. Nothing about that uniform says to me: "There is a real squared-away-looking Marine."

I have a warm spot in my heart for the USMC. It taught me who I was and helped me to understand what I was capable of achieving in life. And, it does disturb this old man when I see our young men and women dressing down at all kinds of ceremonies, events and in public.

Sgt Art Gannon  
USMC, 1951-57  
Palm Coast, Fla.

• *LT Birney Dibble, MC, USNR (Ret); Capt Robert W. Tuleya, USMC (Ret); former Cpl William A. Blood; former Sgt Bob Zelloe and former Sgt James Richart all want to see a return to a service uniform of the day and less unnecessary wearing of camouflage Marine-pattern utility uniforms.—Sound Off Ed.*

### And While We're on Uniforms ...

My fellow Marines (inactive), and I are in contention over a simple issue that we hope you can clear up. Some of us believe that the old web belt with the brass buckle is still being used with the utility uniform. Others believe that it has been replaced by a green or beige "range"-type belt, with an anodized black buckle. We would greatly appreciate your expertise on this topic.

Cpl Brad Larkins  
USMC, 1967-71  
Prineville, Ore.

• *I went to "The Man" of the Marine Corps Association & Foundation, Sergeant Major Kevin Bennett, USMC (Ret), for the answer. It has to do with the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program and degrees of belts. SgtMaj Bennett said: "In a nutshell, recruits are required to be tan [-belted] upon graduation. So by Marine*



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the command-and-control structure of a large group of officers in the field.

A month later my supervisor stopped to talk to me. He asked, "Weren't you in the Marines, and what did you do?" I responded that I had been in the Fleet Marine Force and spent a tour at Parris Island, S.C., as a drill instructor. His face displayed a slight smile and he said, "How would you like to be on Troop D's riot squad?" I responded in the affirmative, and things from that point on took off.

I was charged with teaching troopers how to march, how to go into various riot formations and generally look good. I formed them into fire teams and squads patterned after the Marine Corps. For several years I had complete charge of the training curriculum of our troop and led them in many responses to civil disturbances. The structure and training of the riot squads were adopted in the other nine troops.

The participation in the development of riot squads was the catapult for a successful career with the FHP, and my last assignment was as Training Center Director at the FHP Training Academy with the rank of major. I reflect back from time to time about whether there is a need for Marine veterans and drill instructors in civilian life, and I can say emphatically, "You're darn right there is!"

The experience and leadership skills taught in the Marine Corps are invaluable and applicable in civilian life.

Edward R. Hagler  
USMC, 1954-58  
FHP, 1960-90  
Orlando, Fla.

## Viet Vets and Viet-Era Vets

The letter of Sergeant Joe Doyle, "Is There a Difference Between a Vietnam Vet and a Vietnam-Era Vet?" in the February issue, inspired me to write this letter. Let me say I'm not criticizing anything he wrote. These are strictly my thoughts from my nine years in the Corps.

The neighborhood I lived in as a child during World War II and the Korean War had a large number of men who were Marines. When I was 6, I saw in the Sunday paper the photograph of the Marines raising the flag on Mount Suribachi. At that moment, I knew someday I would be a Marine. In my mind, all Marines were "grunts," although I had never heard the term as a kid.

I really didn't know those Marines other than they were the fathers, uncles or big brothers of some of my friends. I never sat with them and talked about their Marine Corps experiences until after I was a Marine. But I was proud to know them. One of those Marines was a friend of my

## ORIGINAL ISSUE



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## Employers Are Always Looking For Marine Corps Leadership

When my four-year tour ended with the Marines in 1958, I ventured into civilian life wondering what demand there would be for a Marine veteran and drill instructor.

I made application with the Florida Highway Patrol (FHP), and after extensive testing and a background investigation, I was invited to attend the Florida Highway Patrol Recruit Training Academy. Upon graduating, I was assigned to Orlando.

The tumultuous 1960s were beginning and civil disorder was rampant. The FHP was ordered to dispatch a large number of troopers to northeast Florida to maintain law and order during a major demonstration. I was not sent, because at 6 feet and 160 pounds, I was considered a little fellow compared to the other troopers. The FHP's operation was generally successful, but inadequacies surfaced in



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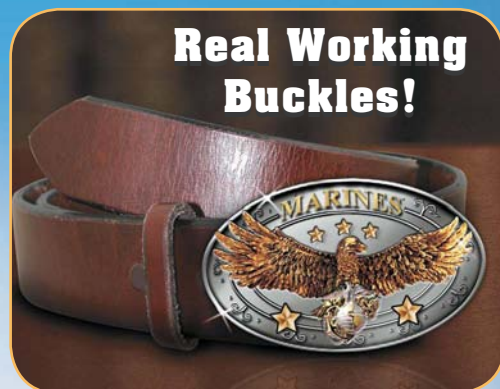
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father, and I found out after I was in the Corps that he had served with the 1st Marine Raider Battalion.

On my 17th birthday, I enlisted. At graduation, our drill instructor gave us our assignments. I was assigned to the aviation school at Jacksonville, Fla.

I was shocked. I did not want to go into aviation, I wanted to be a grunt. I asked permission to speak with the drill instructor and told him I didn't want to go into aviation because I wanted to go into the infantry. He told me in no uncertain terms and a very loud voice that I would go where the Marine Corps needed me and to never question a legal order.

From that moment, I never did question an order. Nevertheless, I guess because I wanted to be in the infantry, I never felt that comfortable in aviation. I fully understood the mission of aviation, and in my nine years serving the Corps, I spent some time on flight duty as a crew member and did a lot of things I'm proud of.

When I read Sgt Doyle's letter, it made me wonder if the Marines who serve in infantry units look at Marines who serve in the air wing the same as themselves? I know we are all "brother Marines" and will be for life, but I'm just curious.

Former Cpl Frank Murphy  
Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

I requested mast to get into the "grunts." I had two years of college. They wanted me to be in the military police, or in the office.

Sergeant Joe Doyle wrote: "What does trouble me, however, is a tendency among some Vietnam veterans—all branches of the armed forces—to distinguish between those who served in country and those who did not, by using the terms 'Vietnam vet' or 'Vietnam-era vet.' "

It used to be that a vet was at least in country in a war.

And why not distinguish?

The grunts did their share of looking for trouble!

Former Marine David Torrel

F/2/9

Eveleth, Minn.

This is in regard to Vietnam vet vs. Vietnam-era vet in Sergeant Joe Doyle's letter. With all due respect to the "Sound Off" editor, I do not agree that the writer was a little overly sensitive. In fact, he appears to me to support the Vietnam-era vet.

I enlisted in the Corps in 1954. I then attended college and earned my degree under the GI Bill. I have been referred to as a Korean-era vet, which is OK with me. However, when the state of Pennsylvania came out with a Korean War license plate, my request for this plate was denied because my DD-214 did not show I had served in Korea. Perhaps I should repay the U.S. government for my tuition, with interest? It is no big deal, but obviously there is a difference.

In response to the letter in the February issue regarding civilian police officers,

I have the following comments. As one who served in the guard company at the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard, having stood watch on the main gate, I can vouch for the professional bearing we maintained despite the many bizarre events that took place on our watch.

Several years ago, I was invited aboard USS *John F. Kennedy* (CV-67) after she completed her last refit at Philadelphia. I took this opportunity to once again stand at my old post while the memories of the sights and sounds passed before me. The guard shack was boarded up, and I remembered how we used to clear our ".45s" before entering at the conclusion of our watch.

At the time of my visit, the "rental cops" then standing my old post were the most pathetic bunch of civilians I have ever seen. I also observed the same scene at Washington Navy Yard. I truly hope that those who are now referred to as "Civilian Marines" are of a higher caliber. Am I alone in being just a tad sensitive regarding those who "claim the title"?

Dave Dickson

USMC, 1954-62

Reading, Pa.

### The Flag Raising Over Tarawa

I have a picture of Old Glory when it was about to be raised over Tarawa.

I was with Company G, 2d Battalion, Sixth Marine Regiment as a corporal, and we mixed in with other Marines to see the flag run up. This photo was in the Second Marine Division newsletter, "Follow Me."

Sgt Gordon Spencer

USMC, 1942-46

Citrus Heights, Calif.



It was Nov. 24, 1943, when Marines of the 2dMarDiv hoisted the colors on a topless coconut palm. On another palm, the "Union Jack" also went up, as the Gilbert Islands had been a British mandate.



Retired Maj Norm Hatch [who was responsible for most of the footage and photography on Tarawa] asked if I had seen a photo of the flag raising.

I thought you'd like to see it.

Susan Strange  
Independent Researcher  
National Archives  
Washington, D.C.

• This is the same photo Sgt Spencer copied from his newsletter and forwarded. Thanks all.—Sound Off Ed.

## Reunions

Reunions are run on a space-available basis. Information should be submitted no later than four months in advance of the reunion.

• **3dMarDiv Assn.**, Aug. 21-26, San Diego. Contact GySgt Don H. Gee, USMC (Ret), P.O. Box 254, Chalfont, PA 18914, (215) 822-9094, gygee@aol.com, www.caltrap.com.

• **5thMarDiv Assn. (WW II, RVN)**, Aug. 26-31, Reno, Nev. Contact LtCol Thomas Kalus, USMC (Ret), 98-1927 Wilou St., Aiea, HI 96701, (808) 486-5004, or Dale Pack, 32175 S.W. Laurel Rd., Hillsboro, OR 97123, (503) 545-7899,  
[continued on page 69]

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# THE WAR ON TERROR

Edited by R. R. Keene

## OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM

### ■ Patrol Base Habib

#### 2/4 Charges Alekhine's Gun, "Wildly Successful"

Together with their Afghan National Army partners, leathernecks from 2d Battalion, Fourth Marine Regiment conducted Operation Alekhine's Gun in Musa Qal'ah District, Afghanistan.

The "Magnificent Bastards," as the Marines of 2/4 are known, launched a heli-borne and motorized night raid into areas suspected of housing improvised explosive device (IED) production training camps and drug-running operations. The raid was intended to disrupt these operations and search for high-value personnel.

"We used our night vision and speed to surprise them," said Company G First Sergeant Adam Bala. "We ... caught them off guard. There was some initial resistance, but we overcame it quickly."

The Marines seized a deserted police compound as a command post and then searched all buildings in the city to find weapons caches. The speed and timing of the initial push was used to confuse and disrupt insurgents from effectively counterattacking. Several enemy fighters abandoned their weapons and fled. Some of them attacked the Marines with indirect fire, but quickly were overwhelmed.

During the exchange, Marines took shelter in a nearby building and found an IED training facility. The house had a large amount of explosives and various triggering devices.

"This area has a history of corruption and enemy occupation," said Captain Tad Drake, "Golf" Co commander. "The enemy forced the police out. By our taking back ... the police station, we're sending a message."

During the operation, the Marines captured enemy personnel and confiscated numerous enemy weapons caches and even 150 pounds of black-tar heroin. The laundry list of recovered enemy weapons included rocket-propelled grenade launchers, rifles and machine guns with thousands of rounds of ammunition and homemade explosives. The heroin had an estimated value of between \$100,000 and \$175,000 per kilogram.

"This operation was wildly successful. It was beyond all expectations; we were able to disrupt insurgents and give the ANA some breathing space," said Lieutenant Colonel Bill Vivian, the battalion commanding officer. "We seriously interfered with their ability to fight and their funding source. They were caught completely by surprise."

"I was able to celebrate my 25th an-

niversary in the Marines by blowing up an IED training camp," Vivian said, smiling.

While the country remains sometimes dangerous and uncertain, steps toward a peaceful and stable government are being made. The presence of the Marines is supported by many of the local villages that have long been threatened and intimidated by the thuggish tactics of the enemy. Noticeable progress has been made with the government, allowing for free elections and the building of schools, hospitals and roads as provinces continue to improve their infrastructure.

"We're here to separate the enemy from the people and to get the government close to the people," said the battalion gunner, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Fred Keeney.

SSgt Robert Storm

Combat Correspondent, RCT-6

### ■ Sangin Tufaan

#### Marines Rescue Afghan Policeman From Collapsed Building

In January leathernecks with 3d Battalion, Seventh Marine Regiment pulled two Afghan police from the rubble of a collapsed building in Sangin Tufaan, Afghanistan.

During a routine key leader engagement with Afghan National Civil Order Police Mentorship Team Two (PMT-II), the Marines found themselves in a situation that was anything but routine.

An overwatch post, constructed out of sandbags on top of a three-story hardened structure, collapsed into itself due to recent inclement weather and buried two ANCOPs inside. Upon hearing the commotion from the wreck, Marines ran to investigate.

"I was in one of the vehicles that were providing security when it all started," said Corporal William Weeks, team leader, PMT-II. "I ran to the roof when I heard all the noise. I saw the post had collapsed through two or three stories. I ran down the stairs to try and help."

While Weeks was running down to help, he found concertina wire and fallen lockers blocking his path.

"We just started moving all the stuff out of the way—the c-wires [communication wires], lockers, sandbags, everything," he continued. "I didn't know at the time





CPL BRANDON RODRIGUEZ

**Marines with Police Mentorship Team, Regimental Combat Team 6 stand where they recovered two members of the ANCOP in Sangin, when the roof collapsed burying the two policemen earlier this year. While the leathernecks were able to pull both men from the rubble, one died later.**

if there were people there. I just started trying to clear everything out.”

More Marines with PMT-II rushed quickly to the aid of the trapped policemen. Gunnery Sergeant James Fuentes, staff noncommissioned officer in charge, PMT-II, instructed the Marines to stop temporarily with the search-and-rescue until the ANCOP policemen observing from the roof were cleared. Fuentes then directed Weeks to begin the casualty evacuation process.

When Weeks ran to the vehicles to gather litters, he told other Marines about what had happened and they ran to assist.

Cpl Travis Sears, team leader, PMT-II, said, “Corporal Weeks was telling us what happened, and I ran towards the building with one of the stretchers.”

According to Weeks, they found the first casualty within four minutes of the incident. The Marines and a Navy corpsman instantly began to check his vitals to see how he was doing.

“I could tell he was in pretty bad shape just by looking at him. We knew he needed medical attention,” said Cpl Terry Still. “I was in a separate part of the building when it collapsed. We ran in to see what

happened, and I saw ‘Gunny’ [Fuentes] yelling into the rubble to see if anyone was trapped. We just started pulling the sandbags off. Once we found out there were two ANCOP trapped, all I thought about was getting the bags off.”

The first injured person was pulled from the rubble and was immediately taken to a casualty collection point. Hospitalman Jared Smith deemed the casualty stable while the others continued to search for the second victim.

Smith found the second casualty with no vital signs.

Both casualties were put in an ambulance and then rushed to Forward Operating Base Jackson for an evaluation at the battalion aid station. The first casualty was flown to Camp Bastion for further evaluation.

The second casualty was confirmed dead by the medical officer at FOB Jackson.

“The Marines gave the notice that something had happened, and it was basically autopilot from there,” said Fuentes. “Their training came into play right there. Everything was like clockwork.”

Cpl Ed Galo

Combat Correspondent, RCT-6

## ■ Garmsir

### Never a Bridge Too Far: Combat Engineers Increase Mobility In Helmand Province

During the last week of January, 55 Marines of Bridge Platoon, Company A, 9th Engineer Support Battalion, Second Marine Logistics Group (Forward) traveled



CPL BRYAN INGLAND

**Marines of Bridge Plt, Co A, 9th ESB employ a welding torch to separate two 40-foot steel I-beams used during the construction of a bridge near COP Rankel in the Garmsir District, Jan. 29.**





Bridge Plt uses an excavator during the construction of a bridge that will increase mobility for Marines operating in the area. (Photo by Cpl Bryan Nygaard)

**Below left:** LCpl Dan Schergen, a metal worker, welds another bolt into place on the bridge near COP Rankel. The Marines convoyed for five days to reach the bridge site and begin construction.

**Below right:** LCpl Fredis Coreas (left) and LCpl Nathan Morningstar prove it still takes Marines wielding picks and shovels to build a bridge or just about anything else in Afghanistan.



CPL BRYAN NYGAARD



CPL BRYAN NYGAARD

nearly 80 miles through the central portion of Helmand province in order to reach Combat Outpost Rankel, a small base located in the Garmsir District.

Their mission consisted of removing a medium girder bridge and replacing it with a more permanent and cost-efficient structure that would increase the mobility of the Marines and Afghans.

Getting to the bridge site was half the battle. The Marines convoyed from Camp Leatherneck to Rankel in armored vehicles carrying more than 100,000 pounds of construction equipment and

building materials on roads that were unpaved. The convoy was held up several times when vehicles got stuck and because of threats from possible improvised explosive devices. As a result, the convoy took nearly five days to reach a destination that would take 30 minutes by helicopter.

The Marines, many of whom were packed tightly together while wearing their body armor, slept sitting up inside the armored vehicles, while others stood watch in the gun turrets.

"You go to sleep for a few hours, you wake up, you get all the energy drinks

you can, and you're good-to-go. You'll be good for the day," said Lance Corporal Rodolfo Lopezsoza, a combat engineer.

After arriving at Rankel, the Marines bedded down and headed out to the bridge site early the next morning.

The site was a few minutes' drive from Rankel and near an observation post occupied by Afghan National Police. The bridge was built over a large creek, enhancing the mobility of the leathernecks of "India" Co, 3d Battalion, Third Marine Regiment, who operate out of Rankel.

Before breaking ground on the site,



the Marines used minesweepers to clear the area and make it safe to work and maneuver heavy equipment. Once the area had been deemed safe, the Marines unloaded their tools.

First, sections of earth on both sides of the ditch were removed with an excavator. Marines followed up with muscles, using shovels and pickaxes to break up some of the harder ground and then used a tractor to finish it off. Using a dirt tamper, they leveled off the ground in order to begin laying the concrete footers that served as the bridge's foundation. They then hooked cables to the footers, which weighed several hundred pounds, and used an excavator to set them in place.

While the majority of Bridge Plt was working, several of the Marines provided security overwatch from the gun turrets of the armored vehicles.

When LCpl Jesus Penagraves, in the turret of an armored vehicle, felt tired or sleepy, he said he would look toward the bridge site, where his fellow Marines were working. "One of the things that went through my mind was, 'Man, it must suck working out there.' I'm just standing up in the turret and I'm tired. They got it rough. They're doing all the manual labor."

Winds cooled the Marines as they worked through the night. Using the headlights on the heavy equipment, the Marines were able to move the rest of the bridge into place. By dawn, the bridge was almost complete.

Even though the Marines were rotated on and off of the bridge site, no one got more than five hours of sleep. Sergeant Joseph Redman, a squad leader, put in 29 straight hours of work that had him directing heavy equipment, guiding the Marines and doing quality control until First Lieutenant Matt Paluta, the commander of Bridge Plt, told him to get some sleep.

When the Marines were finished constructing the bridge, they went to work disassembling the medium girder bridge that already was in place. The parts of the bridge will be sent back to Marine Corps Logistics Base Albany, Ga., and used for training.

"You're looking at a major difference," said 1stLt Paluta. "We put in a permanent structure for \$60,000 and took out a temporary bridge that costs a couple million dollars. To pull that off with the quality of workmanship that we did ... our attention to detail was never lacking. We made it a quality product for both the Marines and for the Afghan people."

"In my eyes, this is an engineer's war," said Staff Sergeant Brian Glory. "The mobility issues in this country are horrible. Combat engineers are a force multi-



**HM3 Michael Soto (inset) also is pictured (above, far right) leading litter bearers to a landing zone to evacuate an injured Marine. For the past year, Soto has been the primary corpsman for the Marines in Bridge Plt, Co A, 9th ESB. (Photo by Cpl Bryan Nygaard)**

plier. ... We enhance the mobility for these units to be able to go in and establish a foothold [in] whatever area they are trying to go to. That's really Bridge Platoon's mission at this point: enhancing the mobility of whatever unit we need to."

Cpl Bryan Nygaard

Combat Correspondent, II MEF (Fwd)

### Corpsman Proves His Worth in Garmisir

During the late afternoon hours of Jan. 30, Marines with Bridge Platoon, Company A, 9th Engineer Support Battalion, Second Marine Logistics Group (Forward) were working hard to take apart a medium girder bridge in the rural district of Garmisir, Helmand province. During the disassembly, part of the bridge inadvertently gave way and landed on a Marine's leg, sending him to the ground, writhing in pain.

"Doc! Doc! Doc! Doc, get up here now!"

Sprinting to the scene with his medical bag was Hospital Corpsman Third Class Michael Soto. He knelt down next to the injured Marine and began to determine the extent to which his leg was damaged. His hands trembled slightly as he used his scissors to cut the Marine's trousers so the injury could be exposed.

"I told myself just to relax a little bit," said Soto. "I was shaking a little. Not because I was scared. I was just kind of hyped up like, 'Yeah! Yeah!' Like this is my time. I get to finally do something. It was exciting in a way."



CPL BRYAN NYGAARD

Once he determined the Marine had suffered a closed fracture, Soto grabbed some splints out of his medical bag. After setting the Marine's leg, giving him medicine to dull the pain and taking his vitals, Soto began joking with his patient. "Now you're going to be on light duty for the rest of the deployment. You're going to be our new clerk."

During this time, the commander of Bridge Plt had coordinated a medical evacuation. Less than 30 minutes later, a Black Hawk helicopter landed in a field next to the bridge site. The injured Marine was placed on a litter and carried by his fellow Marines toward the air ambulance with Soto leading the way.

"That was almost a textbook medevac," said Staff Sergeant Brian Glory, the staff noncommissioned officer in charge of Bridge Plt, "the way Doc Soto took care of everything and really controlled the site. He handled his business. He did his job extremely well."

The 21-year-old Soto has come a long way in his three years since joining the Navy.

In order to fit in with the Marines, Soto,





MGSgt PHIL MEHRINGER

**Maj Erich Bergiel, along with Abdul Rahman, a renewable energy engineer, inspects solar panels on the roof of Marjah Fruit and Vegetable Packing Facility.**

who is naturally cheerful and outgoing, had to embrace the unique culture.

"Everyone talks trash to each other," he said. "You just kind of take it. I just got used to it. It's kind of a bond. I started talking trash back. I became one of them."

In addition to prescribing aspirin, patching up small cuts and pulling splinters, Soto frequently tries to help out with the labor-intensive work his friends are engaged in when they are building bridges.

First Lieutenant Matt Paluta, the commander of Bridge Plt, said he believes that Soto's actions have given the Marines peace of mind for the rest of the deployment.

"It wasn't a major injury, but [Soto] definitely proved his worth," said Paluta. "It's one of those things when Marines see ... their Doc performing that well under pressure; it breeds confidence. 'Hey, Doc's got our back—he knows his stuff. ... Hey, Doc Soto's around. We know he can do it.' "

Cpl Bryan Nygaard

Combat Correspondent, II MEF (Fwd)

## **■ Marjah** **Solar-Powered Packing Facility** **Expands Farmers' Distribution,** **Delivers Produce to Larger Market**

Construction of a new Afghanistan produce packing plant, the Marjah Fruit and Vegetable Packing Facility, complete with a solar-powered cold storage facility, recently was finished, inspected and now is ready for business.

The Marjah plant could change the supply-and-demand economic model for area farmers.

Marjah lies just east of the Helmand

River, which provides the necessary water, through an intricate network of canals, to grow a variety of crops year-round. But local farmers struggle to deliver their produce to distant markets.

Major Erich Bergiel, project supervisor and member of the Regional Command Southwest Economic Development section, related the problem of getting produce to market in an Afghan parable: "Put fresh pomegranate in the back of your truck and on the way to market it turns into pomegranate jelly."

The scorching heat in Helmand province is prolific, often reaching above 130 degrees Fahrenheit during the main harvest season. As a result, fresh fruits and vegetables have a very short life span, resulting in limited shelf life and transportability.

"The new building has the potential to change the current paradigm in the produce market," Bergiel said. The major and his team recently conducted a final inspection on the facility, which has been under construction since May 2010.

The plant will provide local farmers a controlled environment in which to clean, store and distribute their produce, helping farmers to better market their homegrown fruits and vegetables, and perhaps build a profit-generating business.

Under the old system, farmers harvested their produce and took it to the local bazaar to sell immediately. The problem with this system was that bulk quantities of fresh produce would arrive at the bazaars in the morning and lose their freshness and value as the day progressed.

Smart customers waited, purchasing produce at the end of the day and bargain-

ing a much lower price, leaving farmers with little profit.

The new system, utilizing the cleaning, sorting, cold-storage, then distribution process, eliminates an oversupply of produce arriving at the bazaar, while expanding the farmer's selling base, enabling them to generate a profit by selling fresher goods to a larger market.

At the heart of the new facility is a solar-powered cooling system, generating approximately 12,000 watts of electricity that provides a cooling capacity of 40 degrees Fahrenheit. The system is capable of running on both alternating and direct currents.

Bergiel, a Reserve Marine from Carrollton, Ga., who teaches management at the University of West Georgia, said the Marjah packing plant is the first of its kind in Helmand province.

"We hope to use this facility as a pilot [program] to determine appropriateness and feasibility of the construction of similar facilities throughout Afghanistan."

This concept and technology are new for Afghan farmers. Bergiel said the local economic supply-and-demand chain will be significantly impacted in a positive direction for farmers using this facility.

Farmers will unload their produce at one end of the brightly colored, 1,800-square-foot facility where it is washed, disinfected and separated by quality, grade and size.

After grading and sizing, produce is moved into the cold-storage area on the other side of the building to be cooled. After cooling, fruits and vegetables will be loaded into trucks bound for distant distribution points.

Bergiel said the plant is a part of a more intricate "hub-and-spoke" model of distribution system connecting outlying production to a central location where larger quantities of produce are collected and distributed.

Five facilities will be built in Helmand province, acting as the "spokes" of the distribution wheel, while the central or hub facility will be located in Gereshk.

Now that construction and inspection of the Marjah plant is completed, Afghans have responsibility for the new facility. There will be a learning curve Bergiel cautioned.

"But the local farmers are adaptive and extremely capable of taking the reins of this facility and making it successful," he said.

"It would be nice to one day be back in the States and pick up a container of fruit labeled '[Grown and] packaged in Afghanistan.' "

MGSgt Phil Mehringer

Combat Correspondent, II MEF (Fwd)





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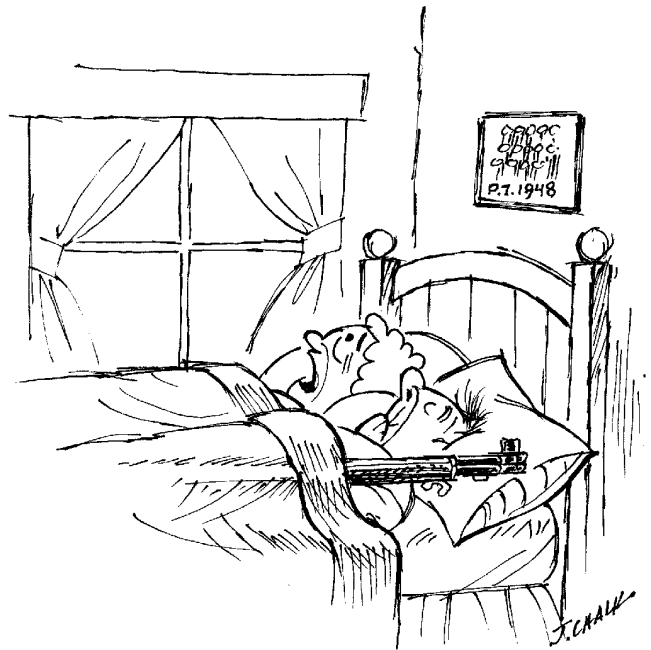




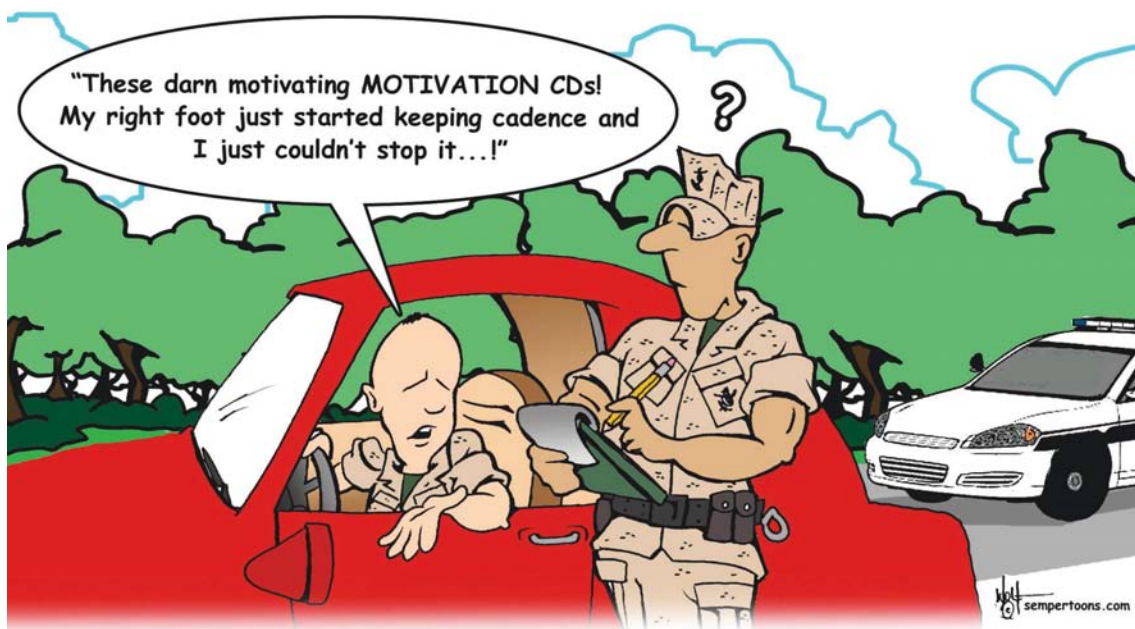
# Leatherneck Laffs



"I'm considering working from home a couple days a week, but I'd miss the lively office atmosphere."



"After 64 years I'm sure even your old DI would agree it's time to get rid of that damned M1 rifle."





"Daddy just called. He made sergeant."



"Quick! In here! I found a McDonald's serving Happy Meals."



"It's called déjà moo:  
The odd feeling I've heard this bull before."





U.S. NAVAL HISTORICAL CENTER

On 20 April 1861, as Confederate forces threatened the Gosport Navy Yard (now known as Norfolk Navy Yard), *USS Pennsylvania* was burned to the waterline to prevent capture. Her wreck was salvaged and broken up.

## Seagoing Marines in the Battle of the Ironclads: *USS Monitor* vs. *CSS Virginia*, 8-9 March 1862

By Suzanne Pool-Camp and Dick Camp

Part I of a two-part article

### Prologue

The war had started badly for the Union. By 14 April 1861, Fort Sumter had fallen, six states had seceded and Virginia was tottering on the brink. Captain Charles S. McCauley, USN, the commander of the Norfolk Navy Yard (then called Gosport Navy Yard), was caught between a rock and a hard place. He had orders to “do nothing to upset the Virginians,” yet his command was surrounded by a hostile population that was itching to get its hands on the machine shops and naval supplies stockpiled in the yard.

Within days, 13 of his 21 officers “went south” (joining the Confederacy), workmen walked off the job and his security

*“It was the greatest fire  
I ever saw, nine ships,  
dry docks and  
all the buildings.”*

*—Pvt Daniel O’Connor*

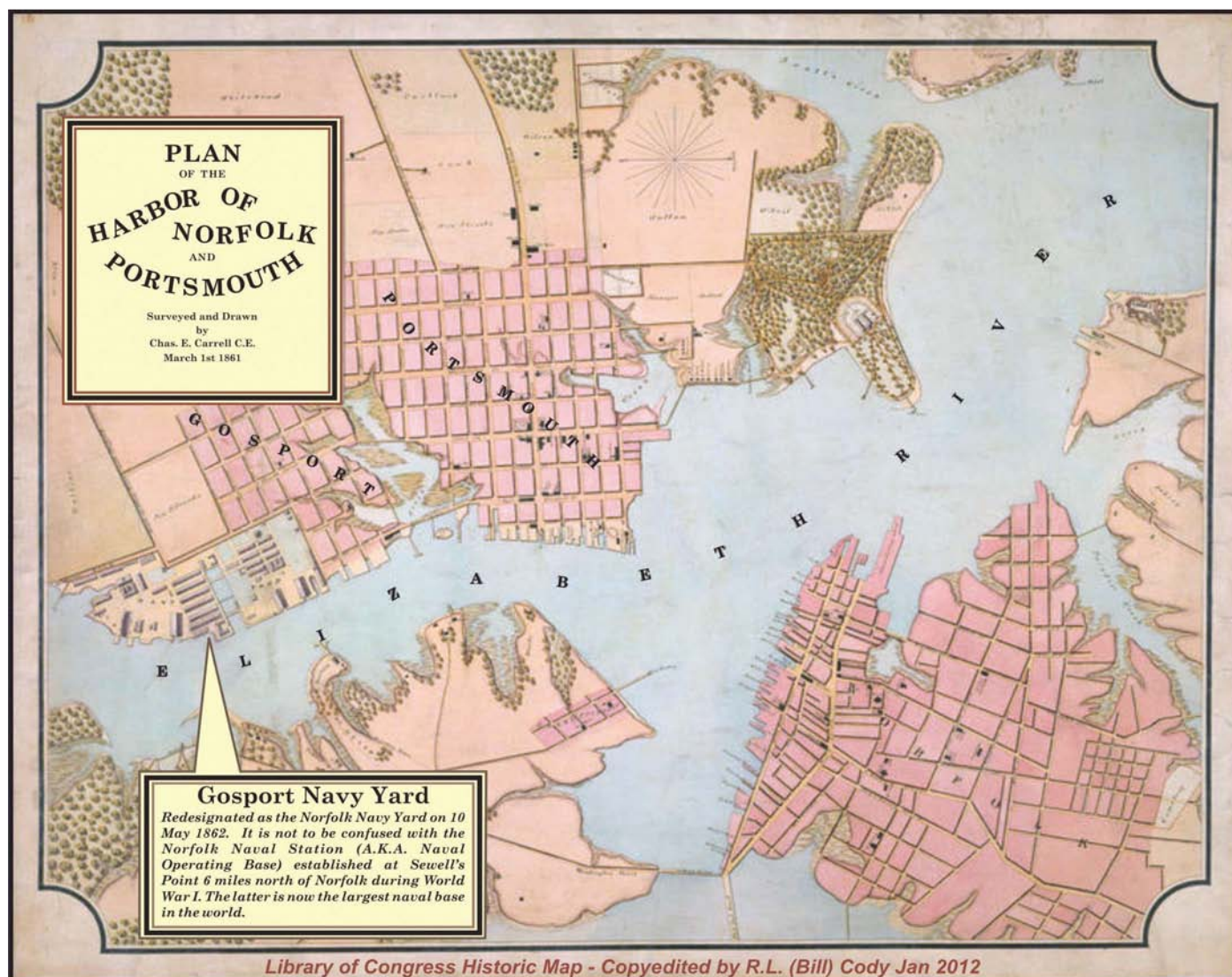
force abandoned their posts. Four U.S. Marines joined the exodus—Capt Jabez C. Rich, First Lieutenant Adam N. Baker (appointed captain, Confederate States Marine Corps), a sergeant named Myers (appointed captain, Confederate States Army) and Private Julius F. Heileman (joined CSA).

The remaining members of the Marine

guard were insufficient to provide adequate security. Eyewitnesses reported that several local citizens made off with small arms they had stolen. Second Lieutenant Charles Heywood (later ninth Commandant of the Marine Corps) and a party of Marines from *USS Cumberland* were landed to beef up security.

One of Heywood’s men, Pvt Daniel O’Connor, recalled, “We were in a bad position ... expecting to be attacked that night ... the Secesh [Confederates] had three batteries around us.”

On 17 April 1861, Virginia seceded from the Union, placing the befuddled McCauley in an untenable position. The yard could not be defended, and he could not let the precious equipment and supplies fall into rebel hands. On 20 April, he



gave the order to destroy the depot. The buildings were torched and nine warships burned and scuttled, including steam frigate USS *Merrimack*. (The ship's name often was misspelled as "Merrimac.")

"We opened her underwater valves and let her sink," Lieutenant Thomas O. Selfridge Jr., USN wrote. "She slowly sank till she grounded, with her gun deck a little out of water."

Marines aboard USS *Pawnee* arrived just after dark and immediately pitched in to help with the destruction. Pvt O'Connor was on one of the demolition parties. "We spiked all the guns ... broke the [small] arms and set fire to all the ships and buildings. ... It was the greatest fire I ever saw, nine ships, dry docks and all the buildings." A news reporter wrote, "The crackling flames and the glare of light inspired with new energies the destroying Marines."

Shortly after, the *Memphis Daily Appeal* reported that one man deserted. "A sergeant of Marines named Myers, knowing what was to take place, and not wishing to be carried off with his company, set fire to the barracks before the appointed



**As a young second lieutenant, Charles Heywood, later the ninth Commandant of the Marine Corps, was assigned to USS *Cumberland's* Marine Detachment. In the fight between *Cumberland* and CSS *Virginia* in March 1862, his conduct was particularly noteworthy while commanding the after gun deck division, firing the last gun in the fight and saving himself by jumping overboard as *Cumberland* sank with her flag flying.**

time, and endeavored to escape in the confusion. He succeeded, but was shot at several times while scaling the walls."

O'Connor and the rest of the Union force were able to escape aboard *Pawnee* and *Cumberland*. "We got out of the blockade by hard struggling," O'Connor recalled. "I lay on the gun deck ... with my gun by my side."

McCauley was charged with treason, cowardice and court-martialed for ordering the destruction of the Navy yard, but the damage had been done. The charges against McCauley subsequently were dismissed. However, most of the war material was recovered and used against Union forces.

Confederate records show that many of the cannon dumped into the water were recovered, as well as 2,800 barrels of gunpowder, 11,000 pounds of bread, 1,000 barrels of pork, 600 barrels of beef, tons of flour, sugar, rice and coffee and thousands of uniforms. Three of the sunken ships were raised, including *Merrimack*, which was refitted, clad with armor and renamed CSS *Virginia*.



## CSS Virginia

*"The possession of an iron-armored ship is a matter of the first necessity."*

—Stephen Russell Mallory  
Secretary of the Navy of the Confederacy

CSS *Virginia* originally was commissioned into the U.S. Navy as USS *Merrimack* in 1856. *Merrimack* was named after the river near where she was built. She was one of the largest steam frigates in the Navy—275 feet in length and 38 feet in width—with a complement of 320 men and 40 cannon. Her four boilers could propel her at nine knots. In her four years of service, *Merrimack* cruised the West Indies and served as the flagship of the Pacific Squadron.

When the war broke out, she was undergoing repairs at the yard, but could have escaped except for the timidity of McCauley. He refused to let her sail and instead ordered her scuttled and torched. At a cost of \$6,000, the Confederates raised the ship from the shallow water and found her to be salvageable, as only the upper works had been destroyed by the fire.

The shipyard workers were directed to turn the ship into an ironclad. They constructed a casemate that was sheathed with four inches of iron laid over two feet of solid oak and pine and sloped at a 36-degree angle to deflect shot. The yard also installed an iron ram, an anachronism for a warship at the time.

"She is the queerest looking thing I have ever seen. Looks like a house that is sunk with only the roof out of the water. All her decks are under water. She is thickly coated with iron, and she has a long ram on

her bow," one observer noted. Ten large-caliber cannon—a broadside battery of six nine-inch Dahlgren smoothbores, two 6.4-inch rifles and two seven-inch newly designed Brooke rifles that fired explosive shells—fleshed out her armament.

CAPT Franklin "Old Buck" Buchanan, CSN, commander of the ironclad, was hard-pressed to find qualified personnel to man the ship. Among those who responded to his call were the 55 men of

*"She is the queerest looking thing I have ever seen. Looks like a house that is sunk with only the roof out of the water."*

Company C, CSMC, under the command of Capt Reuben T. Thom, the first officer appointed to the fledgling organization (25 March 1861).

Colonel Lloyd J. Beall, Colonel-Commandant, CSMC, had ordered the company to Norfolk for the express purpose of guarding the installation. Thom's company arrived on 7 Dec. and immediately established security around *Merrimack*, trying to keep curious citizens and Northern spies from observing her upgrades.

Beall also ordered additional Marines to Norfolk: 1stLt James R. Y. Fendall and a detachment of 20 men to man the side-wheel steamer CSS *Jamestown* and 1stLt Richard H. Henderson, son of the for-

mer U.S. Marine Commandant Archibald Henderson, to command the detachment aboard the gunboat CSS *Patrick Henry*, a converted civilian steamer.

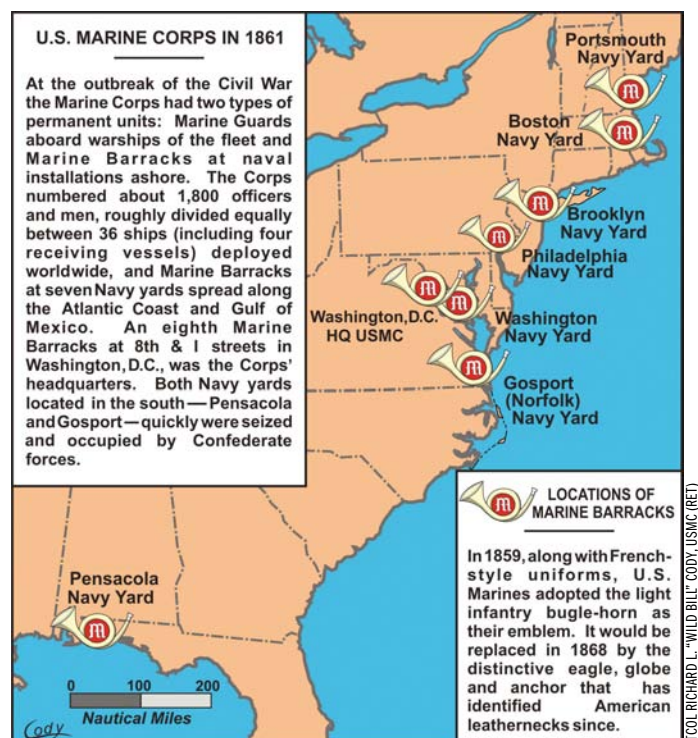
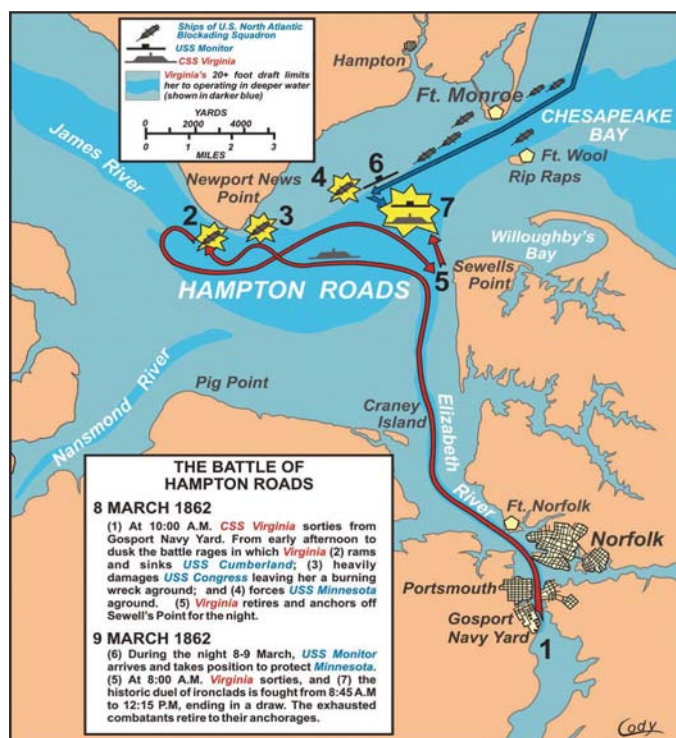
CAPT Buchanan quickly shanghaied Thom's men for duty aboard *Virginia*, assigning them to man two of the Dahlgren guns (No. 8 and No. 9) on the starboard battery. They were drilled every day for two weeks in the old frigate USS *United States* while *Merrimack* was undergoing remodeling.

The first and only practice these men received behind the guns of *Merrimack* was in battle when the ship went into action as CSS *Virginia*. They quickly gained a reputation as well-trained, competent gun crews under the watchful eyes of their officer and senior enlisted man, First Sergeant Jacob Scholls, a veteran of the Mexican War and the first noncommissioned officer to enlist in the CSMC.

On 13 Feb. 1862, *Virginia* officially was launched, but without the traditional commissioning ceremony. Capt Thom watched from the dry dock while a corporal and four Marines rode her down the ways.

"All of the other officers and men of the crew were aboard a school ship lying off the navy yard, and they did not come on board until the ship was commissioned," Pvt William Cline recalled.

"I was one of the five who did duty that day, and was stationed in the bow when the ship went down the ways into the water, she being then and there christened *Virginia*," Cline continued. "There were no invitations to governors and other distinguished men, no sponsor nor maid of honor, no bottle of wine, no brass band,





no blowing of steam whistles, no great crowds to witness this memorable event. The launching was accomplished quietly, only officers and men stationed at the navy yard witnessing it.”

## Blockade

*“She [CSS Virginia] will, in all probability, prove to be exceedingly formidable.”*

—Commodore Louis M. Goldsborough, USN

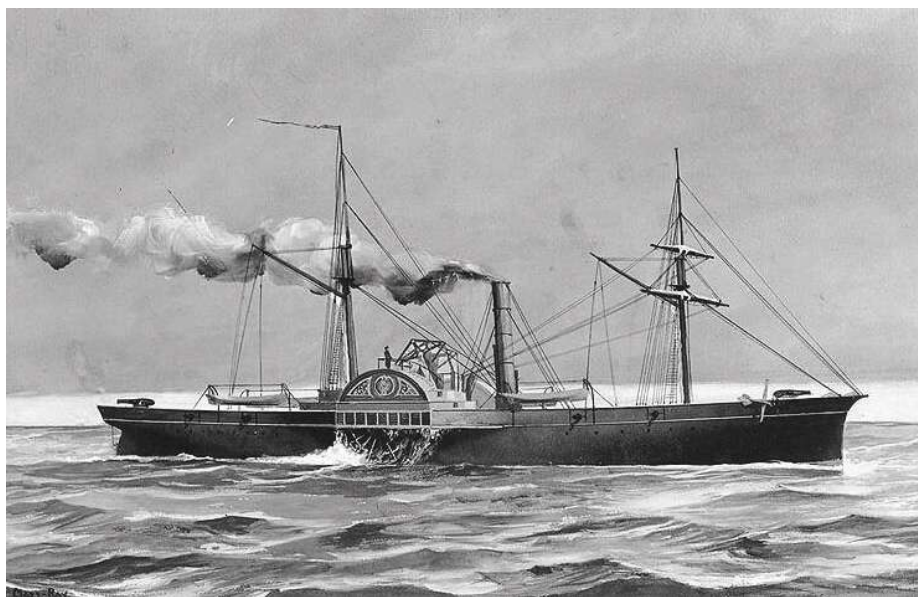
To counter the threat posed by *Virginia*, Commodore Louis Malesherbes Goldsborough, USN, commander of the North Atlantic Blockading Squadron, reinforced the Union flotilla in Hampton Roads, Va., by 2 March 1862. The heavily gunned armada consisted of two steam screw frigates, USS *Minnesota* (47 guns) and USS *Roanoke* (47 guns), and three sailing warships, USS *Congress* (50 guns), USS *St. Lawrence* (44 guns) and USS *Cumberland* (24 guns).

Despite the apparent strength of the fleet, there was some concern among the Union commanders about the Confederate ironclad. “We should only be a good target for them,” one noted. Nevertheless, the Union ships prepared for action. “The winter of 1861-62 was occupied on *Cumberland* in constant drill to meet every imaginable contingency,” LT Selfridge reported. “All the winter one watch slept on the guns, the ship nightly cleared for action ... solid shot had been supplied for the 9-inch guns, the normal charge increased from 10 to 13 pounds of powder, and the guns provided with double breechings to stand the increased recoil.”

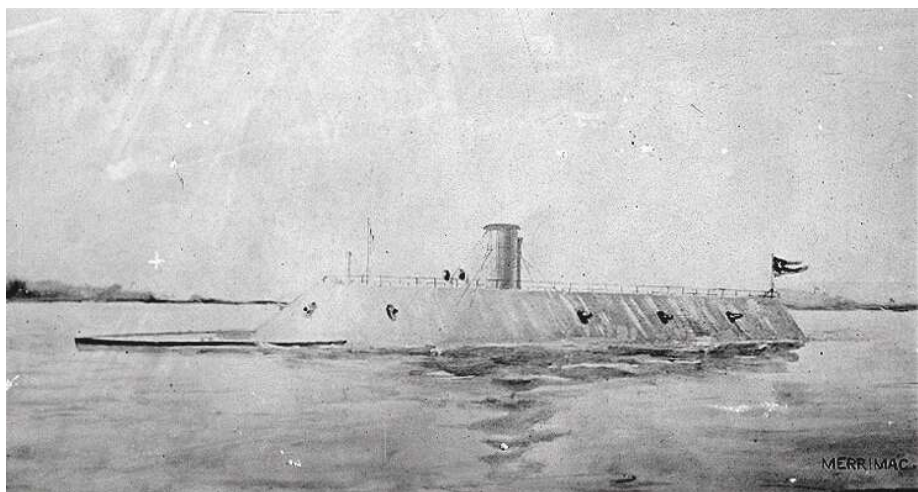
The winter was hard on the man-o’-wars, which rode at anchor waiting for *Virginia* to appear. “The weather was severe, no fires were allowed, and our enforced idleness became extremely irksome,” Selfridge complained. “We all looked forward to a relief in the spring, and a chance for active operations.” There were occasional forays that got the blood flowing. Pvt O’Connor wrote: “We took a prize today, the tug boat *Young America*. [She] was towing a schooner carrying Union prisoners and filled with guns and carriages for North Carolina.”

Lt Charles Heywood volunteered for a “cutting-out” expedition using boats from *Cumberland* to take an anchored enemy ship by surprise. The mission came to naught, but Heywood received recognition for volunteering.

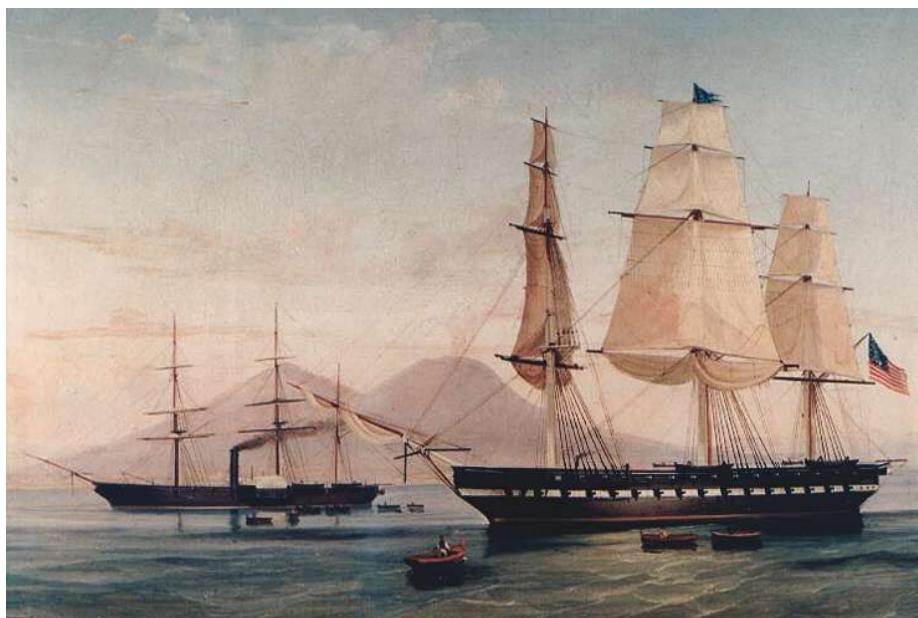
The Union wasn’t the only force out and about. In the early morning hours of 2 Dec. 1861, CSS *Patrick Henry* crept undetected toward the Federal ships anchored off Newport News, Va., and opened fire. The gutsy move caused little damage except to Federal pride. During the two-



In mid-April 1861, the U.S. steamer *Yorktown* was seized by the state of Virginia, turned over to the Confederate government, converted to a warship and renamed CSS *Patrick Henry*.



CSS *Virginia*, the former USS *Merrimack*



USS *Congress*, right, and USS *Susquehanna*, left, in an oil painting by Antonio DeSimone, depicting the ships at Naples in 1857.



hour barrage, the Confederate ship was struck by only a single cannon ball that slightly injured a crewman.

With the approach of spring and no sign of *Virginia*, the Federal commanders grew impatient. Marine 1stLt William H. Carter wrote to his mother: "Everybody is getting tired of doing nothing and I hope just to relieve the tediums that the *Merrimack* will come down and give us a fight. My company will have the pleasure of bo[a]rding her and I would like no better fun than to try some of the ... aristocrats single handed."

CAPT Gershom J. Van Brunt, USN, USS *Minnesota*, wrote, "We have nothing new here; all is quiet. *Virginia* is still invisible to us, but reports say that she is ready to come out. I sincerely wish she would; I am quite tired of hearing of her." Van Brunt was convinced the ship was poorly designed and that "more than likely she'll turn turtle."

The reports Van Brunt received were the result of a deliberate disinformation campaign played out in the Southern newspapers, which claimed the ironclad was a failure. Nothing could be further from the truth, the ironclad was nearing completion. Pvt O'Connor noted, "[O]n the night of the 26th [February 1862], we got a telegraph dispatch warning us to keep a bright look out—that *Merrimack* & *Germantown* was coming down from Norfolk to attack us. We laid alongside of our guns that night."

CAPT Buchanan was hankering for a fight, but he constantly was frustrated by mechanical problems that cropped up ...

***"The eyes of the whole world  
are upon you this day,  
and in the good old name  
of Virginia let every man  
do his duty."***

***—Pvt William Cline***



**This Matthew Brady photograph of CAPT Franklin "Old Buck" Buchanan in his U.S. Navy uniform is said to have been taken in May 1861, immediately after his resignation from the U.S. Navy.**

and the intransigence of the river pilot, who "had trained his entire professional life never to assume the slightest risk to any vessel."

Finally on Saturday, 8 March 1862, "Old Buck" had enough. He gathered the crew on deck and "made a rousing speech" that Pvt Cline still remembered many years after the war. "The eyes of the whole world are upon you this day," he recalled, "and in the good old name of Virginia let every man do his duty."

Buchanan then hoisted his red flag officer pennant on the bow and ordered the crew to cast off all lines. At exactly six bells (11 a.m.) in the forenoon watch, a gun at the Navy yard boomed the historic moment. One veteran wrote, "In an instant the whole city was in an uproar, women, children, men on horseback and on foot running down toward the river from every conceivable direction, shouting 'the *Virginia* is going down.' " As the ship slowly entered the main channel, a breeze caught the ensign at her stern, causing the "Stars and Bars" to wave proudly as she headed for battle.

*Editor's note: Suzanne Pool-Camp has contributed previous articles to Leatherneck. She and her husband, retired Col Dick Camp, live in Fredericksburg, Va.*

*Col Camp is the recently retired director of operations for the National Museum of the Marine Corps and a frequent contributor to Leatherneck.*



## Confederate States Marine Corps

The Confederate States Marine Corps (CSMC) was established by the Congress of the Confederate States on 16 March 1861. Confederate Marine headquarters was located at Ft. Darling near Richmond, Va. The CSMC was modeled after the United States Marine Corps, which was not surprising since many of its officers were U.S. Marines, who resigned their commissions to "go south."

The resignations were not taken lightly by the U.S. government. Capt Robert Tansill resigned while at sea on board USS *Congress*. He was arrested on 27 Aug. 1861, by the order of the Secretary of the Navy and held until 15 Feb. 1862, when he was released as part of a prisoner exchange. The Confederate Congress provided relief for those officers who came south.

"Officers of the Navy and Marine Corps who resigned from the Navy and Marine Corps of the United States in consequence of secession, and who were arrested and imprisoned in consequence of such resignation, and who subsequently joined the Navy and Marine Corps of the Confederate States, 'should receive' leave of absence, pay for and during the term of such imprisonment, and up to the time of their appointment in the Navy and Marine Corps of the Confederate States."

The CSMC initially was authorized 45 officers and 944

enlisted men, which was increased on 24 Sept. 1862, to 1,026 enlisted men. However, the Corps' "foxhole" strength never reached the authorization, maxing out somewhat below 550 Marines.

Its first and only Commandant, Colonel Lloyd J. Beall, was a West Point graduate and former U.S. Army paymaster. Although he served as a Dragoon in the Black Hawk and Seminole Wars and in the Mexican-American War, he was primarily an administrator for the CSMC and never led Marines in combat.

Early in the war, the CSMC was broken into squad-sized units to serve in major warships and for special operations. Confederate Marines participated in the captures of USS *Underwriter* and USS *Water Witch* and an attack to free Confederate prisoners of war being held at Point Lookout, Md.

At the end of the war, most of the surviving Confederate Marines gathered together in Richmond, Va., in support of the last desperate defenses of the South. Marines in Virginia were part of General Richard S. Ewell's Corps, which fought with distinction at the Battle of Saylor's Creek, the last major battle before the surrender of Lee's Army at Appomattox Court House.

—Suzanne Pool-Camp and Dick Camp

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# SHUFLY

## The Marine Corps' Beachhead in Vietnam

### Part I: The Deployment

By David H. Hugel

*It may surprise many Marines to learn that 50 years ago this month the first operational Marine Corps unit was deployed to Vietnam. That unit, Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron (HMM) 362, flew into Vietnam's Mekong Delta on 15 April 1962, to provide logistical support to our Vietnamese allies. Earlier, in January 1962, 42 Marines from the 1st Composite Radio Company, Fleet Marine Force, designated Sub-Unit #1, were attached to an Army communications unit in Pleiku; however, this deployment of HMM-362 represented the first significant commitment of a Marine unit.*

*This article tells the story of that historic deployment as seen through the eyes of the Marines who participated in Shufly during those early days of the Vietnam War. Part II will tell the story of how the Marines of Soc Trang met those challenges and established tactics and procedures still used by Marine helicopter units today.*

With the defeat of the French at Dien Bien Phu in 1954, and the partitioning of Indochina into Laos, Cambodia and North and South Vietnam, communist insurgents, known as the Viet Cong (VC), turned their attention to subjugating South Vietnam. Their goal was to reunite the country under communist rule. During the early 1960s, in response to stepped-up communist guerrilla activity to conquer South Vietnam, President John F. Kennedy sought advice on how the United States could best thwart those efforts.

In late 1961, retired U.S. Army General Maxwell D. Taylor, serving as a special military assistant to the President, submitted a report to President Kennedy, making recommendations about how to counter the insurgency, including sending U.S. helicopter units to Vietnam to provide logistical support for beleaguered Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) forces.

Following extensive discussions between the Commander in Chief, Pacific, Admiral Harry D. Felt; the Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV) commander, GEN Paul D. Harkins; and the Marine Corps Commandant, Gen David M. Shoup, among others, the Joint Chiefs of Staff endorsed a plan to deploy a Marine helicopter squadron to Vietnam's Mekong Delta in mid-April 1962. It was to be only temporary until operational conditions permitted moving the squadron north to Vietnam's I Corps Tactical Zone later that year.

The First Marine Aircraft Wing commander, Major General John Condon, received word of the deployment on 22 March. There was much to be done to meet the tight deadline, but MajGen Condon was determined to make it happen. He selected HMM-362, then participating in Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) Exercise Tulungan in the Philip-



MARINE CORPS UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES



After deploying to Vietnam aboard USS *Princeton* (LPH-5), HMM-362 helicopters like this one with supplies slung beneath, flew from USS *Princeton* into the Soc Trang air base on 15 April 1962. (H-34 photo courtesy of Thomas Hammack)

piners, for the mission. Commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Archie Clapp, the squadron was known throughout the Pacific as “Archie’s Angels.”

LtCol Clapp recalled many years later that MajGen Condon approached him while they were in the Philippines and asked if there was somewhere they could talk privately. With nowhere else to go, Clapp invited the general into his tent. Sitting on the edge of Clapp’s cot, the commander told him of a secret mission to deploy a Marine helicopter unit to Vietnam. MajGen Condon concluded his conversation by saying, “Archie, you’re it.”

Sworn to secrecy, Clapp had to prepare his Marines, their aircraft and equipment for the deployment, but he could not reveal their destination until USS *Princeton* (LPH-5), an amphibious assault ship from which they were operating, left its last port of call and they were at sea.

MajGen Condon tapped his chief of staff, Colonel John Carey, to head the Marine Corps contingent going into Vietnam, designated Task Unit 79.3.5, code-named Shuffly. Over the years, there has been much speculation concerning the source of the codename “Shuffly.” Some who served at the Pentagon or in the inner sanctums of other commands where such decisions are made believe it was taken from a book of codenames randomly assigned to operations or named after the favorite watering hole of a senior planning staffer. Asked years later how the name was selected, Col Clapp gave a brief but honest answer, “Damned if I know.”

In addition to HMM-362 and a small task-unit staff, a sub-unit of Marine Air Base Squadron (MABS) 16, based on Okinawa, would constitute the Marine Corps’ first large unit operational presence in Vietnam. Captain Jim Kizer soon joined Carey’s staff as his admin officer and aide where he, along with a small number of officers and enlisted men, constituted the Shuffly command staff.

One of the quirks of those early days of America’s involvement in Vietnam was that military personnel had to have a U.S. passport with a Vietnam visa. Kizer remembered having to obtain a passport before leaving Japan and arranging for others to get them in Saigon once they arrived in Vietnam. Thankfully, that requirement soon was rescinded, although anyone driving a vehicle needed to acquire a Vietnamese driver’s license.

The advance party left Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan, and headed for Vietnam in a World War II-era twin-engine transport plane designated the C-47 by the Army Air Corps, but known to naval aviators as the R4D. With refueling stops along the way and a change in



**The HMM-362 commander, LtCol Archie Clapp, stands at his command headquarters tent at Soc Trang in 1962. (Photo courtesy of Mrs. Shirley Clapp)**

aircraft as a result of mechanical problems, they arrived at an abandoned WW II Japanese airfield near the village of Soc Trang the morning of 9 April 1962. Soc Trang was 20 miles from the coast and 85 miles southwest of Saigon.

Kizer remembered that aside from the 3,000-foot concrete runway, dilapidated hangar and a few barracks and admin buildings, there wasn’t much left of the old airfield. The advance party was joined by the MABS-16 Marines from Okinawa later that day. Lacking an operational control tower, Kizer improvised by popping the escape hatch over the cockpit of the R4D, standing with his head outside the plane and using the plane’s radio to give landing instructions to the incoming aircraft.

The 211 officers and men of the MABS-16 sub-unit, under the command of LtCol William Eldridge, faced the daunting task of setting up an operational air base for the soon-to-be arriving helicopter squadron. Working long hours, they quickly erected a small tent city of 75 hardback tents with wooden decks, elevated to accommodate monsoon season rains. In addition to providing sleeping quarters, the tent city included offices and other essential facilities.

To keep Marines from sinking into the mud during the rainy season, a raised board walkway was built connecting the tents,

mess hall and heads. Portable field generators were installed to provide the base’s electrical power, and a water-purification facility to meet base water needs was soon operational. By 14 April, a field laundry was active, the mess hall was serving hot meals, a post office was operational, a telephone system connected the base living and working area, and the old hangar had been repaired.

The MABS sub-unit also was tasked with connecting Soc Trang Marines with the outside world, which meant setting up radio and teletype links with the MACV communications center in Saigon. Corporal Art Warren, one of the first communications men to arrive at Soc Trang, remembered that landing on the old rough runway was a harrowing experience. Warren’s stay at

Soc Trang would be brief, as he boarded the old R4D that same day for Saigon. There, along with four other Marines, he would spend his tour in Vietnam at the MACV communications center, transmitting messages received from Soc Trang to Marine commands on Okinawa and beyond.

Helicopters needed aviation fuel, and with the airfield located in a remote area of Vietnam’s Mekong Delta, portable rubber fuel tanks had to be installed and filled to service the squadron’s aircraft. Many years after the war, Clapp remained



**MajGen John Condon**



mystified that the VC never took advantage of that major vulnerability: The fuel had to be regularly trucked in from Saigon by a private contractor through an area heavily infested with enemy forces.

In his memoir, "My Downside Up Life," Capt Weldon Munter, HMM-362's assistant operations officer at the time, recalls the squadron's deployment to Vietnam.

"We were involved in a week's landings and exercises on various Philippine islands, then re-embarked aboard the ship headed for an unknown destination. We were well out to sea when our skipper, Lieutenant Colonel Archie Clapp, called a meeting of the pilots in the Ready Room, a large room that held a small stage and many comfortable pilot's seats. He then informed us that we were going to be the first Marine Air Squadron into Vietnam, and after all our training, we were *ready!*"

That feeling of being ready for their mission was reflected in statements from other pilots. First Lieutenant Bob Whaley, one of the squadron pilots, said: "It was

an exciting time. We were Marines who were doing what we were trained to do. Our squadron had been together a long time, and we had a good number of pilots who had served during WW II or Korea. It was comforting to know that those leading us into Vietnam had prior combat experience, and we learned a lot from them."

In his memoir, Munter continues with his narrative of the Soc Trang deployment.

"A couple of mornings later we arrived just off shore and loaded the first of many loads of troops and equipment aboard the helicopters. It was still dark when we lifted off, all twenty-four aircraft in the squadron.

"We crossed the beach just as it was getting light, and proceeded to an old abandoned landing strip named Soc Trang, and thus began a constant and continuing effort that flew in all the aircraft and supplies we needed to conduct combat missions."

Another of Archie's Angels, 1stLt Jim Shelton, later wrote about the fly-in to

Soc Trang in the HMM-362 cruise book. Knowing it was a historic event, Shelton wrote: "The morning dawned through scattered puffs of cumulus clouds. *Princeton* steamed in lazy circles, as her bowels were busy with activity, which had begun long before dawn. Gear was staged and the birds were warmed up in the pack. This was it ... we were it ... the first Marine unit to be committed in South Vietnam. We were going to do the job we had trained so long and hard for.

"The Mekong Delta region lay before us. A level of peaceful looking land cut irrationally with canals and streamlets. The river lay below in a sleeping band of shaded browns and greens. It was difficult to realize a war could be in such a tranquil setting."

The squadron had been beefed up for the deployment and consisted of 250 officers and enlisted men. In addition to 24 UH-34D helicopters, then known as the HUS-1, it had three OE-1 fixed-wing observation planes.

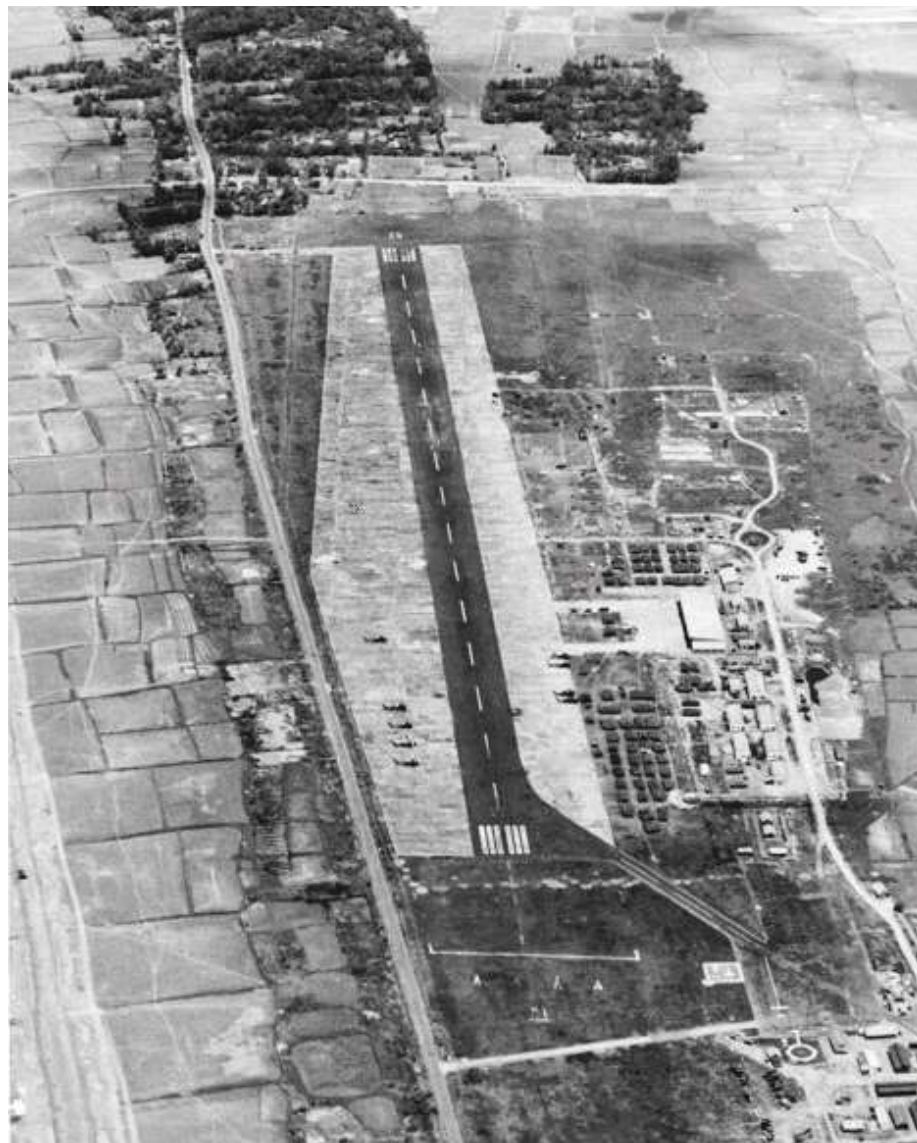
Not knowing what to expect when they arrived at Soc Trang, one of the incoming pilots, Capt Jim Perryman, who served as the squadron admin officer, remembered his first impressions upon landing that day: "The base was operational. Tents had been erected, and the old buildings the Japanese had built made serviceable. It was ready for us to set up shop and begin operations without much delay."

The pilots were well briefed and had no doubt as to why they were there. Asked what their mission was, Perryman responded without hesitation. "Our primary function was to airlift ARVN troops into landing zones [LZs] near suspected VC concentrations, for them to pursue and kill or capture the enemy."

Similarly, Weldon Munter in his memoir wrote: "Our missions were to haul South Vietnamese troops into places where Viet Cong were reported, but we also hauled civilians from place to place, some carrying chickens, produce, and even a pig."

Jim Kizer remembered the daily runs into Saigon in the R4D for supplies and how Marines had their hands full struggling to comply with Army and Navy procurement requirements. "We could never get their forms correct, so I finally flew up with my own typewriter, a handful of requisitions and a 'By Direction' authorization letter and typed everything right in front of the Army and Navy clerks to make sure we were complying with their rules."

In addition to getting supplies from the Army and Naval Supply Activity, Marines also shopped on the open market, particularly for French bread and pastries. Many Soc Trang Marines from LtCol Clapp on down through the ranks fondly



COURTESY OF JOSEPH EKE

The Soc Trang airfield was Shufly's base of operations during the early days of the Vietnam War.



COURTESY OF JAMES SHELTON

**Above: The HMM-362 commander, LtCol Archie Clapp, in the pith helmet, visits MABS-16 sub-unit Marines about the Soc Trang air base in 1962.**

**Right: Capt Jim Perryman, whose additional duty was as the squadron admin officer, is pictured by his tent at the Soc Trang air base.**



COURTESY OF JIM PERRYMAN

recalled the French baked goods and hearty meals served by the MABS sub-unit cooks.

In his memoir, Munter gives insights into life at Soc Trang during those early days. "While we had to resort to canned rations very seldom, we did have cooks, and a C-130 transport plane would swoosh in a couple times a week, bringing lots of chow and that precious commodity, mail! Soon we'd all be laying or standing around the tents, reading our mail and it was a sad time for the few who didn't receive at least a couple letters every time the C-130 arrived."

HMM-362 spent its first week ashore being briefed by MACV and ARVN officials on operations in Vietnam's III Corps Tactical Zone, becoming familiar with the terrain and training Vietnamese troops how to embark and disembark from helicopters. Clapp made clear that the biggest challenge his pilots faced was navigating in a region with such flat terrain, bisected by so many rivers and devoid of any major landmarks. He noted that pilots easily could become disoriented if they didn't pay close attention to their aeronautical charts and keep track of where they had come from and where they were headed.

Asked what modifications the squadron made to their aircraft to prepare them for the deployment, Clapp responded, "None, because we didn't know what to expect." He added that once the squadron began operations, a few minor changes were required. One of the first modifications was adding an additional step to accommodate the shorter stature of ARVN soldiers. The

problem quickly was remedied by the ingenuity of squadron metalsmiths, who attached angle-iron brackets to the lowest metal step to which they bolted 2-inch-by-8-inch wooden planks, creating an extra step for ARVN soldiers.

Another early change was in the flight suits worn by pilots. Because his pilots sat high off the ground in UH-34 cockpits, Clapp was concerned that the standard-issue international orange flight suits made them too tempting a target for enemy riflemen. He promptly had the orange suits replaced with less conspicuous tan ones. He also had flak jackets issued to his pilots, which they wore, along with accompanying diaperlike groin armor that most sat on to protect their "family jewels" from small-arms fire from below.

**H**MM-362 began flying combat missions on Sunday, 22 April 1962, just one week after arriving in Soc Trang. Jim Shelton remembered it was Easter Sunday when the squadron departed Soc Trang in four flights of four H-34s on a mission codenamed Operation Lockjaw. The Marine squadron flew 29 sorties, transporting 400 ARVN troops on the joint operation with the Army's 57th Helicopter Company.

An operations summary from that period notes that while the objective of the mission, trapping suspected VC between the two helicopter-borne and ground-based ARVN forces, was not achieved as a result of ARVN troops being unable to locate VC guerrillas, the helicopter portion of the operation was successful. It was the first of many combat missions Archie's

Angels would fly during their next 3½ months in Vietnam.

The deployment had been successful, and operations had begun. HMM-362 would face many challenges in the months ahead, but the United States Marine Corps had established a beachhead in Vietnam.

*Author's note: I wish to express my appreciation to all who shared their experiences and photographs with me during my research for this article, with a special thanks to Jim Perryman and Weldon Munter. Jim arranged for me to attend the 2010 Archie's Angels reunion dinner in Reno, Nev., and connected me to many of those Marines with whom I talked. Weldon and his publisher, Trafford Publishing, allowed me to use quotes from his book "My Downside Up Life."*

*I also appreciate the Marine Corps University's History Division archives for making available numerous documents and photographs that shed new light on this first deployment of Marines to Vietnam. Without their assistance, I could not have told the story of this historic deployment. Finally, thanks and Semper Fi to all those Marines who served at Soc Trang during Shufly.*

*Editor's note: David Hugel has been a longtime contributor to Leatherneck magazine. He enlisted in the Marine Corps following graduation from high school in 1960 and later served with the 1st MAF where he covered early Marine Corps operations in Vietnam while stationed in Da Nang as part of Shufly.*







## Marine Corps Heavy Metal Moves to Georgia: Armor School Now Based at Fort Benning

Story and photos by CWO-4 Randy Gaddo, USMC (Ret)

**A** stiff 15-mph southerly wind blew sand and dust across the valley at high noon as Marine Corps Lieutenant Colonel Michael Muller gazed east and contemplated the bucolic scene that stretched 2,000 meters in front of him.

He watched intently as a Marine assault breacher vehicle (ABV) pulled into position on the far side of the shallow valley. A few minutes later a voice came over the radio, proclaiming, “The range is cleared hot. Repeat, the range is cleared hot,” followed by other preparatory radio traffic. In the distance, a smoke trail rose up from the tanklike chassis and, a few seconds later, the “whoosh” of a rocket being launched.

As the smoke from the rocket was car-

ried off quickly by the wind, the scene became ominously quiet. Occasional tumbleweeds drifted silently across the scene, stirring thoughts of the silence before the shoot-out at the O.K. Corral. The observers behind LtCol Muller collectively were holding their breaths.

Then, a bright orange and black mushroom cloud of fire and smoke erupted skyward where the rocket had landed, followed seconds later by a deafening thud that could be felt by the earth shuddering underfoot and by the brief concussion blast that brushed everyone’s face. The red-hot fireball folded itself upward into a thick, dark, expanding column of smoke rising hundreds of feet in the bright, cool November sky in Georgia.

“Ooh-freaking-rah!” exclaimed one of the observers. With that, Marines left one tradition in the bluegrass of Kentucky and christened another in the red, sandy clay of Georgia. With the historic explosion of a mine-clearing line charge (MCLC, pronounced “MicLic”), the first at Fort Benning, Marines had punctuated their arrival in the Peach State.

The Marine Detachment that has coordinated Marine Corps armor training at the Army’s Ft. Knox, Ky., for nearly 40 years pulled up stakes in July 2011 and moved its colors to Ft. Benning in Columbus, Ga. Benning is home to the recently commissioned Army Maneuver Center of Excellence.

The move came as a result of the 2005

**Left: The entry park outside the gates of the Army Maneuver Center of Excellence, Ft. Benning, Ga., which is now home to all Marine tanker training, welcomes visitors.**



**Inset: A Marine M1A1 tank crew student gets some time on the road at Ft. Benning.**

**Below: Marine Corps trainers closely supervise students as they load the rocket onto a Marine assault breacher vehicle from which they will launch a mine-clearing line charge.**



Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process that also moved the Army's armor school from Ft. Knox to Benning.

Ft. Benning has served as the Army's home of infantry since 1918 and Ft. Knox as the home of armor since 1940. The BRAC Commission's decision led to consolidating a number of Army schools and installations to create "centers of excellence." Moving armor to Benning, now home to the Maneuver Center of Excellence, was one result.

"Marine Corps Detachment-Ft. Benning" staff will train Marines and soldiers at the armor school and will manage all other infantry, airborne and specialized training for Marine enlisted and officers at Ft. Benning.

"If there are Marines training on this base, they're ours," said LtCol Muller, Detachment commanding officer. "There will be as many as 350 Marines here at any one time, counting permanent party and students."

The Detachment annually will train about 25 tank officers, who graduate from Armor Basic Officer Leaders Course alongside their Army counterparts. It also will train a maximum of 288 enlisted tank crewmen, 180 mechanics and 24 ABV crewmen.

For years, a small detachment of approximately a dozen Marines had been assigned to Benning to coordinate Marine students in Army infantry courses, including Ranger School, Basic Airborne and Static Line Jumpmaster courses. Marines also attend Reconnaissance and Surveillance Leader, Pathfinder and Infantry Mortar Leader courses at Benning.

The move will bring permanent-party Marine strength to about 75, and they will support more than 1,500 Marine students annually enrolled in armor and infantry



Marine students train with a full-width mine plow attachment for the assault breacher vehicle.



courses. LtCol Muller believes the move is advantageous to the armor-infantry team, even though they left long-standing traditions at Ft. Knox.

“Collocating infantry and armor training gives us each a better appreciation of what the other does,” explained the Detachment commander, who has served in both armor and infantry billets during his career and has deployed twice to Iraq in infantry billets. “We can integrate our training and operations to familiarize

infantry Marines with armor and enable armor students to understand what infantry training is all about.”

Integrated training is timely, as the Corps deployed its tank units to Afghanistan in November 2010 when Marines with Company D, 1st Tank Battalion, First Marine Division (Forward) reported for duty with their M1A1 main battle tanks.

Captain Daniel Whitt, commanding officer of the Benning Detachment’s Marine Training Company, is responsible for

all armor-related courses. He said there are positive aspects to the move to Ft. Benning.

“The Army has provided us with amazing facilities and support,” he said, standing outside the new headquarters building, fronted by the iconic M60A1 Patton tank named “Buster,” which was among the first in action during Operation Desert Storm in 1991.

“The people on the base, both military and civilian, have been outstanding to

**Below left: The Marine Detachment commander, LtCol Michael Muller, talks with instructors and students as the mine-clearing line charge is prepared for firing.**

**Below right: Capt Daniel Whitt, the commanding officer of Marine Training Company, which is responsible for all armor-related courses, is interviewed by the Ft. Benning TV station as his Marines prepare the mine-clearing line charge.**





work with,” the captain said. “My job is to ensure that our Marines have everything they need to get their jobs done. The soldiers and civilian staff here have made it a lot easier because they’ve come through for us across the board.”

Indeed, the Marines’ area of the base is virtually brand-new, having been cleared of trees, graded and built just months before the move. In addition to the headquarters building, Marines have new barracks and 16 maintenance bays at the Tank Vehicle Maintenance Instruction Facility. All facilities used by the detachment are complete.

The fact that the BRAC Commission directed the move made funding available for construction of new facilities, not only for Marines, but for soldiers as well. The project brought \$3.5 billion in construction projects to Ft. Benning and called for \$1.2 billion of equipment to be moved from Kentucky to Georgia.

The project added 6 million square feet of new construction, converted 3 million square feet of existing space and made additions and improvements to base roads, bridges, training areas and utility systems. The base serves more than 120,000 servicemen and their families, retirees, civilian employees and contractors. Some 52 percent of the Army’s soldiers train at Ft. Benning, and another 21,000 training seats have transferred from Ft. Knox.

The process is a work in progress, as Benning staff reviews more than 50 additional BRAC projects and training areas for conformance. The projects must be evaluated in 14 different areas such as land use, noise, air quality, environmental impact, safety and other local, state and federal requirements.

The potential for the move was in review for several years, and as the commanding officer of the detachment at Ft. Knox, LtCol Muller was involved directly in planning during the past two years. He said that the move makes sense on a number of different levels.

“It is consistent with standing [Department of Defense] policy for services to share resources whenever possible,” he explained. “There are savings and benefits for both the Marine Corps and Army.”

The Army owns all the land and facilities that the Marine Corps occupies and provides the majority of their tanks and support equipment. The Army receives federal funding to compensate for supporting the Marines at Ft. Benning.

“A certain number of [Marine] instructors are allocated for a given number of students,” said LtCol Muller. “For example, the Marine Corps has 750 seats for airborne training, which justifies about five Marine instructors. They will teach

**Marine students in the tank crew course practice driving the tank on the paved course at Ft. Benning.**



and support training for both Marines and soldiers, so in the end we all benefit.”

At the ceremony to unfurl the Detachment colors on July 28, 2011, Muller told spectators that moving to Benning offered a unique opportunity.

“We train alongside the Army, so that when we fight alongside the Army, we’ll both be better prepared,” he said. “You can’t just wait until the bullets start flying. We have to get in the tanks and work with the infantrymen.”

For Marines who were already at Benning, the move means deeper support on a number of fronts.

“Our Marine family network has gotten better,” said Marine Major Tom Siverts, Commanding Officer, Infantry Specialty Skills Co. He was one of the Marines already at Benning. “Of course, there’s the social element of having more Marines around, but there’s also better support available for our families, more administrative support and there’s more interchange among different MOSs [military occupational specialties].”

The move makes Ft. Benning the sixth-largest military installation in the United

States with the third-largest troop density, according to briefings by base officials. Of the total 183,000 acres on base, 20,000 have been or will be reshaped.

In spite of the vast open spaces on the base, ample, appropriate training land for tanks is one of the preliminary issues that must be overcome for the Marines.

“That is probably our biggest challenge,” said LtCol Muller. “Right now, we can only train on paved surfaces. We hope to be able to go off-road in early 2012.”

Georgia’s sandy clay soil stands in stark contrast to Kentucky’s rich black dirt when it comes to holding up under the extreme punishment of tank training.

“It is imperative that we train our Marines off-road,” said Capt Whitt, as he watched students in four tanks maneuver around a winding, hilly concrete course. “The tank responds very differently on asphalt or concrete than it does on unpaved ground. It’s something the drivers and crew need to experience firsthand before they go into live operational situations.”

LtCol Muller said that the Army is working on providing more adequate training areas for the Marines, but must





SSgt Bobby Stone (above, top center) supervises the loading of the mine-clearing line charge onto the assault breacher vehicle after providing instruction (below left) on unpacking and operation of the charge. The initial explosion (below right) from 1,750 pounds of C4 in the MCLC, the first ever detonated at Ft. Benning, is the result of proper preparation and supervision.



balance the needs of other training requirements as well. He noted that there are significant hurdles the Army has to negotiate to provide adequate land for all armor training, Marine and Army alike.

Planners have to be mindful of potential erosion and resulting fuel or oil runoff, noise pollution, protection of endangered plants or animals, aesthetics, safety and a host of other requirements. All those issues must be addressed to obtain ade-

quate training areas.

Firing the MCLC is a good example. The mine-clearing charge consists of 1,750 pounds of C-4 explosive in small packets about the size of a 5-pound bag of sugar. The packets are strung together in a 350-foot-long strand and layered into an oval that fits into a green shipping box.

The end of the strand is attached by rope to an 8-foot rocket that pulls the strand out behind it when fired. That deploys the

line charge across a minefield, and the line charge detonates to clear an 8-meter-by-100-meter lane.

The line can be deployed from different platforms, but in the shoot at Benning it was shot from an ABV, a specially modified M1A1 chassis that can carry and fire two of the charges. After firing the charge, the 1,500-horsepower ABV, using a front-mounted, full-width, mine-plow attachment, can dig down and fully clear the



way for follow-on maneuver forces.

Two of those 1,750-pound charges were fired by Marines at Ft. Benning. It was the first time it had been done and was one of the largest explosions ever to be detonated there. The event was welcomed by both Marines and soldiers.

"It was a long process, getting approval to deploy these systems," said Marine Staff Sergeant Bobby Stone, staff non-commissioned officer in charge of ABV training and the resident expert on the devices. "Due to the magnitude of the detonation, we needed clearance from a few state and federal agencies, and there was lots of close coordination with base officials."

As SSgt Stone supervised preparation of the line charges, he also was teaching Marine and Army students about safe and proper handling procedures. Students were all eyes and ears as their instructor showed them the correct hook-up and detonation process. The crate of C-4 explosives at their feet was a graphic reminder to pay attention and punctuated the fact that this was serious, real-world training.

The Marine and Army students completing the ABV crewman's course at the time of the MCLC deployment are now part of Marine Corps armor history. Not only were they the first full class to complete that course of instruction at Benning, but they participated in the historic firing of the MCLC.

Marines who complete the ABV training are not tankers; they're combat engineers, MOS 1371. They receive a secondary MOS of 1372, ABV crewman. Six Marines in the first full class were right out of basic engineer school, had just obtained the primary MOS of 1371 and were handpicked for the follow-on course. Two other Marines, a staff sergeant and private first class, came from 2d Combat Engineer Bn.

The Army is slated to obtain ABVs soon, which Marines began using in 2009. Four of the 12 students completing that class were soldiers from Ft. Stewart in Savannah, Ga., who will become the Army's trainers.

It is a unique opportunity for engineers, who normally don't step inside a tank.

"This is really amazing training," said PFC Dakota Day, climbing down from the ABV after a practice run plowing up ground by using the specialized front-end mine plow. "You can just feel the power this machine has. It pushes through the dirt like a hot knife through butter. It doesn't even seem like you're pushing anything."

The heavily armored tank chassis provides excellent protection against improvised explosive devices and otherwise devastating weapons for the two-man

Seven of the Marines in the ABV course are, kneeling, from right: PFCs Zakare S. Logan and Dakota R. Day. Standing, from right: PFCs Mark E. Hobson, David A. Lucas Jr., Logan M. Norton, Zachary C. Thompson and Cody W. Mayer.



ABV crew. Survivability of this platform has been battle-tested.

In Iraq, tanks were the only armor vehicles approved for entry into Fallujah. According to LtCol Muller, all 28 of the tanks in the two tank companies that went into the city took multiple rocket-propelled grenade hits as well as high-caliber rifle fire, but all were able to drive out under their own power.

Frequent *Leatherneck* contributor Andrew Lubin, who was embedded with a tank unit in Fallujah, noted, "An Iraqi RPG left only a black mark on the tank's armor which could be wiped off with a wet rag. But the Abrams was a 70-ton killing machine the likes of which Fallujah had never seen before. The Iraqis didn't know that the arrival of the tanks changed the rules of the fight. There would be no more blithely ambushing Marine infantry with RPGs and quick AK47 bursts from rooftops."

Author and historian Patrick K. O'Donnell embedded himself with the Marines going into Fallujah and wrote a book titled "We Were One." In the book, he recounts a jihadi cell phone call intercepted by American intelligence. The caller was trapped in Fallujah and was describing to his superior the "attack of all attacks." Obviously far from the battle, the superior apparently was perturbed that his subordinate did not make a break for it. He made

the casual remark, "Listen, on the streets, it's just tanks, right?"

"Yes," replied the embattled subordinate. "But you see, a tank is roughly as big as a house ... you can hit it with a rocket and it doesn't blow up. ... Fallujah is finished."

The first Marine armor units have made their presence known in Afghanistan. There can be no doubt the lessons learned returning with armor veterans may impact how armor is employed in the future. Nevertheless, at Ft. Benning, the basics will remain the focus.

"We will continue to train basic tank crewmen who will be ready to fight on any given battlefield," said Capt Whitt. "Tailoring of training for specific theaters is conducted at tank battalions. Together, we remain in support of the infantry and provide them with survivable cross-country, precision, direct firepower support platforms."

*Editor's note: Leatherneck appreciates the support of the Army's director of public affairs at Ft. Benning as we prepared this article.*

*The author, CWO-4 Randy Gaddo, was a combat correspondent as an enlisted Marine and later a public affairs officer. He retired from active duty in 1996 and is a frequent contributor to Leatherneck.*



## Leatherneck—On the Web

See more photos of Marine tankers and tanks training at Ft. Benning at [www.mca-marines.org/leatherneck/benningtanks](http://www.mca-marines.org/leatherneck/benningtanks)



# Captain John Ripley at the Bridge: “Please, God, Don’t Let Me Screw This Up!”

By R. R. Keene

If you’ve never been to Dong Ha, you haven’t missed a thing. Well, perhaps with the exception of Easter 1972.

No one really knows how many of those who were there are still around to talk about it. The South Vietnamese Marines are no more: banished or dead. The North Vietnamese soldiers who fired their weapons in frustration from across the Cau Viet River are scattered and old or dead. John Ripley’s been dead for three years and wasn’t the kind to brag.

So, from time to time we have to retell his legendary tale and pass it to every generation of Marines.

Colonel John W. Ripley: When they talk of Marines with *cojones*, one thing comes to mind—Ripley as a captain at the bridge at Dong Ha.

West of Dong Ha was Camp Carroll, named for Marine Captain James J. Carroll, who posthumously was awarded the Navy Cross for action near the Demilitarized Zone in 1966. The camp sat on a plateau off the south side of Highway 9, perhaps less than halfway between Dong Ha and Khe Sanh. Today, pepper plants have rooted out nearly all traces of the pentagonal-shaped fire support base. The Marines had left Camp Carroll in 1969 as part of President Richard M. Nixon’s “Vietnamization” policy to turn the war over to the South Vietnamese.

“Vietnamization”: It had almost worked, but like so many “good intentions” during the American involvement in Southeast Asia, it, too, went wrong. American promises to the South Vietnamese of dollars, military hardware and assistance were becoming as empty as the ammunition boxes strewn throughout Northern I Corps. The American forces in garrisons beyond the South China Sea had no tactical or strategic plans of returning. In Paris, there was talk of peace talks. In Hanoi, there was, after 30 years of war, a real anticipation of victory. One coordinated push was needed to gain as much South Vietnamese soil, decimate and demoralize the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN), and gain the upper hand during negotiations in Paris.



This dramatic painting by Col Charles Waterhouse, USMCR (Ret) captures the spirit of Ripley at the bridge at Dong Ha. His was a feat of physical and mental endurance, as well as great courage.

The ARVN forces had proved less than effective, and they were stretched thin defending their 600-mile land border. For the leaders in the North, the strategy extended beyond the Indochina peninsula. In the United States, there was a presidential election looming. Antiwar sentiment among the population and U.S. government had risen to an all-time high buoyed by continuing American troop withdrawals.

For the U.S. military, the war was back where it started with American advisors.

Hanoi committed nearly its entire army, 14 divisions and 26 independent regiments, to what was called the “Eastertide Offensive.” They had waited for the monsoon season with its heavy and low clouds swollen with rain that limited the deadly U.S. airpower.

“You can surrender with us or commit

suicide,” Camp Carroll’s South Vietnamese commander, Lieutenant Colonel Pham Van Dinh, told two astonished U.S. Army advisors, LtCol William C. Camper and Major Joseph Brown, and offered them his pistol.

It was 2 April 1972, and Camp Carroll’s current occupants, elements of the South Vietnamese Army, were completely encircled by the North Vietnamese Army and about to run up a white flag. The North Vietnamese wanted Camp Carroll, seeing it as the linchpin of the South Vietnamese northern and western defense line in Northern I Corps and a major obstacle between them and Quang Tri City to the southeast.

“That’s not what we Americans do,” replied Camper. “We’ve got other plans.” They grabbed a radio and made for the wire. A CH-47 Chinook helicopter came in for a rescue under heavy fire and almost was overwhelmed by South Vietnamese soldiers attempting to flee with the two Americans. Underpowered and overloaded, the helicopter lifted off and ended up crash-landing on Highway 1. They made it, but Camp Carroll’s garrison of 1,500 surrendered with barely a shot fired.

Almost due east, Dong Ha was in peril with only a few stalwarts wearing tiger-striped camouflage uniforms of the South Vietnamese Marine Corps facing down a column of Soviet-built tanks and self-propelled artillery backed up six miles all the way to the DMZ. Everyone was engulfed in a flood of refugees and ARVN deserters pouring south.

Dong Ha was, and still is, hardscrabble country. Its only claim to fame came a few years earlier when it was one corner of four bases Marines called “Leatherneck Square”: Dong Ha, Cam Lo, Con Thien and Gio Linh. Even today, a tourist guidebook pans visiting Dong Ha. “There’s still an element of the Wild West to Dong Ha. It’s not a particularly friendly or attractive place. ... There is no conceivable reason to visit.”

On 30 March 1972, an intense artillery barrage rained down on the northernmost ARVN outposts in Quang Tri Province. The 304th and 308th North Vietnamese Army divisions with 30,000 soldiers supported by more than 200 tanks plowed through the DMZ into I Corps.

It was a very good attack plan, but the North Vietnamese had not seriously considered two things. They underestimated the pugnacious fighting character of South Vietnamese Marines and American advisor John Ripley holding the south bank of a 500-foot bridge at Dong Ha.

Ripley was a deceptively slim Marine—all muscle and sinew woven taut in tenacious determination. The 700 men of

the 3d South Vietnamese Marine Battalion and their commanding officer, Maj Le Ba Binh, were fortunate to have such a *co-van*, Vietnamese for “trusted friend.”

At 33, Ripley was an “old Asia hand” on his second Vietnam combat tour. He deployed in country as a reconnaissance platoon leader in 1965 and then commanded “Lima” Company, 3d Battalion, Third



**Ripley retired as a colonel. His valor at Dong Ha is remembered, but more than that, he was a sterling example of leadership, integrity and honor throughout his Marine career and, indeed, his entire life.**

Marine Regiment. “Ripley’s Raiders” they call themselves, and they insist the “33” label of Vietnamese “*Ba Muoi Ba*” Bier (beer) really means 3d Bn, 3d Marines. They liked Ripley. He was no wuss. He gave his Marines no slack, kept them in the field and got them in plenty of combat, but also took good care of them, and they took their wounds together.

In addition to the Purple Heart, Ripley won a Silver Star during an attack with Lima Co against an NVA regimental command post.

The men of Lima Co admire their “skipper” and like telling stories about him.

One Marine said, “I remember Staff Sergeant Joe Martin saying, Ripley was on *Harlan County* [(LST-1196)] in port on the Caribbean in 1964. He was cross-decking when one of the ‘squid’ officers of the day said something insulting about the Corps. ‘Rip’ threw him in the drink. They put him in ‘hack’ down over the bilges in the bowels of USS *Boxer* [(LPH-4)], where the hull makes a V. He did push-ups all day. Eventually he took over Weapons, 2/2 and was Martin’s platoon commander.”

Ripley, even for a Marine, was a physical fitness animal. He was a “The-more-you-sweat-in-peace, the-less-you-bleed-in-war” believer who’d taken it to heart—and all the other muscles of his body—as an enlisted man and later as a midshipman at the U.S. Naval Academy. It gave him an edge on his exchange tour with the British Royal Marines on the Malay Peninsula, at the U.S. Army’s Airborne and Ranger schools and with the Navy’s underwater demolition teams. He had become jump-, scuba- and Ranger-qualified.

Ripley said, “Endurance: We confuse this with fitness ... but mental endurance is like an extra bandolier. ... You lock-and-load and keep going.”

He also was a man who kept his soul in shape. A staunch Catholic, he believed you do best when at peace with your maker. His was a quiet devotion that gave his Marine persona an extra shot of courage when needed. He was a man with deep and unshakable convictions who believed in his God, his country and his Corps.

It all came together on Easter Sunday, 2 April 1972.

Ripley was the lone *co-van* with 3d VNMC Bn spread between Cam Lo and Dong Ha. He listened as the CO, Maj Binh, received his orders via radio. The brigade commander ordered Binh to “hold Dong Ha at all costs.” He promised to throw in a few 106 mm recoilless rifles and some M48 ARVN tanks, but to the north, the





This aerial photo, which looks north over the two bridges on the Cua Viet at Dong Ha, was taken in 1969 when Naval Mobile Construction Bn 62 was building the bridge (right) at Dong Ha. It was completed in 1970 and destroyed in 1972 along with the accompanying old railroad trestle.



dust and diesel smoke over Highway 1 and the unmistakable rumble of metallic treads heralded the approach of T-54 and PT-76 Soviet armor—lots of it.

Today, there is a large multistoried market at the southwest corner of the highway bridge, which once stood in tandem with a deteriorated French-built railroad bridge over the Cua Viet River. When the Vietnamese Marines consolidated their defensive positions, they noticed the red flag of the People's Republic of North Vietnam and, below it, North Vietnamese infantry, crouched with AK47s at high-port, starting toward both bridges.

Ripley later told Marine historian Charles D. Melson, "an absolute fire storm" ensued, most of it directed at Marines and him courtesy of the communists.

There was no close air support to call on, but there were U.S. destroyers offshore, and they knew how to put naval gunfire with precision on tanks. Over the horizon rose the smoke of burning fuel. At noon from south of the Cua Viet River, the 90 mm cannon from two ARVN M48s started going off, destroying several North Vietnamese tanks. Still, there were just too many tanks and not enough firepower to stop them. Other ARVN tanks were reluctant to provide support. At 12:15 the first NVA tank with the bravado of being an unstoppable 40-ton behemoth treaded its way onto the highway bridge.

It was then that a tactical miracle came in the form of a veteran 90-pound South Vietnamese Marine—Sergeant Huynh Van Luom went forward alone and ex-

posed onto the bridge. He carried only two ammunition boxes filled with dirt and a small strand of concertina wire to use as cover.

When Sgt Luom extended his M72 light antitank assault weapon, the lead tank stopped. Luom pressed down on the firing mechanism, which activated the rocket and its warhead. It missed. Now, the tank did not hesitate to move forward. Sgt Luom armed a second LAAW, aimed and fired. This one hit the tank head-on and jammed the turret. The tank commander threw his vehicle in reverse and backed off the bridge.

Ripley always remembered Sgt Luom's action as the "bravest single act of heroism I've ever heard of, witnessed or experienced." He realized the sergeant had



**Above:** John Ripley returned to Vietnam in July 1997 with members of L/3/3. At Dong Ha, it was a new bridge that Ripley admired, with a huge market nearby (where this durian fruit atop the wall was purchased). Shoppers in the market had no idea of Ripley's involvement 25 years earlier; most weren't even born then.

**Below:** The market on the southern banks of the Cua Viet River as seen from the new Dong Ha Bridge is a thriving place of business and the central commerce site for Dong Ha. It once was the site of 3d VNMC Bn positions as they fired across the river at NVA troops and tanks and laid down protective and covering fire while Ripley mined the bridge.



"single-handedly stopped the momentum of the entire attack." The column would not move forward and would not turn around. The whole thrust of the NVA's southern assault came to fumes from idling diesel engines. The column was vulnerable.

It is still the subject of speculation as to why the tank column didn't grind the diminutive sergeant under its tread and roll, followed by great numbers, across the bridge, but it didn't and that changed everything. Ripley later said, "It was one of the most inexplicable parts of the whole affair."

In a 2009 story, Army historian COL Frederic L. Borch wrote that Ripley received a call from U.S. Marine LtCol Gerald H. Turley, assistant U.S. senior

advisor to the Vietnamese Marine Corps. Ripley asked about air support. Turley replied that the threat facing Ripley, "Ain't the only war in town ... every fire base ... is taking crap and some have already gone under. ... You're all we have. There's nothing to back you up."

"We've got to blow that bridge," Ripley radioed Turley. "We've got to buy some time."

Neither Ripley nor Turley had that kind of authority. Ripley later said, "Lieutenant Colonel Turley took matters into his own hands and said: 'Do it and worry about the consequences later.'"

As if a reminder, the North Vietnamese

started pounding the south bank with artillery and raking it with small-arms fire.

While the ARVN forces were unenthusiastic about facing off with North Vietnamese tanks, Ripley found MAJ James E. Smock, U.S. Army advisor to the 290th ARVN Tank Bn, willing to step forward and provide what proved to be critical aid.

But, who was going to blow the bridge? In reality, Ripley was the logical choice, an example of the best man for the job being in the right place at the right time. Remember all those military schools Ripley attended? They were packed with classes on demolitions and, when Ripley was a teenager, he would impress friends



and relatives by hand-walking under a large bridge near his home in Radford, Va. And, he confided to Smock almost with delight, "I've always wanted to blow up a bridge."

ARVN engineers had placed 500 pounds of TNT and C-4 plastic explosives near the bridge in the event it would need to be destroyed. But according to the book "Bridge at Dong Ha," by retired Marine Col John G. Miller, "These engineers had not placed the explosives under the bridge, much less attempted to rig it for destruction, since they were terrified of being so far forward."

The bridge, recently completed in 1970, had been professionally and solidly constructed of wood, reinforced with steel "I" beams, girders and concrete abutments by U.S. Navy Seabees and, therefore, was not about to collapse easily. Ripley quickly surmised what it was going to take. In a nutshell, COL Borch explained, "The TNT would be used in concert with satchels of C4. ... The C4 would cut the girders and the exploding TNT would lift ... the bridge up and then twist it off its [concrete] supports, sending it crashing into the water below."

The only problem was it couldn't be done. Not by one man. Especially if that one man was strapped with two 15-pound satchels of C4 explosives, blasting caps

and hanging from the girders, moving hand over hand and under fire from angry North Vietnamese. But nobody had said to Ripley it couldn't be done.

He readied himself and whispered a near perfect Marine prayer—"Please, God, don't let me screw this up!"

Ripley hoisted himself atop a chain-link fence topped with razor wire, grabbed the beam's flanges and climbed through the wire, which tore at his arms and legs. "Just don't bleed to death before you make it through," said Smock.

He swung his body out and was 50 feet above the river. He needed to hand-walk 100 feet to the first abutment. That was when NVA riflemen on the north bank spotted him and started shooting. South Vietnamese Marines on the south bank opened up and drew the communist fire away.

"Jesus, Mary get me there. Jesus-Mary-get-me-there. JesusMarygetmethere," is how Borch describes Ripley's Gregorian-like chant as his hands and arms carried his body across the girder.

Melson wrote that about halfway out, Ripley "tried to swing himself up into the steel girders by hooking his heels in either side of the beam. It was then that he realized that he still had his web gear on and his rifle slung over his shoulder. All at once the weight was oppressive. ...

His arms ached with pain, his finger grasp felt insecure, and he could not hang there indefinitely. ... After several attempts to swing his body, he lodged his heels on the beam."

Ripley wedged the two satchels on either side of the girder and slightly off, creating a "crooked earmuff charge" designed to shear the beam.

Smock had been busy hoisting 50-pound boxes of TNT and satchel charges. Each time he climbed the fence with the boxes, he took fire. Ripley edged the boxes along the beams to where he had placed the satchel charges. In the back of Ripley's and Smock's minds was the question, "Why haven't the tanks rolled across the bridge?"

Ripley was particularly worried. "Why aren't they directing more of their attention to me? What are they doing over there?"

The North Vietnamese were watching in frustration as Ripley swung from one I beam to another. Their small-arms fire pinged around and below Ripley, but didn't hit him. The Vietnamese Marines kept putting out suppressive fire.

A communist T-54 tank had carefully maneuvered down the bank into position. Its turret pointed the 100 mm gun at Ripley and fired.

"Mother of God! They've got me this time!" he recalled thinking. The round hit less than two feet away, glanced off a beam and ricocheted into the south bank. Ripley almost lost his grip.

Ripley went back to work inserting blasting caps. He had no crimper to fasten the caps to the fuze. He had to bite the cap to open one end. If he bit too low, he would not get a good crimp. If he bit too high, he might set off the cap, which would take the top of his head off. Nonetheless, he was meticulous in setting the charges. Ripley patiently moved from beam to beam—all six of them—and set his charges. He gave himself 30 minutes of fuze cord, lit it and started back.

The mining had taken three hours, but finally Ripley was back with Smock on the south bank. That was when he discovered a box of electric caps. Ever the thorough, attention-to-detail perfectionist, Ripley knew he had to go back under the bridge, and under fire, to set the electric caps as a backup to the burning fuze cord.

Smock admonished him. "Hey, you dumb jarhead! That isn't necessary. What are you doing that for?"

"You tankers don't know anything," replied Ripley.

Smock said he was smart enough to know Ripley had enough to blow the bridge and "three more like it." Smock also was smart enough to hook up a few



R. R. KEENE

The new bridge at Dong Ha looking north is a much more civil scene than during the Eastertide Offensive of 1972 that brought down its predecessor.



RON LUNN



RON LUNN

**Above left: It was 2 March 2012 when members of L/3/3 gathered at Semper Fidelis Memorial Park, National Museum of the Marine Corps, Triangle, Va., to dedicate the “CAPTAIN J. W. RIPLEY LIMA CO RVN-1967” Memorial, honor their fallen comrades and remember their CO. Also on hand was retired Col Gerald H. Turley, who was assistant senior advisor to the VNMC during the Eastertide Offensive.**

**Above right: They unveiled their monument and gathered for a group photo while former Ripley Raiders A. C. Boley (kneeling, left) of Salem, Va., and Robert Peugh of Dewey, Okla., held the “Ripley's Raiders” banner. It was a mark of the esteem and respect they have for their former commander. During the war, they demonstrated that respect when many extended their tour just to continue to serve with Ripley.**

boxes of TNT under the old railroad trestle hoping that when the Dong Ha bridge blew, it also would take the old rail bridge.

Ripley finally made it back. He found a jeep battery to give him the electrical source needed to detonate the caps, and they ran toward the Vietnamese Marines' lines. It was there he touched the wire to the battery terminal: nothing.

It was then that Ripley saw a young girl separated from her mother. An NVA mortar round hit behind her. Ripley sprinted to the girl, scooped her up and ran toward the mother. That's when they were all blown off their feet. The timed fuzes had burned like sparklers, slowly, but steadily until they reached the explosives.

When the dust and smoke cleared, there was a 100-foot gap between the south bank and the rest of the bridge. The wooden timbers were on fire and would burn for days. The old French bridge was blown in half. The North Vietnamese ceased firing, turned off their tanks, opened the hatches and looked.

At 1630 Ripley reported both bridges destroyed. The NVA, still threatening, sent their PT-76 amphibious tanks to the river's edge. That's when the Navy unleashed more gunfire from offshore and a flight of South Vietnamese A-1 Skyraiders hit the armored column.

What remained of the NVA armor eventually would make a minor thrust into South Vietnam, but not through Dong Ha. It would take the North Vietnamese Army another three years to launch another and final offensive.

In the meantime, Ripley was presented with the Navy Cross, the U.S. Army awarded Smock the Silver Star, and the Vietnamese were left to fend for themselves.

Ripley retired in 1992 and became president of Southern Virginia College and later president of Hargrave Military Academy, also in Virginia. In 1999, he became the director of the Marine Corps History and Museums Division.

Respected as a warrior, and later for his personal and professional integrity, he received numerous accolades. In 2002, he was the first Marine officer to be named a Distinguished Graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy. In May 2004, the 22d Marine Expeditionary Unit in Afghanistan named their forward operating base “Ripley.” In 2006, a new dormitory at the Naval Academy Prep School in Newport, R.I., was named “Ripley Hall,” after the graduate. And in 2008, Ripley was inducted into the U.S. Army Ranger Hall of Fame.

Colonel John Walter Ripley died at his home in Annapolis, Md., 28 Oct. 2008. He was 69.

Epilogue: At Christie's, a restaurant on Da Nang's Han River in 1997, Ripley raised a glass of what is now “333 Bier,” “Ba Muoi Ba Muoi Ba,” which those around the table insisted stands for 3d Bn, 3d Marines, 3dMarDiv. It was his first time back since the Eastertide Offensive,

and Ripley was celebrating his first tour with fellow members of Lima, 3/3 who had returned with him for an in-country reunion with Military Historical Tours.

They basked in the warmth of camaraderie under the glow of the evening lamps. They were young Marines again, fresh from the field, happy to be alive and in the Corps. As Ripley raised his glass, he gave this toast: “Here's to the drunken Marine with beer in his canteen. You've heard of the Unknown Soldier, but never an unknown Marine!” They shook with laughter. It was followed by the sound of empty glasses slammed to the table.

*Editor's note: On this 40th anniversary, should you want to read more about the 1972 Easter Offensive, two exceptional books are “The Easter Offensive: The Last American Advisors, Vietnam, 1972” by Col Gerald H. Turley, USMCR (Ret) and “Ride the Thunder: A Vietnam War Story of Honor and Triumph” by Marine veteran Richard Botkin. To learn more about the life of Col Ripley, read “An American Knight: The Life of Colonel John W. Ripley, USMC,” by Norman Fulkerson. All are available from the bookstore at The Marine Shop. Call toll-free, (888) 237-7683, or go online at [www.marineshop.net](http://www.marineshop.net).*



## Leatherneck—On the Web

To see more photos of the Capt J. W. Ripley, “Ripley's Raiders” Memorial dedication, go to [www.mca-marines.org/leatherneck/ripleymemorial](http://www.mca-marines.org/leatherneck/ripleymemorial)





LCpl Jerry Ghent (standing, left), Cpl Joe Haman (kneeling) and Cpl Josh Karlen, Weapons Plt, Kilo Co, 3/1, were together in Iraq. All three men were wounded during a grenade fight at Haditha, Afghanistan, on Nov. 19, 2005.

# Just Lucky

Story by Nathaniel R. Helms · Photos courtesy of Joe Haman

Corporal Joseph Haman thought he was ready for anything after two arduous tours in Iraq as a mortarman in deadly Anbar province with Weapons Platoon, Company K, 3d Battalion, First Marine Regiment during 2004 and again in '05. After his four-year enlistment was up, he planned to go to college while he enjoyed a little peace and quiet in his hometown of St. Louis. Little did he know that the combat skills he learned in the Marine Corps would help save his life two years later.

Haman joined the Corps in July 2002, as soon as he graduated from high school. Shortly after his brother Gregory's return from a tour in Iraq, where he drove amtracs during the Marines' spectacular "March Up" to Baghdad in 2003, it was Haman's turn to go to the sandbox. Instead of Iraq, he drew Bahrain, pulling watch for a very long year in a security company guarding the huge U.S. Navy facility there.

"At least it was closer to the action. There

were Brits, Asians, fast-food restaurants and British Royal Marines. The Brits told us [that] Royal Marines are told they were lucky they didn't have to go through U.S. Marines' boot camp. Good guys, Royal Marines," Haman said.

"I woke up in another room,"

Haman remembered.

"I didn't know how I got there.

I had been hit by shrapnel,

but it didn't hurt until later,

just a little stinging."

When his year was up, Haman was sent to Camp Pendleton, Calif., just in time to join 3/1 while it was training for its 2004 deployment to Iraq. The "Thundering Third" was already salty, giving a good account of itself in the big fight the Marines got into in 2003 between the bridges

at An Nasiriyah, fighting Saddam Fedayeen black-garbed "Ninja" jihadists. When the battle was over, the much-vaunted Ninjas were destroyed.

Iraq in June 2004, however, was nothing like the situation the Thundering Third encountered the year before. The smiling faces and open arms were replaced by improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and deadly ambushes. Internecine warfare had broken out between the different religious and political factions trying to dominate post-Saddam Iraq. The fighting was fierce. Haman's company was sent to the so-called Sunni Triangle, Saddam's old stomping grounds, where al-Qaida's foreign fighters were running amuck. The Marines were sent to take them down.

After four months of skirmishes, IED ambushes and pinprick indirect fire attacks, Haman's battalion was sent to Fallujah in November 2004 to help take it back from the insurgents. During one of the fiercest battles Marines fought in the Iraq War, Haman survived unscathed while participating in "Kilo" Co's stand at the legendary "Hell House" in his close-combat debut. He wouldn't be as lucky at Haditha during another close-quarter fight with al-Qaida-led foreign fighters a year later.

An orbiting Scan Eagle UAV captured that encounter on its video camera while Marines and al-Qaida-led foreign fighters beneath it threw hand grenades at each other from the roofs of two close-packed houses at the south end of the desert city. At one point in the all-day fight, Haman can be seen pitching a grenade through a door before being enveloped in a cloud of smoke and debris.

"It was the wrong house," he explained. Haman has a disarming manner that belies his armored toughness. At 28, he hardly looks like a guy who has fought terrible fights.

The mistake was understandable. Haman's squad-sized quick reaction force (QRF) had run 800 meters from the combat outpost it was manning to reinforce a hard-hit four-vehicle convoy of Marines that had just resupplied them. Haman already knew the convoy was hurt. He heard and saw the rising black smoke from the huge IED that announced the ambush. Before they'd saddled up, he heard the ambushed squad leader say on the radio that he had three Marines down. He was calling for medevacs and reinforcements. Meanwhile, the ambushers were fleeing in all directions.

The Scan Eagle followed one squad of heavily armed insurgents running into the path of the double-timing Marines. Haman's QRF was sent to a cluster of houses where the Scan Eagle operator had observed the insurgents disappear.

Haman's fire team was ordered to help clear them out of three of the buildings. It was easier said than done. Moments after chucking a grenade into the first door he encountered, Haman entered the house next door. It was the right house this time. His team was greeted by an insurgent grenade, a yellow one that he watched roll down the hall.

"I woke up in another room," Haman remembered. "I didn't know how I got there. I had been hit by shrapnel, but it didn't hurt until later, just a little stinging."

Overhead, the Scan Eagle recorded it all. After an hour battling fierce resistance from the constantly reinforced insurgents, Haman's QRF pulled back across the road and called in air strikes. By then his platoon leader was wounded severely, and so were several men from his squad. The UAV video shows a savage machine-gun duel between cornered insurgents on the roof of one house and grenade-throwing Marines responding from the roof of another just before they pulled back. A pair of Marine F/A-18s armed with 500-pound bombs settled the account.

When it was over, one Kilo Marine from the convoy was dead, and 11 others were wounded along a nondescript road called Route Chestnut. It was the toughest fight 3/1 was in during its third combat deployment. Nine insurgents were found dead almost immediately. Another was captured while holding a baby hostage, and several more surrendered to pursuing tankers and 3/1 infantrymen before the fight was over. During the next few days, many more dead insurgents were found decomposing in the



**Graduation night, Oct. 10, 2008—Officer Joe Haman's badge is pinned on by his father, Rubin Haman, a retired St. Louis police officer.**

brush on the edge of the battlefield. Haman said it was all the war he ever wanted.

The summer Haman returned from his second tour in Iraq, he accepted his discharge to go to college. He intended to major in criminal justice and then become a St. Louis police officer like his father and four cousins. Eighteen months into school, the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department started hiring, and Haman couldn't wait. After a 6½-month police academy, Officer Joe Haman, by then a sergeant in the Marine Corps Reserve, hit the bad streets of north St. Louis. Known by police as the 5th District, it is a gang-filled, violence-prone part of the city that in October 2008 sometimes had more shooting victims in a night than Baghdad did.

Haman hit the streets running. He loved what he was doing, he said. Along with Officer Kyle Chandler, another Marine

combat veteran, he worked from a two-man squad car, looking for trouble. They soon led the district in felony arrests. In 2009, Haman received a Chief's Letter of Commendation, the District 5 Officer of the Month and Officer of the Year awards, as well as the Overall Department Officer of the Year honors. In March 2010, Officer Haman was presented with a Captain's Letter for Exceptional Performance of Duty.

"There was plenty to do," Haman said. "Sometimes it was a lot like patrolling in Iraq. When we were patrolling in Fal-lujah or Haditha, we got to know when something was out of place. We could recognize the people. We had to know when cars and trucks didn't belong somewhere. There were IEDs and VBIEDs [vehicle-borne IEDs] and all sorts of things like that.



**Joe Haman (sitting in wheelchair), along with Kyle Chandler, receives the Attorney General's Justice Award for Law Enforcement from Missouri Attorney General Chris Koster, Oct. 28, 2010.**





**Officers Joe Haman and Kyle Chandler were selected prior to the shooting as the 2009 Overall Officers of the Year for the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department. On July 14, 2010, the award was presented. From the left: Lieutenant Colonel Paul Nocchiero, deputy chief and commander of the Bureau of Auxiliary Services, St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department; Joe Haman; Haman's partner, fellow Marine and Iraq veteran Kyle Chandler; and St. Louis Chief of Police Colonel Daniel Isom, at the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department Officers of the Year Award presentation.**

"It is the same patrolling as a policeman except things are a lot easier [than they were in Iraq]. We go where we want and patrol where we want. Still, things stand out. People that shouldn't be where they are, cars full of young guys looking at us like deer caught in our headlights when we come up on them. Being situationally aware is absolutely important. The Marine Corps teaches you discipline. We knew what we were supposed to be doing, and we did it.

"One of my sergeants told me that when the district gets rookies that are former Marines, it always knows what it is getting," Haman added. "Marines just naturally do what they are supposed to be doing without anybody telling them or checking up on them ... at least most of the time."

Haman was on routine patrol about 0800 on May 27, 2010, when he spotted a car engaged in a traffic violation. At the moment, he was alone. He had dropped Chandler at the district station to write a report and decided to cruise his patrol area while he waited for his partner to come back into service. Haman flipped on his overhead emergency lights and pulled the vehicle to the curb. Inside the car were three young men and a woman, two in the front seat and two in the back. It was a routine traffic stop.

Although Haman didn't expect any

trouble, he prepared himself for it just the same. Violence erupted suddenly on the mean streets and was over just as fast. Taking a stance near the rear of the vehicle, Haman began questioning the occupants. One of them sitting in the back began acting suspiciously. Haman edged closer to ask him some questions. When

**Haman is philosophical,  
still smiling as big as he did  
a few days after being shot.  
His was the only smiling face  
in the crowded hospital room  
at the time.**

he did, the man opened fire with a .40-caliber semi-automatic he'd hidden under his leg. Haman was not fast enough to get out of harm's way. He felt slugs striking his bulletproof vest, as he started diving away from the shooter. The bullets hit so hard that he didn't know if the rounds had been stopped by his Kevlar vest. Drawing his own city issue Beretta 9 mm semi-automatic, Haman returned fire.

"Brown [24-year old Arvon L. Brown, the alleged shooter] was sort of crouched down behind the back seat, shooting at me as I was diving behind the car. He was shooting out the back window as I flew by.

He wasn't just shooting; he was tracking me, aiming. I could see his eyes following me as he kept pulling the trigger. He knew how to shoot," Haman recalled.

Haman returned fire as best he could. To his disgust, several of his shots bounced off the back of the car without striking the shooter. In the meantime, Brown allegedly continued to fire, eventually striking Haman eight times before he fled on foot from the scene. Despite his terrible injuries, Haman was able to give a concise description and direction of travel of the shooter over his radio.

Curiously, the driver of the car stayed behind to help Haman while the other young man and his female companion ran a half-mile to the police substation to report Haman was down. Meanwhile, a concerned citizen, after seeing what happened, telephoned the police. All three occupants who cooperated were released later without charges.

"I never passed out. I always knew I was going to be all right. I even told everyone I was going to be fine," Haman said.

It didn't look that way to the police and paramedics who arrived almost immediately to rush Haman to a top-notch St. Louis trauma center. His arms and legs were shattered; two bullets that struck his chest near his heart had inflicted huge burn wounds despite his Kevlar vest, and another round had passed through his lower torso after bypassing his body armor completely. Haman was in critical condition. He faced more than a dozen surgeries and nearly a year in a wheelchair. How he managed to remain conscious and cognizant remains a mystery.

"I wanted to get out a description of the guy. Several times I thought I was going to pass out—I'd get real woozy—but I never did," Haman said. "The one guy, the driver, was trying to help me. He helped me remain conscious."

The reaction in St. Louis was immediate. Although police officers frequently are shot in St. Louis, the heinous nature of this attack stunned even the street-hardened cops who patrol St. Louis every day. The entire force immediately launched a drag-net to find the alleged shooter. Using Haman's description and the video of the shooting taken automatically by Haman's dashboard-mounted video camera, Brown was caught several hours later when an informant told police the suspect was hiding in a nearby apartment building. Investigating officers captured him hiding on the roof. After a brief scuffle while trying to escape, the alleged shooter was apprehended.

Brown is currently in jail without bond, awaiting trial.

Police Chief Daniel Isom praised Ha-

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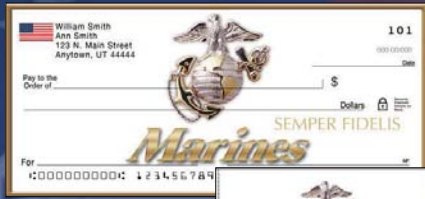
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man as an officer who was "working hard to keep our community safe." St. Louis Mayor Francis G. Slay called Haman "one very brave and very tough cop" during a televised interview with Isom at his side. The police chief added, "We've got video. He had his vest on; he returned fire; he did an amazing job; and now we need to pray for his recovery."

St. John Vianney High School principal Larry Keller posted a prayer appeal on the school website that seemed to sum up the situation. "The prayers of his fellow Griffins [school mascot] are with him now, asking God for his speedy recovery."

Keller added that Haman was a member of the National Honor Society and the football and wrestling teams during his high-school years. "We are proud of his service to our country in the Marines and to the city of St. Louis as a police officer," Keller wrote.

Similar accolades and prayers for his swift recovery came from dozens of civic and religious leaders around the city. Among the first of the many awards and honors he received, Haman earned the Attorney General's Justice Award for Law Enforcement, as well as recognition by "America's Most Wanted" All-Star competition for his service. He also was invited to sew a repair stitch into the National



Missouri Governor Jay Nixon presents the Medal of Valor to Joe Haman at the Missouri state Capitol in Jefferson City on Nov. 2, 2011.

9/11 Flag that flew over the World Trade Center on that most solemn of days.

On Nov. 2, 2011, along with seven other Missouri police officers, Haman was awarded the Missouri Police Officer's Medal of Valor, the highest award a police officer can receive in the state. On hand to present the award was Governor Jay

Nixon, a former Missouri attorney general who prosecuted some of the highest profile criminal cases in the "Show Me" state. Haman said the best part of receiving the honor was hearing the stories of the other recipients at the ceremony.

Haman is retired now, at least from policing. Although he is still officially a St. Louis police officer, his wounds make him ineligible for either police work or the Marine Corps. Haman is philosophical, still smiling as big as he did a few days after being shot. His was the only smiling face in the crowded hospital room at the time.

He said he doesn't ponder his misfortune. He makes it sound as though all that has happened to him merely created new, previously unconsidered opportunities.

"It happened, so I [have] to figure out something else. I really miss being a police officer. It is like when I was in the Marines, the camaraderie of it. But I am married and happy about that. I'm getting around OK. I figure there will be other opportunities. I'm lucky."

*Editor's note: Nat Helms is the author of "My Men Are My Heroes: The Brad Kasal Story," which was reviewed in the May 2007 Leatherneck.*





# We—the Marines

Edited by Clare A. Guerrero



CPL DANIEL WETZEL

GySgt Tony Russo swipes a rebound during the East vs. West sitting basketball game at the 2012 Marine Corps Trials, Feb. 17, at MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif. The top 50 athletes will represent the Marine Corps at the Wounded Warrior Games in Colorado Springs, Colo., in May.

## WWR's Marine Corps Trials 2012 Fields All-Marine Team

■ More than 300 wounded, ill and injured Marines, Marine veterans and international Marines and military personnel participated in the second annual Marine Corps Trials, Feb. 13-22, at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif.

The trials provided a forum to select 50 athletes as members of the All-Marine team for the Warrior Games. The Warrior Games, a competition between all branches of the U.S. Armed Forces for wounded, ill and injured personnel, will take place in Colorado Springs, Colo., April 30-May 6.

The trials are a part of the Wounded Warrior Regiment's Warrior Athlete Reconditioning program, which provides opportunities for Marines to engage in both physical and cognitive activities outside the traditional therapy setting. The program allows the WWR to continue supporting wounded, ill and injured Marines through their recovery process by providing opportunities for them to focus on strengthening their bodies and building their confidence. For more information about the WWR, visit [www.woundedwarriorregiment.org](http://www.woundedwarriorregiment.org).

Capt Jill L. Wolf  
PAO, Wounded Warrior Regiment

## Marines Train for Jungle Survival During Cobra Gold 2012

■ Royal Thai Reconnaissance Marines taught leathernecks of Company B, Battalion Landing Team 1st Bn, Fourth Marine Regiment, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit and Republic of Korea Marines how to survive in an isolated jungle environment during a class on Feb. 13, which was part of the 31st iteration of Exercise Cobra Gold 2012.

Cobra Gold 2012 is a multilateral training exercise held annually in Thailand and combines military forces from numerous countries in the Asia-Pacific region. The forces work together in a multitude of

events that train troops to operate in foreign environments.

"The Thais are showing us a lot of tools as well as resources available to us in the jungle that we will be able to exploit to survive in that environment," said First Lieutenant Zachary Duncan, platoon commander for 1st Platoon, Co B, BLT 1/4, 31st MEU. "This class is the first step in a succession of training we'll be going through, the end result being that our eyes will be open to see the jungle environment as plentiful as it is."

With hundreds of U.S., Thai and South Korean Marines in a semicircle around a presentation area, Sub-Lt Pranom Yodrug, a Thai Recon Marine, with the aid of a translator, outlined the wide variety of edible foliage and fruits available in the Thai wilderness and demonstrated proper preparation techniques for safe consumption of each item. Cooked insects resting on bamboo fashioned into makeshift trays were passed around as evidence that there is more to eat in the jungle than fruit.

While the Marine Corps has various locations around several bases that are suitable for jungle survival training, the experience is not something every Marine has the opportunity to experience. South Korea is even at less of an advantage since the country is a cold-weather region, but the jungle environment is something every Thai Marine is familiar with.

"The heavy humidity alone can cause rapid dehydration, so being here and having the Thais teach us these skills, which we may one day use, is valuable," said Lance Corporal Aaron Lende, a squad automatic weapon gunner with Co B, BLT 1/4.

The second part of the instruction covered the process of creating various traps and crude instruments for capturing animals, such as fish or lizards.

The main attraction of the class, however, was the technique of killing and field-stripping chickens and cobras. Procedures for the quick capture and humane killing of both were demonstrated to the Marines, and volunteers from all sides practiced their newly learned survival techniques.

"It may not be pretty, but in a situation where you must survive off the land, it is either you or the chicken," said Yodrug. "That is why we are teaching the other Marines these skills, because they do not have the proper environments to regularly train in jungle survival. When we all combine forces again, everyone will know how to live in the jungle."

"If I was in a jungle environment and some kind of resupply was lost, I would be able to live off the land until I was able to be resupplied," said LCpl Joshua Johnson with Co B, BLT 1/4.



**During an Exercise Cobra Gold 2012 course led by the Royal Thai Recon Marines, a Co B, BLT 1/4 leatherneck learns how to handle a deadly cobra that could become dinner in a survival scenario. (Photo by Cpl Jonathan Wright)**

The 31st MEU is the only continuously forward-deployed MEU and remains part of the nation's force in readiness in the Asia-Pacific region.

Cpl Jonathan Wright  
Combat Correspondent, 31st MEU

### **Young Marines Honored to Participate In Memorial Service for Code Talker**

■ After Keith Little, 87, president of the Navajo Code Talkers Association, passed away in January [see "In Memoriam," March *Leatherneck*], members of the Mountain View and Colorado Springs, Colo., Young Marines answered a call to

action when Little's family contacted them to assist with his memorial ceremonies.

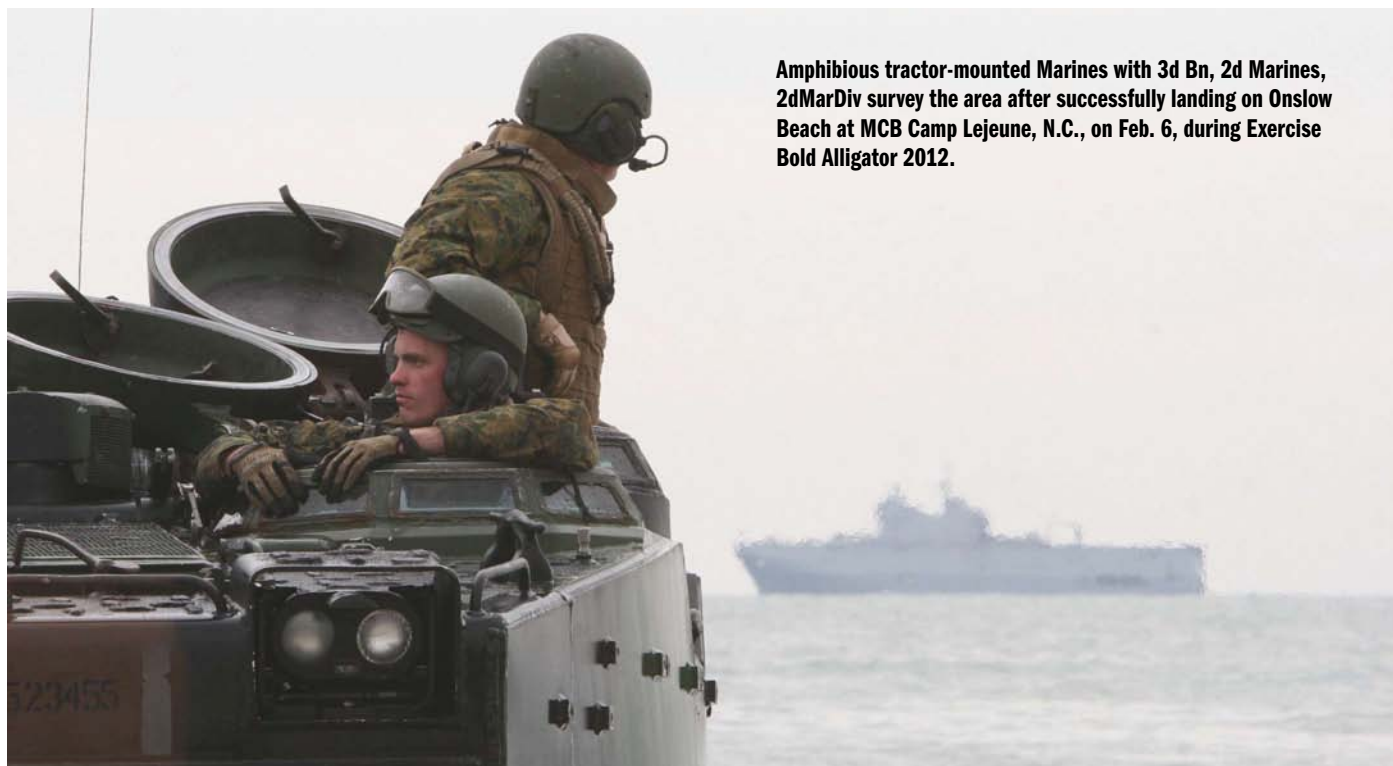
Little became a friend of the Young Marines organization in February 2006. The Young Marines has been active in the National Code Talker Day in Window Rock, Ariz., since 2007, an event that has taken place every year on Aug. 14 since 1982, when President Ronald Reagan proclaimed it a national observance.

The memorial service was a celebration of Little's life and gave members of the community a chance to attend the memorial. It was an honor for the Young Marines to be asked by the Navajo Nation to be a



**A Young Marine lays a wreath at the gravesite of Navajo Code Talker Keith Little during a memorial service that was held in January in Window Rock, Ariz. Little was a proud supporter of the Young Marines and president of the Navajo Code Talkers Association.**





**Amphibious tractor-mounted Marines with 3d Bn, 2d Marines, 2dMarDiv survey the area after successfully landing on Onslow Beach at MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C., on Feb. 6, during Exercise Bold Alligator 2012.**

PFC JAMES FRAZER

part of Little's memorial, and the Young Marines were some of the few non-Native Americans who attended the ceremonies.

The Young Marines assisted with memorial service preparations, served as ushers and were tasked with etiquette responsibilities to ensure Little's family members and the Navajo Code Talkers in attendance were properly seated.

Brenda McNulty, the unit commander of the Mountain View Young Marines,

said that when Little's widow, Nellie, arrived at the ceremonies, she went straight toward the Young Marines and hugged each and every one of them.

"Mrs. Little took all the Young Marines around to meet all of her family members," said McNulty. "She expressed her sincere appreciation for the Young Marines' participation, and she told us that Mr. Little would be honored that his 'Colorado Babies' [Young Marines] drove

so far to participate in his memorials."

The Young Marines recited the Pledge of Allegiance and posted the colors and Young Marine Private First Class Anton Nabuco sang the national anthem. McNulty read condolence letters from the Commandant of the Marine Corps and from the office of Arizona Senator Jon Kyl and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Since the Navajo language was used in many parts of the ceremony, the Young Marines had to follow cues from the Navajos to understand when they were praying and when to sit, stand, laugh and when to bow their heads. The Young Marines were granted the rare permission to photograph the memorial services.

The funeral procession included Patriot Guard Riders, family and attendees of the funeral. Along the route, many people waved flags and rendered honors to the procession. At the gravesite, a Marine Corps Reserve unit rifle detail fired a rifle salute of three volleys, and a member of the Navy sounded "Taps." Little's family and the Young Marines were invited to shovel dirt on top of the grave after a brief ceremony.

When it came time for the Young Marines to depart, a Navajo Code Talker said a blessing for the Young Marines to travel home safely.

"Mrs. Little hugged and kissed all the Young Marines that participated, and she didn't want to let go," said McNulty. "She just kept expressing how much Mr. Little was proud of the Young Marines. She said he spoke about them often and knows that he was smiling down on them."



LCPL TABITHA BARTLEY

**DEFENSE TACTICS REVISITED—Cpl Gilbert Colon (left) and Sgt Evan Benson (right) with Security Battalion, Weapons Company, 1st Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment practice handcuffing during a lesson on defensive tactics at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., Feb. 9.**

For more information on the Young Marines, visit the official website, [www.YoungMarines.com](http://www.YoungMarines.com).

Janelle Johnson  
PAO, Young Marines

### Bold Alligator Rolls Onto Onslow Beach

■ For more than 10 years, Marines have been performing operations in the deserts of Iraq and Afghanistan, far away from the U.S. Navy ships the Corps originally was created to protect and serve aboard. Exercise Bold Alligator 2012 prepared Marines to return to their amphibious roots with several training events all along the East Coast.

Marines and sailors from 3d Battalion, Second Marine Regiment, Second Marine Division and Combat Logistics Battalion 26, Second Marine Logistics Group recently conducted a training assault on Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C.'s Onslow Beach.

"Our mission was to perform an amphibious assault for follow-on missions in the area," said Sergeant Shane Cooley with CLB-26. "For the CLB, our mission was to get all of the gear across Onslow Beach and provide any combat logistical support that was needed."

"Bold Alligator is trying to get Marines back to their roots in the water, and there is a lot of planning that has to go into that," continued Cooley. "All of the service-members here are proving that Marines are specialists. Even the ones that have been serving in collateral billets or in dry environments like Iraq and Afghanistan are capable of coming out here and doing their craft."

Major James Zepko, the battalion executive officer for CLB-26, said that the exercise was an opportunity for the CLB to acquire some amphibious training before it deploys with the MEU.

"So far everything has been going pretty smoothly. We haven't had any equipment failures, and even the weather has been cooperating," said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Tina Figueiredo, USN, the officer in charge of the Beach Master naval unit. "Our job is to make sure all the craft coming on shore from the naval craft are coming in correctly, so we can avoid any casualties or losses of equipment. Even though this is just a training exercise, the danger is still very real, and everyone has been working nonstop to ensure we can complete the mission successfully without any problems."

Zepko also said that Marines who served on previous MEUs, as well as new Marines, had a chance to participate in the exercise. "All of our Marines have been very flexible and doing exceptional work. ... Across the board everyone involved in this operation [has] been doing excellent work," he said.

PFC James Frazer  
Combat Correspondent, 2dMarDiv

### Quick Shots Around the Corps

#### African Lion 12 Ready to Roar

■ Gunnery Sergeant Will Price, PAO, Marine Forces Africa, reports that in January 2012 MARFORAF conducted the final planning conference for Exercise African Lion 2012 in Agadir, Morocco. The exercise will begin in mid-April at locations in Morocco.

Exercise African Lion is a bilateral, theater security cooperation exercise led by MARFORAF and is conducted annually between the U.S. military and the Kingdom of Morocco to further develop joint and combined capabilities.



## Crazy Caption Contest

### Winner



LCPL JOSHUA YOUNG

"Come on, man. He's starting to stiffen up!"

Submitted by  
Edith Morgan  
Kittery, Maine

### This Month's Photo



CP1 DENGRER BAEZ

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

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



# The Vietnam Children's Fund



COURTESY OF DAN PULTZ

**Forty years after serving in Vietnam, Dan Pultz mobilized the members of "India" Co, 3d Bn, 9th Marines to raise funds for a Vietnam Children's Fund school in Cam Le District, Da Nang. Many India Co leathernecks and their wives traveled to Vietnam for the dedication in April 2011.**

By Terry Anderson

It was raining steadily on Nov. 11, 1992, Veterans Day. Dozens of veterans, some in wheelchairs, many dressed in old fatigues or combat camouflage utilities, stood patiently for the commemoration ceremonies at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the reading of names and the speeches.

I had been invited to speak by Jan Scruggs, one of the men who had made "The Wall" happen. It would be my "second homecoming," he said. Scruggs was referring to my release less than a year before after seven years as a hostage in Lebanon and to the "homecoming" being offered across the country to Vietnam

veterans, nearly 20 years after the war. Like many who came back from that war, I had experienced the hostility, the demonstrations, the flag-burning that greeted us in 1970, during my last tour in the Marine Corps at the recruiting station in Des Moines, Iowa. Finally, Scruggs explained, people were separating the politics of that war from the young men (average age 19) who fought it.

Early that Veterans Day morning, Scruggs and I moved slowly past the powerful black marble wall with its long list of names. There was already one man leaning against it, head bowed, touching someone's name and quietly crying. I spotted a small box among the flowers, notes and other items left at The Wall by visitors. It was a Medal

of Honor, the second one, Scruggs said, found at The Wall. Someone had seemingly wanted to honor all those listed. All were heroes, all deserved a share in our nation's highest honor.

My emotions were still strong when my turn to speak came. I talked about the medal and about healing and reconciliation—those things The Wall bestows on its visitors so strongly and with which I was struggling after my time in Lebanon. The veterans and their families listened patiently.

After the speeches ended, I chatted with other participants in a tent set up near The Wall. A lovely Vietnamese woman was introduced to me. Kieu Chinh, a famous actress in Vietnam and now in the United States, was a refugee twice over: from Hanoi in 1954, when she left a father and brother to flee south to Saigon and again in 1975, to Canada and then the United States.

Kieu had spoken to the crowd about not just the Americans whose names were on The Wall, but also about the more than 2 million Vietnamese who died. She kindly praised my short speech, and we talked about the power of The Wall, the strong effect it had on every veteran who visited it. A healing place, we agreed. "But what about my people?" she asked. "Isn't there something we can do for them?"

Vietnam was still under a trade embargo, its economy stifled by the American government's continuing enmity and the failings of a socialist government. The question struck a chord in me. While nearly all the veterans I knew were very reluctant to talk much about the war, except to other veterans, they and I shared a continued interest in the country. We had all gone there believing we were doing something positive, something right. That it went bad, that it ended in acrimony and failure, left a feeling of incompleteness. Some vets had gone back, become involved in projects from clinics and hospitals to mine removal. Was there something we could do?

In the next days and weeks I talked with others about the idea. Slowly, a group came together: Vietnam vets Jack Wheeler, another of the men who built The Wall and who had served in both the Reagan and Bush administrations, and Ed Timperlake, a former Marine F-4 pilot and intelligence expert and later Assistant Secretary for Veterans Affairs; Patt Derien, an assistant secretary of state for Jimmy Carter; and several others.



The Thai Binh VCF school, serving more than 400 needy children in Thai Binh Province, including those from an orphanage, was completed in September 2010 and dedicated in November 2010. (Photo courtesy of the Vietnam Children's Fund)



COURTESY OF THE VIETNAM CHILDREN'S FUND

**Above left:** Co-chairs of the VCF board of directors Terry Anderson and Kieu Chinh, a Vietnamese actress and refugee, celebrate with Vietnamese children at the VCF school dedication in Haiphong in 2002.



COURTESY OF ED TIMPERLAKE

**Above right:** In 1994, Ed Timperlake, a Marine F-4 Phantom II pilot during the Vietnam War, examined a pile of recovered U.S. bombs at a small village in a region once called "Leatherneck Square." He was there to participate in a groundbreaking ceremony for a school in honor of Marine Vietnam veteran Lewis B. "Lew" Puller Jr.

When we gathered in a borrowed Washington, D.C., office to talk, Kieu brought a surprise guest—Lew Puller Jr., son of deceased Marine hero Lieutenant General Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller, USMC (Ret) and a former Marine lieutenant who had lost both legs and much of both hands to a booby trap in Vietnam. "Washington's a dangerous place, Terry," Lew joked, as

he shook my hand. "We're a couple of Marines. You watch my back, and I'll watch yours."

Lew proved to be a key to realizing what later became the Vietnam Children's Fund. As we tried to figure out what kind of project we might undertake, his compassion, intelligence and stubbornness kept the discussion moving and focused. We

couldn't build another Wall, we agreed, and anyway the Vietnamese didn't really need a monument. Perhaps a clinic? A hospital? Finally, Lew suggested we ask the Vietnamese.

He agreed to make his first visit back to Vietnam, despite his disability, to find out what he could. The trip proved physically and emotionally exhausting, he told



Ed Timperlake, a U.S. Naval Academy graduate and Marine veteran, now a member of the VCF board, speaks at the 1994 groundbreaking for the first VCF school, which honors the service of Lewis B. "Lew" Puller Jr.



COURTESY OF ED TIMPERLAKE



COURTESY OF DAN PULTZ

First Lt Dan Pultz left Vietnam in late January 1968, planning only to be a citizen Marine when he left active duty in 1969, but became involved with his 3/9 contemporaries in the funding of the Thai Thi Boi Elementary School in Da Nang.

us on his return some weeks later. He had talked with government officials and ordinary Vietnamese, including a notable visit to a camp for disabled war veterans. They'd never seen a wheelchair, he said, and left him sitting on a bed with another paraplegic, while others played delightedly with his chariot.

Lew was amazed, as all of us have been, by the Vietnamese people's lack of bitterness or anger toward Americans about the war. They didn't seem to hold a grudge, despite the destruction and deaths. It was just another part of their 40-year-old struggle, which claimed more than 3 million Vietnamese. They just wanted peace and a chance to climb out of the poverty they

had been mired in since the war ended.

The trip was both a healing experience for Lew and an opportunity to learn how we could help. "They don't need a statue or a monument. What they need is schools for their children," he told us at our next meeting. A United Nations report had just come out on the million or so Vietnamese children learning in huts and even caves or with no school at all to attend.

OK, we agreed, we would build a school. The location was chosen quickly: on the former Demilitarized Zone where so many American Marines and soldiers had fought. We eventually settled on the village of Dong Ha, a small place where children were taught in a thatch-roofed hut, without

even proper desks, let alone such things as computers and televisions.

At first, as we set up the nonprofit organization we needed, we talked about building a first-class high school with computer and physics labs and all the other great things we could do with the money we could raise. Again, Lew brought us down to earth. They couldn't possibly operate or maintain that kind of school, he said. They just needed a good building and maybe some desks and chairs and even such simple things as paper and pencils. Too fancy wouldn't work.

It took us 18 months to raise the money for that first school, mostly from Vietnam vets. Our biggest donor was Jim Kimsey, founder of AOL and an Airborne Ranger in Vietnam. With the whole-hearted cooperation of the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry and its Americas Department, as well as the local Education Committee, we set up procedures for the actual construction.

An American engineer living in Hanoi, Sam Russell, agreed to supervise the building and negotiate with local builders. It was better to hire the Vietnamese and put the money to work in the local economy than bring in outsiders, we decided. Sam made sure that Vietnamese national construction standards were met. This building would last, unlike the Soviet-style cement-block buildings common in Vietnam. Despite their poverty, the local villagers came up with several thousand dollars to add a playground and a fence.

Unfortunately, Lew died before that school was completed. With the agreement of the people of Dong Ha, it was dedicated to him on April 24, 1995, 20 years after the war ended. "A gesture of healing and reconciliation between the American and Vietnamese peoples," the plaque beside the door reads.

Kieu and I made the trip with several donors for the dedication. It was her first visit home since 1975 and my first since I had left in 1970. The villagers, highly pleased with the gleaming blue-and-white structure, put on a welcome party, complete with singing children in traditional dress and a band. We went on to visit Hanoi and Da Nang, as well as Ho Chi Minh City, amazed by both the people's friendliness and the country's beauty.

That was great, we all agreed. Now what? Why not do it again? We did and then again and again. It has not always been easy. One school was built with cement carried by canoe. For another in the marshy Mekong Delta, a "floating" concrete slab had to be devised as a foundation. VCF schools have become social centers and refuges from typhoons and floods. Often, they are the only substantial, solidly built structures in the area, a spur





In 1994, Joy Carol, an early member of the VCF board and a driving force behind building schools for Vietnamese children, and Ed Timperlake visited with schoolchildren when they arrived in Dong Ha to break ground for the first VCF school. (Photo courtesy of Ed Timperlake)

to the local economy.

As we approach our 20th anniversary, the VCF has completed 48 schools throughout the country. Donors have included Marine veteran Fred Smith, founder of FedEx, who has given money for five schools, and Pete Peterson, the first U.S. Ambassador to post-war Vietnam, who spent six years in the "Hanoi Hilton" after his Air Force F-4 went down, and donated funds for a school in the village where he was captured. Major corporate donors also have included Boeing; Citibank; Coca-Cola; American Eagle, Conoco; ACE-INA and Lomma Construction.

Vietnam has changed drastically since that first school was opened. Hanoi, Da Nang and Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) have become flourishing cities, with high-rise buildings and 5-star hotels and motorcycles and even cars replacing the once ubiquitous bicycles. Per capita income has gone from a miserable \$200 a year to more than \$1,300 today, as the budding Asian Tiger's economy has opened up and its people's industry and energy blossom. But, much of the country remains poor, with a high birthrate that strains the government's ability to build schools fast enough. So, we continue to help.

Our newest school is deep in the breathtaking northern mountains of Vietnam in Lai Chau Province, a place of great potential that is difficult to reach. It serves a group of small villages that had no primary school and will provide 255 children with a modern facility.

Like other VCF schools, this one is the only solid building in the area, functioning as a social center, a refuge from storms and floods as well as an economic lift for the area. Shops and small houses will spring up around it, as they have in other areas—a kind of "halo" effect.

For the past 18 years, some 23,000 Vietnamese children annually have passed through VCF schools. Many have gone on to college or filled the jobs a newly awakened economy has created.

Our newest veterans are returning home now from Afghanistan and Iraq. For many Americans, the Vietnam War has passed into the history books. For others, though, the memory of Vietnam and her children has not dimmed. Like those of "India" Company, 3d Battalion, Ninth Marine Regiment, whose members raised \$40,000 to help construct a school near Da Nang just two years ago.

The Vietnam Children's Fund will con-

tinue to build schools as long as they are needed and generous people like these are willing to help. We think of Lew whenever a new school goes up. We believe he is pleased.

*Editor's note: To find out more about the Vietnam Children's Fund and how you might assist, visit the fund's website at [www.vietnamchildren.org/](http://www.vietnamchildren.org/).*

*Marine units who have formed Marine unit associations may wish to contact the Vietnam Children's Fund to find out how a school can be built in honor of those Vietnam veterans of your unit who served in Vietnam.*

*Terry Anderson is presently a visiting professor at Syracuse University, Newhouse School of Journalism. He joined the Marine Corps in 1965 at age 17, served as a combat correspondent in I Corps, 1969-70, and was honorably discharged in 1971 as a staff sergeant. He has been a journalist ever since, and was the Associated Press chief Middle East correspondent when he was kidnapped in Lebanon in 1985 and released 20 years ago in December 1991.*





# Instructor Battalion, TBS

## Enlisted Marines Teaching at The Basic School— Shaping Tomorrow's Leaders

*The Basic School's mission is to "train and educate newly commissioned or appointed officers in the high standards of professional knowledge, esprit-de-corps and leadership required to prepare them for duty as company grade officers in the operating forces, with particular emphasis on the duties, responsibilities and warfighting skills required of a rifle platoon commander."*

By LtCol Michael V. Samarov

Regardless of commissioning source, every new Marine officer reports to The Basic School (TBS) at Camp Barrett, aboard Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., for six months of entry-level training. In the same manner that Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C., and MCRD San Diego make basically trained Marines, TBS produces basically trained provisional rifle-platoon commanders.

Throughout much of the school's history, enlisted Marines were limited to acting as aggressors and providing logistical support. Today, this is not the case.

Staff noncommissioned officers (SNCOs) and noncommissioned officers (NCOs) are full participants in training, educating and mentoring the future leaders of our Corps. In recognition of these responsibilities, TBS has requested that SNCOs and NCOs assigned to specific billets at the school be designated for special-duty-assignment (SDA) screening and assigned the 0913 combat-instructor military occupational specialty (MOS).

"If you are a combat-experienced staff NCO or NCO, and you think that you have what it takes to train officers, you should ask for orders to TBS," said Sergeant Major Scott Schmitt, the sergeant major

of Instructor Battalion (previously known as Support Bn), The Basic School.

### The "Five Horizontal Themes"

The Marine Corps historically has set extremely high standards for officers. These standards are at the heart of entry-level officer training at TBS. In 2008, then-Colonel George Smith, the TBS commander from July 2007 to June 2010, developed a description of a TBS graduate. Incorporating then-Col John Allen's 1999 work in such areas as "pillars of officership," Col Smith described a Marine officer in terms of "Five Horizontal Themes."

- A man or woman of exemplary character
- Devoted to leading Marines 24/7
- Able to decide, communicate and act in the fog of war
- A warfighter who embraces our Corps' warrior ethos
- Mentally strong and physically tough

Enlisted instructor Cpl Rafael Hilario, Instructor Bn, TBS, MCB Quantico, Va., briefs new second lieutenants prior to a class on mines and improvised explosive devices. (Photo by LCpl Emmanuel Ramos)



## Enlisted Instruction

Developing officer graduates imbued with these themes demands the very best instructors. Previous restrictions on the use of combat-experienced SNCOs and NCOs assigned to TBS limited lieutenants' interactions with enlisted Marines and prevented student officers from seeing tactical events from both the "friendly" and "enemy" perspectives.

For many years, the most talented enlisted Marines assigned to Instructor Bn, to which all TBS permanent personnel belong, had greater opportunities to teach student lieutenants and warrant officers directly only on a case-by-case basis. Today, the Instructor Bn mission is to "provide combat instruction and training support to The Basic School in order to prepare company grade officers for duty in the Operating Forces."

Beginning with then-Col James Laster, who commanded TBS from July 2003 to June 2005, TBS established a separate platoon of NCOs who were specially selected, screened, trained and educated. These NCOs completed the same Instructor Education Program (IEP) course as their officer counterparts. Upon successful graduation, the NCOs could qualify as assistant instructors in squad-level program of instruction (POI) events. They assumed the role of assistant primary instructors for major field exercises.

The titles "primary instructor" and "assistant instructor" are extremely important at TBS. Prior to this platoon's creation, only officers were designated as instructors and allowed to teach lieutenants. The group of captain instructors at TBS is called "the Bullpen." In keeping with this tradition, the platoon of NCO instructors is known as "the Dugout." The first Dugout Marines provided instruction that improved and complemented their officer counterparts. Because of this, the platoon has become a permanent part of the TBS table of organization.

"The incorporation of the NCO into TBS' program of instruction gives the student lieutenant an example of how experience, blended with doctrine, becomes a training standard," said Sergeant William McMonigle, enlisted warfighting instructor in the Dugout Plt. "These valuable interactions, while early in their career, facilitate a better understanding of the officer and enlisted relationship and raise their expectations of a quality Marine NCO," McMonigle added.

Expanded training at TBS drove demand for more enlisted primary and assistant instructors. Implementation of the latest changes to the POI in March 2011 brought the issue to a head. Clearly, a fundamental rethinking of the role of en-

listed Marines at TBS was necessary.

In response to the new requirements, Instructor Bn reorganized to increase the availability of SNCO and NCO instructors, improve the efficiency of logistical support to training and streamline command and control of both of these mission-essential functions. This approach allows students the opportunity to face a thinking enemy who is trying to win, allows enlisted combat instructors to provide more meaningful contributions and increases the opportunities for SNCO and NCO interaction with student officers.

The dramatically expanded roles and responsibilities of these enlisted leaders place duty at TBS on par with existing Marine special-duty assignments.

According to Sgt Andrew Dorf of Combat Instructor Company, "Enlisted instruction at TBS is paramount towards the development of successful Marine officers. Having NCOs help forge the building blocks of Marine officers gives insight as to what officers should expect from their future NCOs upon reaching the operating forces or supporting establishment. The use of NCOs at TBS is a two-way street because it not only prepares officers for their future platoons and sections, but also shows the NCOs who teach them where officers come from."

The new Instructor Bn structure aligns units and personnel along functional lines, organizes combat-service-support tasks into a single company, clearly assigns individual and team training and readiness skills to enlisted combat instructors and affords selected SNCOs and NCOs the opportunity both to teach and evaluate student officers and creates a complemen-

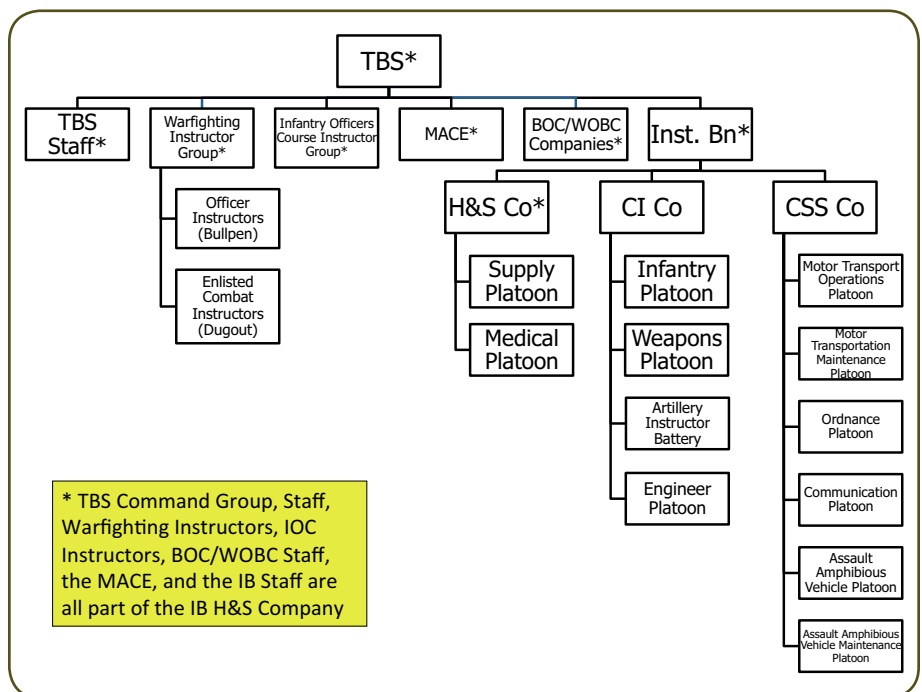


**The commander of Instructor Bn makes a strong case for special-duty-assignment pay for enlisted instructors, such as Cpl Rafael Hilario, teaching mines, IEDs and countermeasures. (Photo by LCpl Emmanuel Ramos)**

tary relationship between officer and enlisted instructors.

Headquarters and Service Co (H&S), Instructor Bn maintains its organization and role of providing administrative control, staff oversight, supply support and medical support to training. The Dugout Plt remains an integral part of H&S Co, reporting to the Warfighting Director, the chief instructor at TBS.

Combat Service Support Co—organized into Ordnance, Motor Transport Operations, Motor Transportation Maintenance, Communications and Assault Amphibious Vehicle platoons—provides training and logistical support both to TBS and to all





Marine Corps forces in the National Capital Region.

Combat Instructor Co, which includes Infantry, Weapons and Engineer platoons and Artillery Instructor Battery, has a dual role.

First, Combat Instructor Co provides combat instruction in all infantry, engineer and fire support individual and team training and readiness skills, both to TBS and to National Capital Region Marine Corps units, including Marine Barracks Washington and other units at MCB Quantico.

Second, the company's officers, SNCOs and NCOs have taken on the duties and responsibilities of the Combined Arms Warfighting Section. In this effort, qualified Marine leaders from the company teach classes, direct tactical-decision games and sand-table exercises, function as primary and assistant instructors for several field-firing exercises and execute a systems approach to training responsibilities for nearly one-third of the 26-week Basic Officer Course.

Whenever possible, officers, SNCOs and NCOs teach as a team. A captain provides the example of officership, while a sergeant demonstrates the high caliber expected of the Marine NCO. Seasoned officer, SNCO and NCO instructors provide students a vivid example of an ef-

fective leadership team. "Who's better to evaluate the qualities of a leader than those who are expected to follow?" said Captain Mark Tetzl, Combat Engineer Plt commander, Combat Instructor Co.

### The Way Ahead

In recognition of the contributions and expanded roles of enlisted Marines to entry-level officer instruction, TBS has explored ways to professionalize and recognize this cadre of highly capable enlisted instructors. In the same manner as our best Marines recruit and train entry-level enlisted Marines (both at the MCRDs and at the Schools of Infantry), professionalization would ensure that top-quality SNCOs and NCOs recruit, train and educate entry-level officers.

The parallels between the missions, structure, roles and contributions of combat instructors at TBS and the combat instructors at the Schools of Infantry, who acquire the 0913 combat instructor MOS, are clear. So the recommendation to afford special-duty-assignment status to the TBS combat instructors recognizes and rewards those parallels.

TBS and Instructor Bn have operated under the new POI and new structure since April 1, 2011. The lessons learned since then have increased the effectiveness of the new role of SNCOs and NCOs in

molding the future leaders of our Corps. While this should surprise no one, enlisted Marines have thrived in their new roles.

"These staff sergeants and sergeants are showing lieutenants what 'right' looks like. They are making officers who are ready to lead Marines as soon as they get to the Fleet," said Col Julian D. Alford, Commanding Officer, TBS.

Improved efficiency and effectiveness have allowed the school to maintain its operational tempo in the face of personnel and resource reductions. The process has been a significant win for student officers, instructors and TBS. This critical opportunity for SNCOs and NCOs to train their future platoon commanders requires the Corps' best enlisted leaders.

So, as SgtMaj Schmitt said, if you think that you have what it takes, ask for orders to TBS!

*Editor's note: See the January 2012 Marine Corps Gazette for a companion article that describes in detail the development and evolution of the current TBS POI.*

*LtCol Michael Samarov is the commanding officer of Instructor Bn. He is a career infantry officer and has commanded at the platoon and company levels.*



**Sgt William R. Bradley (far left) of Instructor Bn's Dugout Plt instructs and evaluates the student lieutenants of "Alpha" Co, 1-12, TBS during their patrolling field exercise. (Photo by Capt Chris Parks)**





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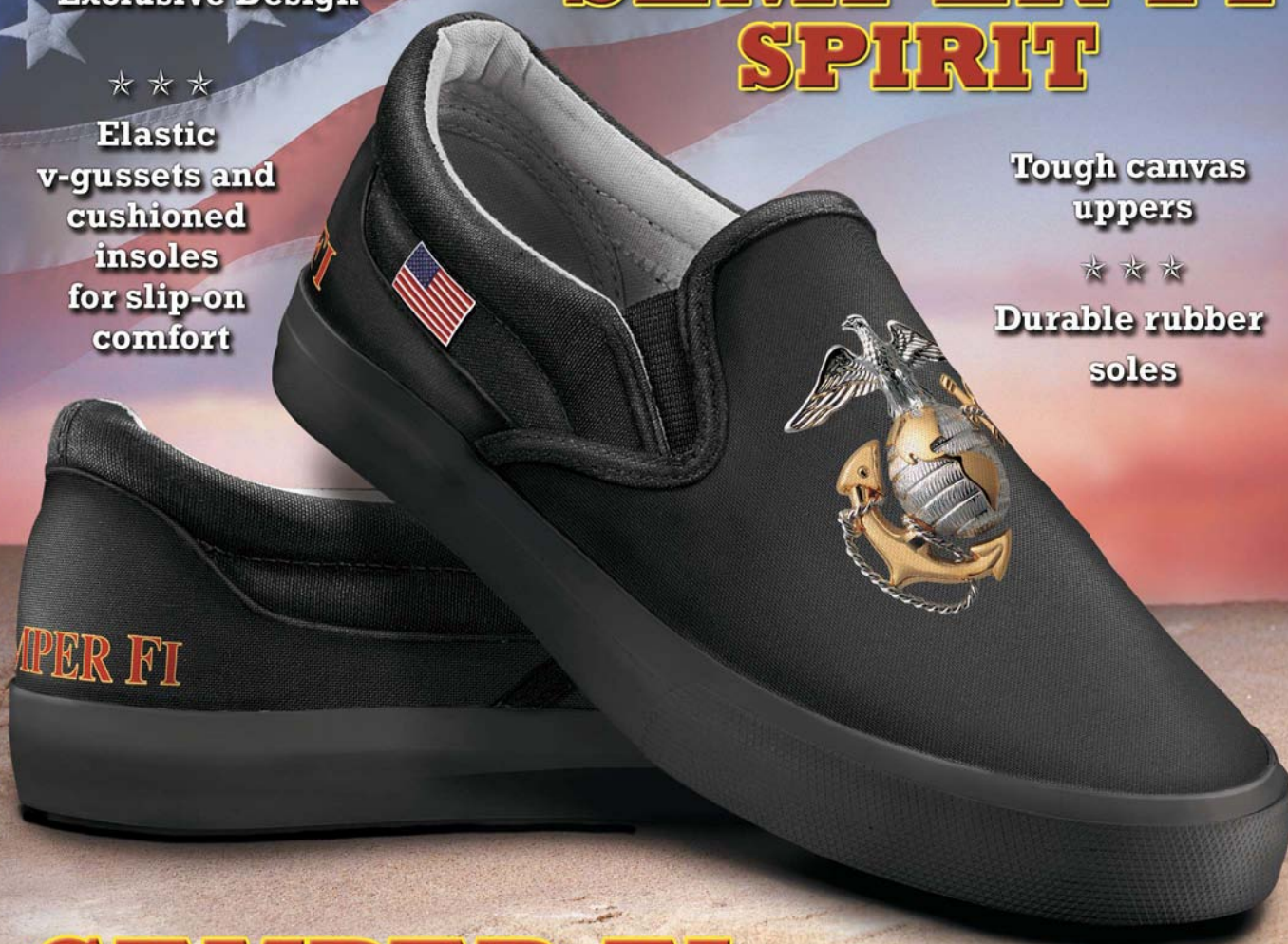
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# In the Highest Tradition

Edited by R. R. Keene and Lawralynn Diehl

## Drill Instructor Awarded Silver Star



Sergeant Philip A. McCulloch Jr. and his squad heard an explosion off to the northeast as they were crossing the Helmand River. Moments later, McCulloch's team was ambushed from three machine-gun positions, and they took cover in the riverbank.

The engagement happened on a reconnaissance mission in Sangin District, Afghanistan. McCulloch, a squad leader in Company K, 3d Battalion, Fifth Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 8, Second Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward), had to make several critical decisions to ensure the safe return of his 21-man team, Jan. 8, 2011.

"I've always had aggressive leaders in charge of me who accepted nothing less than perfection," said McCulloch, 23. "I never second-guessed myself."

McCulloch personally led his squad in the counterattack, destroying an enemy

fighting position with an AT-4 antiarmor weapon. His squad then forced the enemy to fall back by maintaining constant pressure and by making use of their air support and indirect fire capabilities.

"I was just doing my job. I wanted to make sure my Marines were safe," said McCulloch, who was raised in Texas. "It was just another day on the job."

Only after six hours of fighting, with his squad low on ammunition, did they return to friendly lines. During the action, McCulloch was wounded in the leg.

For these actions, McCulloch was awarded a Silver Star by Brigadier General Daniel D. Yoo, Commanding General, Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego and the Western Recruiting Region, Feb. 10, 2012.

"He absolutely deserves that medal. ... His courage under fire is unwavering," said First Sergeant Christopher M. Carlisle, Company M, 3d Recruit Training Battalion. He's the future of the Corps."

McCulloch is a drill instructor now, using his combat experience to train the next generation of Marines. "I came down here to give back to the Marine Corps, as a drill instructor," McCulloch said. "I think my combat leadership as a whole, not just that one day, has definitely impacted my leadership and the way I look at things and down here at MCRD as well."

McCulloch has been a DI at the depot since December 2011 and is in his first recruit training cycle. "With [his] combat experience, maturity and understanding of the way the Marine Corps works, he is definitely a person I want in front of recruits," said Carlisle.

Although McCulloch is the Marine being awarded, he said his squad deserves the recognition. "I don't think I earned it. My Marines earned it," said McCulloch. "I wish they could all have one. ... They definitely earned it in my eyes."

LCpl Eric Quintanilla  
PAO, MCRD San Diego



Sgt Philip A. McCulloch Jr., drill instructor, salutes BGen Daniel D. Yoo, CG, MCRD/WRR San Diego, after being awarded the Silver Star for his heroics during 2011 in Afghanistan.

LCPL ERIC QUINTANILLA

## Personal Combat Awards

The awards records in the Marine Corps' Award Processing System (APS) and Improved Awards Processing System were used to populate this list, which reflects personal combat awards from the start of the global war on terrorism presented to Marines and sailors serving with U.S. Marine Corps forces only. This list may not reflect certain personal combat awards

processed outside of either system and/or approved by another branch of service. Any questions on the content should be submitted in writing to the Personal Awards Section at Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, Manpower Management Division, MMMA-2, 2008 Elliot Rd., Quantico, VA 22134.

The following awards were announced in January:



### Bronze Star With Combat "V"

**Sgt Freddie Cavazos Jr.**, 3d Battalion, Fifth Marine Regiment, First Marine Division  
**SSgt Bernard J. Coyne Jr.**, 7th

Engineer Support Bn, First Marine Logistics Group

**Sgt Jonathan D. Decker**, 3/5, 1stMarDiv

**GySgt Jason S. Dempsey**, 3/7, 1stMarDiv

**SSgt David J. Dignan**, 7th ESB, 1st MLG

**Capt Christopher Z. Esrey**, 3/5, 1stMarDiv

**Sgt Robert D. Gregory**, 3/5, 1stMarDiv

**Sgt Adam M. Jacks**, 3/8, 2dMarDiv

**Capt Nickoli C. Johnson**, 3/5, 1stMarDiv

**1stLt Christopher J. Kakas**, 3/5, 1stMarDiv

**SSgt Jonathan C. Key**, 7th ESB, 1st MLG

**Sgt Dayton C. McConnell**, 3/5, 1stMarDiv

**SSgt Everaldo M. McKie**, 7th ESB, 1st MLG

**1stSgt Jorge Melendez**, 3/5, 1stMarDiv

**1stLt Robert E. Rain**, 1/8, 2dMarDiv

**LCpl Paul J. Stephens**, 3/6, 2dMarDiv

**Capt Steve Temerlin**, 3d Marines, 3dMarDiv

**SSgt James D. Whidden**, 7th ESB, 1st MLG

**Sgt Cassell J. Wiggins**, 3/5, 1stMarDiv



### Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal With Combat "V"

**Sgt Thomas R. Arnett**, Combat Logistics Bn 6,

Combat Logistics Regt 2, 2d MLG

**Cpl Ryan L. Boulan**, 2/4, 1stMarDiv

**Sgt Mark W. Brokaw**, 3/5, 1stMarDiv

**1stLt Joshua S. Cox**, Marine Expeditionary Force Headquarters Group, I MEF

**SSgt Anthony P. Donato**, 3/8, 2dMarDiv

**Sgt Liam T. Dwyer**, 8th Marines, 2dMarDiv

**1stLt Bradley C. Fromm**, 3/5, 1stMarDiv

**SSgt Daniel G. Garcia**, 3/5, 1stMarDiv  
**Cpl Yoseph Gonzalez-Vasallo**, 1/6, 2dMarDiv

**1stLt Kolbe E. Grell**, 3/5, 1stMarDiv

**Cpl Rory Z. Gutowski**, 3/8, 2dMarDiv

**SSgt Timothy C. Henley**, 3/5, 1stMarDiv

**SSgt David C. Hernandez**, 3/5, 1stMarDiv

**Cpl Madison J. Jefferson**, 1/5, 1stMarDiv

**Sgt Kevin T. Krebs**, Hq Bn, 2d MLG (Fwd)

**SSgt Cesar L. Larrea**, 1/5, 1stMarDiv

**GySgt Raymond C. Lombard Jr.**, 1/9, 2dMarDiv

**Capt Matthew P. Manoukian**, 1st Marine Special Operations Bn (MSOB), U.S. Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command (MARSOC)

**Sgt Israel J. Matos**, 3/4, 1stMarDiv

**Cpl Jared W. McNally**, 1/5, 1stMarDiv  
**1stLt Nicholas M. Morales**, 3/5, 1stMarDiv

**SSgt Gregory J. Mullins**, 7th ESB, 1st MLG

**1stLt Benjamin J. O'Donnell**, 1/5, 1stMarDiv

**Capt Jonathan R. Parker**, 2/8, 2dMarDiv

**Sgt Michael A. Pinedo**, 1/5, 1stMarDiv

**SSgt Thomas S. Praxedes**, 1/5, 1stMarDiv

**Cpl Jesse J. Raper**, 3/8, 2dMarDiv

**SSgt Jeffrey S. Ray**, 2d MLG (Fwd)

**GySgt Brad W. Rickabaugh**, 3/8, 2dMarDiv

**Sgt Daniel P. Robert**, 3/5, 1stMarDiv

**1stLt Benjamin T. Schramm**, 2d

Maintenance Bn, CLR-25, 2d MLG

**Capt Scott A. Stewart**, 1st Air/Naval Gunfire Liaison Company, MHG, I MEF

**Cpl Kevin S. Tucker**, 3d

Reconnaissance Bn, 3dMarDiv

**1stLt Brian T. Vandenberg**, 1/5, 1stMarDiv

**Maj Jason C. Vose**, Marine Corps Recruiting Command

**1stLt Chase B. Wheeler**, 2d Combat Engineer Bn, 2dMarDiv

**GySgt Jeffrey C. Williams**, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps

**GySgt Corey E. Wodrich**, 2d CEB, 2dMarDiv



### Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal With Combat "V"

**SSgt Philip M. Ashe**, 1st MSOB, MARSOC

**Sgt Anthony E. Bailey**, 2d MLG (Fwd)

**Sgt Samuel A. Beltram**, 3/8, 2dMarDiv

**Sgt Paul R. Boothroyd**, 3/8, 2dMarDiv

**Sgt Kevin C. Boyd**, 2d Recon Bn, 2dMarDiv

**Cpl Steven J. Bradley**, 3/2, 2dMarDiv

**SSgt Edwin A. Burch II**, 2d

ANGLICO, MHG, II MEF

**Cpl Derron M. Burd**, 3/8, 2dMarDiv

**Sgt John J. Celona**, 2d Recon Bn, 2dMarDiv

**LCpl Jason A. Chavez**, 2/4, 1stMarDiv

**Cpl Garrett Z. Coxwell**, 3/8, 2dMarDiv

**HN Ryan J. Davis**, 3/7, 1stMarDiv

**Sgt Ehren L. Ehly**, 3/5, 1stMarDiv

**Cpl Colin C. Faust**, 3/5, 1stMarDiv

**Cpl David P. Garner**, 3/8, 2dMarDiv

**LCpl Travis I. Haggerty**, 3/5, 1stMarDiv

**Capt Joseph B. Hamilton**, 1st ANGLICO, MHG, I MEF

**1stLt Joseph S. Hanson**, 3/4, 1stMarDiv

**2dLt Michael P. Hubbard II**, 1/9, 2dMarDiv

**Cpl Richard H. Hur**, 3/5, 1stMarDiv

**Sgt Alex M. Jack**, 3/4, 1stMarDiv

**Cpl Steven J. Kelly**, 3/5, 1stMarDiv

**HN Andrew T. Maltais**, Regimental Combat Team 5

**1stLt Corey G. Mazza**, 1/5, 1stMarDiv

**1stLt Timothy M. McNulty**, 3d Recon Bn, 3dMarDiv

**LCpl Samuel W. McWhorter**, Hq Bn, 2d MLG (Fwd)

**Cpl Jeffery D. Moore II**, 2d CEB, 2dMarDiv

**Sgt Joseph B. Myers**, 3/5, 1stMarDiv

**Sgt Hector Ochoa**, 1/5, 1stMarDiv

**1stLt Andrew W. O'Donnell**, 1/5, 1stMarDiv

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GySgt Christopher L. Pruitt, 3/4,  
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Cpl Tristan B. Pursley, 3/8, 2dMarDiv  
Sgt Fernando Rojas Jr., 1st  
ANGLICO, MHG, I MEF  
Cpl Mitchell C. Romero, 1/5,  
1stMarDiv  
LCpl Matthew R. Scott, 1/5,  
1stMarDiv  
Cpl Kirk H. Shaffer, 3d Recon Bn,  
3dMarDiv  
Cpl Victor M. Sierra, 1/5, 1stMarDiv  
LCpl Aaron J. Stark, Hq Bn, 2d MLG  
(Fwd)  
LCpl Joshua K. Stowers, 1/5,  
1stMarDiv  
HM3 James A. Stringer, RCT-5  
SSgt Benjamin S. Sundell, 3/4,  
1stMarDiv  
HM2 Tinsea E. Tekleab, 8th Marines,  
2dMarDiv  
Sgt Jason E. White, RCT-5  
2dLt Edward L. Yoo, 1/6, 2dMarDiv

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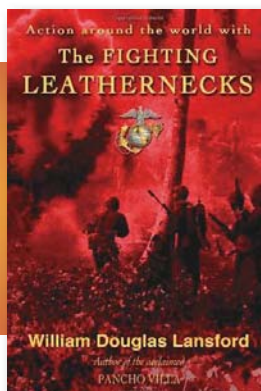
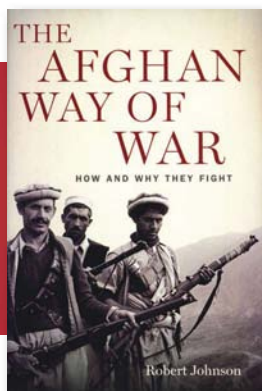
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**THE AFGHAN WAY OF WAR: How and Why They Fight.** By Robert Johnson. Published by Oxford University Press. 375 pages. Stock #0199798567. \$26.96 MCA Members. \$29.95 Regular Price.

Perusing the extensive scholarship in Robert Johnson's compelling "The Afghan Way of War—How and Why They Fight," one has the feeling it was written by the acknowledged expert on the history of warfare in Afghanistan exclusively for those veteran campaigners and strategists now lecturing U.S.-led coalition troops for new military operations. Within the first few pages of the introduction, however, a smooth, easy-to-digest, narrative style emerges, convincing the uninitiated that the book was compiled and written exclusively for him or her.

The author's account of the Afghan "way of war," that is repeated episodes of civil war or the ethnic nature of conflict, is yet an unfolding drama in world military history—a drama of not only the ever-changing tides of invaders and their unique killing technologies, but also over the past 150 years, tribal courage, collective fortitude and faith.

In his grim analysis, Johnson, the deputy director of the Oxford Changing Character of War Program, and lecturer in the History of War at Oxford University, stages his drama in three acts: the seemingly endless dynastic struggles leading up to the first Anglo-Afghan war; the 1863-68 Afghan Civil War to the 11-year Soviet war with the Mujahedeen and, in between, the Pashtun Rising and Frontier Wars; and, third, the Taliban and Insurgency between 1990 and 2012. His final 10 pages, "Lessons Learned," are alone worth the price of the book.

"My effort reassesses all the Afghan wars in order to examine Afghan strategy and operational planning, motivation, force structures, leadership, command and control, tactics, and attitudes toward negotiations," Johnson writes. "I provide a catalog of consistent problems and constant change. Ultimately, war is still about friction, perception and human will, and, like humans, war remains a specimen beyond absolute scientific classification."

It's all here, except for the fact Johnson is too gracious and diplomatic to concede:

When molding the world, God had a "senior moment" as he created the Hindu Kush range of mountains west of the Himalayas. That is, unless he deliberately pinpointed one geography for all human miseries—diverse races, insane early empires, austere religions, tyrannical governments, trying heat and freezing cold, high-altitude fighting, and endless, absolutely endless, rock and fine dust. Yet, God created there a purity in the eyes of the children and an innocence in the faces of villagers and mountain people that is nonpareil.

And, for this reviewer, that explains exactly why America and her closest allies are there.

"The Afghan Way of War" is a superb survey of the early history, fighting character, and the traditional and enduring hope of an incredibly resolute people hedged in by every conceivable natural and man-made difficulty. Written with obvious enthusiasm, it will remain for decades a significant contribution to both the history of Afghanistan and the evolution of modern warfare. Johnson's treatise must be required reading for anyone venturing into the region.

Don DeNevi

*Editor's note: Don DeNevi, an author himself, is a frequent reviewer for Leatherneck magazine.*

**THE FIGHTING LEATHERNECKS.** By William Douglas Lansford. Published by CreateSpace. 284 pages. Softcover. Stock #1452811768. \$17.96 MCA Members. \$19.95 Regular Price.

In the rarified world of great military history storytelling, we have located a book of remarkable distinction. The new book, "The Fighting Leathernecks," written by William Douglas Lansford, qualifies with a near-perfect score. For within its pages reside the accounts of some of our Corps' most legendary figures. And, although you surely may have examined some of these bold accounts on a starlit

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night around a campfire, trust me, you've never heard their stories told with such gusto, and told in such an enjoyable way.

Ahoy, Raiders! The esteemed author, William D. Lansford, is himself something of a legend. He served with the storied 2d Marine Raider Battalion during the early days of the Pacific campaign. He made the landing on Makin Island and took part in the battalion's "long march" during the hotly contested Guadalcanal campaign.

Lansford's rough-and-tumble stories of these hard-fought desperate days are filled with the mud-Marines' salty language. They include the personal accounts of famous Marines we all know and love, and perhaps thanks to this fine work, some with whom you will soon become acquainted. But while Marines everywhere will enjoy reading the chronicles of these famed Medal of Honor winners, the book also gives us remarkable insight into these iron-hard Marines, as flesh and blood human beings.

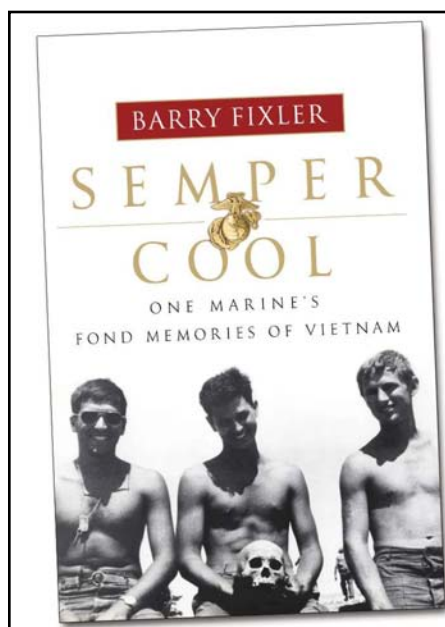
Notably, we revisit the glory days of such astonishing Marines as Evans F. Carlson, Smedley D. Butler, Herman Hanneken, Anthony Biddle, David M. Shoup, Mitch Paige, John Basilone, Thomas A. Wornham, Clyde Thomason and Eugene Obregon. One other reader wrote, "If most of these names don't ring a bell, then you've let your Marine Corps knowledge dull and tarnish like those who fail to shine the back of their brass. That is all the more reason to buy this book."

Of course what makes each of their personal stories—really vignettes—more intriguing is that the author personally knew, or served, with most of them. His knowledge of his subjects and his masterful writing skill help bring each of these "Giants of the Corps" to us: up-close and personal.

Additionally, the author includes some interesting stories of some things we've, most likely, never heard. Does anyone, aside from our honored surviving Carlson Raiders, remember the 2d Raider Battalion's "war-games" raid on Lualualei?

Prior to their deployment to meet the Japanese on the jungle island of Makin, Lieutenant Colonel Carlson's men took on a nearly impossible training mission. In this true-to-life exercise, the Raiders infiltrated and captured a well-protected U.S. base on one of the Hawaiian Islands. None of the high brass, but perhaps Carlson and his Raiders, expected that it could be done. So, grab a copy of this captivating book and find out how the highly trained Raiders managed to do the near-impossible.

A joy to read, this book will keep Marines and other military history buffs intrigued. Cover to cover, from Haiti to the ridges overlooking Seoul, Korea, read-



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—Marc Leepson, *The VVA Veteran*

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ers feel they are in the presence of the leathernecks who inspired them to join up. Aside from the author's somewhat annoying habit of incorrectly referring to the Medal of Honor as the "Congressional" Medal of Honor, this book carries us along with the iron men whose names decorate the mess halls of our youth.

"Ahoy, Marines—shine your brass, then zero in on this outsized history of our

Corps' bigger-than-life heroes.

Robert B. Loring

*Editor's note: A prolific reader and Leatherneck contributor, "Red Bob" Loring is dedicated to supporting social programs improving the lives of citizens in East Pasco County, Fla.*





# Leatherneck Line

Edited by Clare A. Guerrero

## Leathernecks Hit the Slopes During SMP Snowboarding Trip

Nine Marines stood around a campfire in the freezing cold at the top of an 8,000-foot mountain in Big Bear, Calif. Music filled the air, and the aroma of pepper steak roasting over the fire drifted on the night breeze as the group laughed and talked the hours away. No one would be able to tell that most of these Marines had met each other only the day before for the Single Marine Program's Big Bear Mountain snowboarding trip on Jan. 29.

This SMP group, from Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz., also recently held a dodgeball tournament, a flag football tournament and a Super Bowl party

at the SMP recreation center, as well as a ski trip to Flagstaff, Ariz.

Eric Cabalbag, recreation assistant with the MCAS Yuma SMP, said that the program helps to build morale and camaraderie among Marines by providing activities that relieve stress. "We're here for you," said Cabalbag. "The individual Marine is extremely important. You support [America], so we support you. SMP exists to be a home away from home for Marines.

"The trips provide more freedom to unwind. Marines go through a stressful week, and if you want to release some tension, this takes you out of your workspace and helps you relax."

Most SMP events are free or are of-

fered at a reduced cost because they are subsidized by Marine Corps Community Services. Prior experience in an activity is not required.

"It's well worth the money," said Lance Corporal Sean Jevicky, a target repairman with Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron Range Maintenance. "The cabins are nice, and the travel is free. It's great to be out with a group of people where there's always someone to hang out with."

Jevicky said that the Big Bear Mountain snowboarding trip was one of the best experiences that he has had since being stationed at MCAS Yuma, and he highly recommends SMP to others. "The trip is calming, soothing and relaxing, except when you're falling," said Jevicky.

According to the SMP website, the SMP is an initiative offered in conjunction with MCCS, and an SMP council meets regularly at every major Marine Corps installation. "The [SMP] was established to provide a forum for Marines to identify quality of life ideas and issues and recommend solutions, after all, change starts from the bottom up. Through participation in the planning and coordination of programs and activities Marines have a direct influence in their execution" the website says.

For more information about SMP, visit the website at [www.usmc-mccs.org/smp/index.cfm](http://www.usmc-mccs.org/smp/index.cfm).

LCpl William Waterstreet  
PAO, MCAS Yuma, Ariz.



LCPL WILLIAM WATERSTREET

Cpl Joshua P. "Josh" Huitt, a native of Porter, Texas, and a hydraulic and diesel mechanic with Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 13, flies off a jump on Big Bear Mountain, Calif., during a Single Marine Program trip from MCAS Yuma, Ariz.

## Eagle Scout Candidate Restores Trail at MCLB Albany

Jared R. Gillan, a 17-year-old member of Boy Scout Troop 3 of Albany, Ga., led a project to restore a nature trail at Marine Corps Logistics Base Albany, Ga., Feb. 4.

Gillan, who started as a Tiger Cub Scout and joined the Boy Scouts in 2005, was working toward the rank of Eagle Scout, the highest rank in Boy Scouts, which he would merit after the completion of a community service project.

The senior at Lee County High School discussed several project ideas with his father, Colonel Daniel Gillan, USMC (Ret), and decided on the project at MCLB Albany, a nature trail between Building 3500 and Maintenance Center Albany. "I wanted

to do something different from the other Boy Scouts,” he said. “When I heard about the nature trail, I jumped on it because I thought it [was] an awesome idea.”

In July 2011, Jared Gillan and his mother, Andrea, met with Al Belanger, the game warden at MCLB Albany, and toured the nature trail. “Service is a key part of Scouting,” Belanger said. “The restoration project gives Jared the opportunity to demonstrate and enhance his leadership skills while performing a project that will benefit the base community. This is a great opportunity for MCLB Albany and the Boy Scouts to work together and make a positive impact on the base’s conservation efforts.”

According to Gillan, the nature trail was in poor condition. “The trail needed a lot of cleaning up to be made safe for Marines and civilian Marines to use,” he said. “There were a lot of fallen trees and limbs on the path. It was not a place where I would walk or run if I worked here.”

More than 40 volunteers, including other Scouts, arrived at the base to help with the project. Gillan led them to the nature trail’s entrance where he conducted a detailed safety brief and divided the volunteers into teams with specific tasks.

One team marked the two trails by painting scarlet and gold triangles on certain trees to identify each path. The other team raked, shoveled and removed debris off the trail from a recent tree harvest. Gillan’s Scoutmaster, Mike Johnson, used a chainsaw to cut down any rotten trees. The Scouts dragged the trees into the nearby woods away from the trail. In addition, the sign at the entrance of the trail was disassembled, washed and reassembled.

Col Gillan said that while most Scouts ask for donations to complete their projects, his son saved his weekly allowance and purchased the items needed for the project, including paint, hardware, materials, cleaning supplies and, with the help of his parents, lunch for the volunteers.

At the end of the day, Jared Gillan and his father hung an arrow-shaped sign bearing his name, troop and month and year the project was completed below the main sign at the trail’s entrance. “I feel proud and honored to be able to provide a place where Marines and civilian Marines can walk or run,” the younger Gillan said. “The men and women here work hard every day to make sure we have a safe place to live. They are out there every day fighting for us. I just wanted to give something back, repay them for protecting me.”

“What we hope Jared will gain is knowledge in planning, organizing and completing his project,” said Johnson. “After he completes the project, he was to write



**Jared R. Gillan stepped off the beaten path when he chose an Eagle Scout service project that benefits Marines. The Life Scout with Boy Scout Troop 3 of Albany, Ga., partnered with the Marine Corps to restore a nature trail at MCLB Albany, Feb. 4.**

NATHAN L. HANKS JR.

a report analyzing the success of the project, changes that took place during the project and things he would have done differently. This is a tremendous step in his leadership.” Johnson added that Gillan is scheduled to be Boy Scout Troop 3’s 150th Eagle Scout.

“To say that I am proud or to say I am thrilled with Jared does not illustrate the sense of pride I feel for his achievement,” said Col Gillan. “It’s been amazing to see Jared mature and suddenly realize that he can really accomplish what at first seemed like an impossible task. Andrea and I are happy to see him realize the importance of service to others.”

Nathan L. Hanks Jr.  
PAO, MCLB Albany, Ga.

## Corps Programs Count Toward Graduate Credits

The Marine Corps College of Distance Education and Training (CDET) is work-

ing with multiple universities to provide graduates of the 8900 series Command and Staff College Distance Education Program and 8650 series Expeditionary Warfare School Distance Education Program the opportunity to use their experience to earn credits toward a master’s degree.

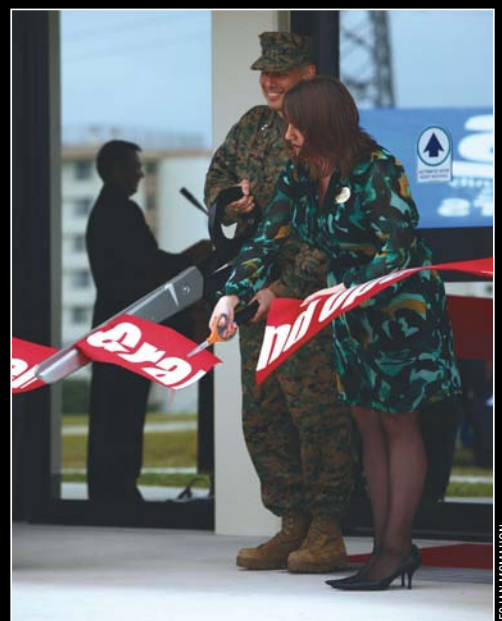
CDET has partnered with the University of Oklahoma, University of Maryland University College, Indiana University, Webster University and Marshall University. Each university will grant graduate-level credits for course work completed for a variety of different degree and certificate programs.

For more information about obtaining graduate-level credits, visit [www.tecom.usmc.mil/cdet/masters\\_credit.asp](http://www.tecom.usmc.mil/cdet/masters_credit.asp).

James J. Corvin  
PAO, TECOM



**STATE-OF-THE-ART CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER OPENS—MajGen Peter J. Talleri, Commanding General, Marine Corps Installations Pacific and Marine Corps Base Camp Butler, Okinawa, Japan, and Molly Conley, director of the Ashibina Child Development Center, Camp Foster, Okinawa, cut the ribbon symbolizing the completion and opening of the new Ashibina center on Jan. 20. The center that took approximately two years to build cost \$4.7 million and is designed for the care of up to 104 children. It consists of an 8,000-square-foot playground, eight classrooms, a kitchen and a state-of-the-art safety security system.**



PECIAN MCMAHON



# In Memoriam

Edited by R. R. Keene

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

## Operation Enduring Freedom: Marine and Navy Casualties, Jan. 1-31, 2012

The following were listed as having died while supporting combat operations:

**Corporal Jon-Luke Bateman**, 22, of Tulsa, Okla., with 2d Battalion, Fourth Marine Regiment, First Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., Jan. 15, in Helmand province, Afghanistan.

**Lance Corporal Kenneth E. Cochran**, 20, of Wilder, Idaho, with 9th Engineer Support Bn, Third Marine Logistics Group, III MEF, MCB Camp Butler, Okinawa, Japan, Jan. 15, in Helmand province.

**Cpl Phillip D. McGeath**, 25, of Glendale, Ariz., with 1/6, 2dMarDiv, II MEF, MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C., Jan. 18, in Helmand province.

**Captain Joshua C. Pairsh**, 29, of Equality, Ill., with 4th Civil Affairs Group, Marine Forces Reserve, Washington, D.C., Jan. 22, in the United States of a noncombat-related illness.

**Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technician First Class Chad R.**

**Regelin**, USN, 24, of Cottonwood, Calif., with Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit 3, San Diego, assigned to Marine Special Operations Company B, Jan. 2, in Helmand province.

**Sergeant William C. Stacey**, 23, of Redding, Calif., with 2/4, 1stMarDiv, I MEF, Camp Pendleton, Jan. 31, in Helmand province.

The Department of Defense announced the deaths of six Marines who were supporting Operation Enduring Freedom. Killed were: **Capt Daniel B. Bartle**, 27, of Ferndale, Wash.; **Capt Nathan R. McHone**, 29, of Crystal Lake, Ill.; **Master Sergeant Travis W. Riddick**, 40, of Centerville, Iowa; **Cpl Jesse W. Stites**, 23, of North Beach, Md.; **Cpl Kevin J. Reinhard**, 25, of Colonia, N.J.; and **Cpl Joseph D. Logan**, 22, of Willis, Texas, with Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 363, Marine Aircraft Group 24, First Marine Aircraft Wing, III MEF, MCB Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, Jan. 19, in Helmand province.

## Corps Identifies 7 Killed In Helicopter Collision

The U.S. Marine Corps identified the seven killed in a midair collision of two of its helicopters along the Arizona-California border in February.

The Marines, who were preparing to deploy to Afghanistan, were killed Feb. 22 in a collision between an AH-1W Super Cobra attack helicopter and a UH-1Y Super Huey utility helicopter.

The Marines were identified as:

**Major Thomas A. Budrejko**, 37, of Montville, Conn. He was commissioned as an officer in 1996 and served as an AH-1W Super Cobra pilot and was the Executive Officer, Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 469.

**Captain Michael M. Quin**, 28, of Purcellville, Va. He was commissioned in 2006 and served as a UH-1Y Super Huey pilot.

**Capt Benjamin N. Cerniglia**, 31, of Montgomery, Ala. He was commissioned in 2007 and served as an AH-1W Super Cobra pilot.

**Sergeant Justin A. Everett**, 33, of Clovis, Calif. He enlisted in 2002 and served as a helicopter crew chief aboard a UH-1Y Super Huey.

**Lance Corporal Corey A. Little**, 25, of Marietta, Ga. He enlisted in 2009 and served as a helicopter crew chief aboard a UH-1Y Super Huey.

**LCpl Nickoulas H. Elliott**, 21, of Spokane, Wash. He enlisted in 2009 and served as a

helicopter crew chief aboard a UH-1Y Super Huey.

**Capt Nathan W. Anderson**, 32, of Amarillo, Texas. He was commissioned in 2002 and served as a UH-1Y Super Huey pilot.

Anderson was assigned to Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Squadron One at Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz., while the other six were assigned to HMLA-469, Marine Aircraft Group 39, Third Marine Aircraft Wing, MCAS Camp Pendleton, Calif.

The crash occurred in the Chocolate Mountains on the California side of the range, near MCAS Yuma.

## Samuel Jaskilka

General Samuel "Sam" Jaskilka—former Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps, decorated combat veteran of three wars and 36 years as a Marine—died Jan. 15 in Arlington County, Va. He was 92.

As a platoon leader, he fought in the Pacific during World War II and served aboard USS *Princeton* (CVL-23). He participated in the Tarawa Island raid; the Gilbert Islands Operation; the Marshall Islands Operation; Palau, Yap, Ulithi and Wolei raids; Marianas Operation; Western Caroline Islands Operations and Leyte Operation. While serving in *Princeton* he survived her sinking in the Battle of Leyte Gulf on Oct. 24, 1944.

Upon his return to the States, he was as-

signed duty as Instructor, Headquarters Company, Troop Leaders Battalion, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif. He later became Commanding Officer, Marine Detachment, U.S. Naval Air Activities, Port Lyautey, French Morocco.

In 1949, then-Captain Jaskilka joined the First Marine Division and, later, embarked with the division for Korea serving as battalion executive officer and commanding officer of Company E, 2d Battalion, Fifth Marine Regiment. He led the first wave of Marines onto Red Beach on Sept. 15, 1950, in the invasion of Inchon. His action in Korea earned two Silver Stars and a Bronze Star with combat "V."

He reported to the 3dMarDiv in 1963 and was assigned as Executive Officer, 3d Marines and, later, Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3, Southeast Asian Treaty Organization Expeditionary Brigade. He returned to the States as a joint staff officer in the Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and earned the Joint Service Commendation Medal. He was promoted to colonel in July 1964.

In August 1966, he was assigned to Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps where he served consecutively as Deputy Manpower Coordinator for Research and Information Systems, G-1 Division; as Director, Data Systems Division; and as Director, Management Analysis Group. He earned the Legion of Merit for the latter two assignments and was promoted to brigadier general in 1968.

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He served in Vietnam in 1969 as Assistant Division Commander, 1stMarDiv, and Commanding General, Task Force Yankee. In August 1969, he was reassigned as J-3, Operations, Military Assistance Command, Vietnam. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal.

He was CG, 2dMarDiv in 1973 and, following his promotion to lieutenant general in 1974, was assigned as Deputy Chief of Staff (Manpower) at HQMC.

He was named Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps under General Louis H. Wilson, 26th CMC, in July 1975. He was advanced to the grade of general on March 4, 1976.

An avid runner, he ran on a daily basis, long before it became popular to do so in the Corps, and became known as "the running general." He created a friendly rivalry with then-Secretary of the Navy J. William Middendorf III with an annual five-mile race down the Potomac River. Gen Jaskilka ran and Secretary Middendorf rowed.

Gen Jaskilka was the first president of the Marine Corps Association following its merger with the Leatherneck Association in 1976. He retired from the Corps on June 30, 1978.

In his home state of Connecticut, there is a highway named for him.

## William H. Dabney

Colonel William H. "Bill" Dabney, USMC (Ret)—winner of the Navy Cross for his leadership at Hill 881 South during the 1968

siege of Khe Sanh, veteran of 36 years as a highly decorated Marine infantry officer, former Commandant of Virginia Military Institute's Corps of Cadets, Lexington, Va.—died in Lexington, Feb. 15. He was 77.

Born in St. John, New Brunswick, Canada, he grew up in Panama and Gloucester County, Va. He enlisted in 1954 and served as a sergeant with the Third Marine Division in Japan until he was discharged in 1957. Dabney remained in the Reserve until 1960 when he attended the Marine Corps Officer's Basic School, Quantico, Va.

He served as a platoon leader and rifle company commander in the 2dMarDiv, Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., and saw duty in the Caribbean and Mediterranean. From 1964 to 1967, he served at Marine Barracks Rota, Spain.

He earned his Navy Cross on Dec. 26, 1967, when he took "India" Company, 3d Battalion, 26th Marine Regiment to the top of Hill 881S, a regimental outpost about four miles west of Khe Sanh Combat Base.

On Jan. 18, 1968, a Marine reconnaissance team was ambushed near Hill 881 North, two kilometers directly north of 881S. The next day when an India Co platoon was sent to recover gear abandoned by the recon team, they again skirmished with units of the North Vietnamese Army. Capt Dabney requested and received permission to take all of India on a reconnaissance-in-force to 881N. Mike Co of 3d Bn, less one platoon, was sent to 881S to hold it while India made its recon.

On Jan. 20, India ran head-on into an NVA battalion. The siege of Khe Sanh had begun. Capt Dabney commanded the two-company detachment of 3/26 on Hill 881S for 77 days. His Marines held onto the key terrain against all odds. During the vicious fighting, Capt Dabney lost 163 Marines and corpsmen out of a company of 180. His famous comment to senior officers inquiring if he could hold was that there were only two ways he and his men would come off the hill: "Blown off, or flown off."

He returned to Vietnam in 1970 and served as senior advisor to a Vietnamese Marine infantry battalion on the Demilitarized Zone, again, near the old Khe Sanh Combat Base.

As a lieutenant colonel, he commanded 1/1 at MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif., in 1978-79.

He then served at Offutt Air Force Base, Omaha, Neb., as Chief, Combat Operations Center, National Emergency Airborne Command Post from 1980 to 1981.

He returned to Asia as CO, 9th Marines at Camp Hansen, Okinawa, in 1983. He was CO, Headquarters Bn, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, Henderson Hall, Arlington, Va., from 1984 to 1987.

Col Dabney's final assignment was as CO, NROTC, Virginia Military Institute, 1987-90, and as Commandant, VMI Corps of Cadets, 1989-90, when he retired with 33 years of active service (36 years total).

He was the husband of Virginia Puller Dabney and son-in-law of the Corps' legendary Lieutenant General Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller.





Col Dabney's decorations also include the Silver Star, two Bronze Stars with combat "V," the Purple Heart, two Navy Commendation Medals with combat "V" and the Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross.

**Troy B. Akers**, 87, of Radford, Va. He was a WW II veteran with 2d Antiaircraft Artillery Bn, III Amphibious Corps on Okinawa and with the 1stMarDiv in China. He was a retired heavy equipment operator.

**Cpl James L. "Seamus" Garrahy**, 70, of Gettysburg, Pa. He was a Marine who remained active in Marine Corps affairs throughout his life. Through the years, he hosted thousands of active-duty leathernecks and Marine veterans at his home in what had become known as "Steaks and Beers." He also hosted the finish line and post-race event for the "Face of America—Wounded Warriors Bike Ride."

Seamus Garrahy owned and operated "Jim Garrahy's Fudge Kitchen." What started as a single store on Baltimore Street grew into 78 different locations in the United States, England and Scotland. Headquartered in Gettysburg the company was sold in 2009. For a year, he served as a crew member aboard the tall ship HMS *Bounty*, sailing the Atlantic.

He also founded a singing group, the "Sault Antlers Men's Choir," known for its Irish drinking songs. They recorded an album and later were a fixture in the Gettysburg area every St. Patrick's Day. And if you've ever tasted it, you'll never forget his "Gung Ho" barbecue sauce.

**SSgt Jayne G. (Burgess) Loraine**, 80, of Sun City, Ariz. She enlisted in the Marine Corps Reserve in 1950 and was assigned to the Women's Reserve Plt, 2d Infantry Bn in Boston. During the Korean War, she was called to active duty for recruit training at MCRD Parris Island, S.C., and was assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron, MCAS El Toro, Calif. In 1951, she was assigned to the Women Marines' Det., where she enlisted in the regular Marine Corps.

In 1953, she attended recruiter school at Parris Island and graduated top of her class. She was assigned as a recruiter in Dallas where she met her husband, Marine SSgt Jacques B. Loraine Jr. She left the Corps in 1953, and her husband went on to retire as a major in 1969. They raised four children at various East and West Coast duty assignments.

**Maj Leonard H. "Len" Mapes**, 89, in Lebanon, Ohio. He enlisted in 1942 and, during the war in the Pacific, flew R4Ds with MAG-25, carrying supplies and men into, and casualties out of, such places as Guadalcanal, Bougainville, Peleliu, Samar, Leyte, Mindanao and Luzon.

With the Japanese surrender in September 1945, he deployed with MAG-25 to Tsingtao, North China. From there he flew support for Marine operations in North China and participated in the rescue of Allied civilians from Japanese prison camps in North China and Manchuria. His hazardous rescue of civilian prisoners from the camp at Weihsien was the subject of an article in the June 2011 issue of *Leatherneck*. For that mission he was decorated by Chinese President Chiang Kai-shek.

Mapes graduated from Central Michigan University in time to return to active duty for the Korean War and retired in 1966. After retirement from the Corps, he worked as a flight instructor and chief pilot for several Michigan flying clubs, and with more than 24,000 lifetime flight hours, he was a member of the Experimental Aircraft Association and a life member of the MCL.

**Sgt Franklin C. Sexton**, 87, in Chattanooga, Tenn. He enlisted at age 16 and saw combat in the South Pacific during WW II. He fought as an artilleryman on Guadalcanal in M/4/11, 1stMarDiv and became a sergeant at age 17.

After the war, he completed his education, graduating from Memphis State College. He was in management with Chrysler's subsidiary Vanpool Services.

**Capt John Smith**, 81, in Orlando, Fla. He enlisted in 1948 and was a member of the "Summer of '48" (Marine Corps veterans organization). A veteran of the Korean and Vietnam wars, he went on to serve 23 years in the Corps at various duty stations.

**Gloria M. (Lopez) Spooner**, 82, of Triangle, Va. Well known to generations of Marines, FBI and law enforcement officials and their families, and a friend of the docents at the National Museum of the Marine Corps, Gloria was the wife of retired Marine Maj Richard T. Spooner, owner and proprietor of the famous Globe & Laurel Restaurant in Stafford, Va.

She was first sergeant tough and stood her ground when she believed in something. She was strict, rock-solid in her beliefs and unapologetically expressed them in no uncertain terms. She also was a loving mother and grandmother in the old Mexican family tradition, which she learned in her childhood home of San Francisco. She brought her children up to believe in God and to listen to their mother. She had a sense of humor, was a friend to those in need and loyal to those she befriended and trusted.

"She was dedicated and loyal," said Rick Spooner. "We were married for 60 years, and we had a wonderful life together."

She was at his side at the Globe & Laurel since they founded the eating establishment and watering hole in 1968, and it was a rare day when she wasn't there on duty, either behind the bar or at the door greeting customers. She never sent anyone away who stopped at her door in need of a meal, which she often provided free of charge. She was a personal and close friend to the *Leatherneck* staff and the MCA&F. Her granddaughter Clare Guerrero is a staff writer with the magazine.

Gloria leaves four children and 17 grandchildren. Her son, Richard W., is a retired Marine major. Her two sons-in-law are veteran Marines, and three of her grandsons are in the Corps. She is sorely missed.

**SSgt Fred Steffens**, 82, in Leonardo, N.J. He enlisted in 1948 and was a member of the "Summer of '48" (Marine Corps veterans organization). He served in the Korean War and with the crash crew at MCAS Cherry Point, N.C.





## SOUND OFF

[continued from page 11]

dalep@upwardaccess.com.

• **Marine A-4 Skyhawk Assn.**, May 17-20, Oxon Hill, Md. Contact Mark Williams, 400 Howell Way, #102, Edmonds, WA 98020, (425) 771-2030, roger.wilco@comcast.net.

• **Marine Air Traffic Control Assn.**, Sept. 19-23, Fredericksburg, Va. Contact Roger McIntosh, 5 Quartz Cir., Fredericksburg, VA 22405, (540) 373-9691, mac13120@cox.net.

• **USMC Bulk Fuel Assn.**, May 4-6, Beaufort, S.C. Contact Howard W. Huston, 328 Pine Ave., Egg Harbor Township, NJ 08234, (609) 432-4027, (609) 927-3857, hhust61@aol.com, usmcseabee@hotmail.com.

• **Moroccan Reunion Assn. Inc.** is planning a reunion for Marines and sailors who served at Port Lyautey/Kenitra, Morocco. Contact Robert Sieborg, Moroccan Reunion Assn. Inc., P.O. Box 13362, Omaha, NE 68113, (402) 496-1498.

• **USMC Hawk Assn.**, June 8-14, Washington, D.C. Contact Stan Buliszyn, 1 Cherry Drive Ln., Ocala, FL 34472, www.usmchawkassociation.com.

• **East Coast Drill Instructors**, May

3-6, Parris Island, S.C. Contact SgtMaj Kenneth D. Miller, USMC (Ret), (828) 757-0968, usmcpidi@charter.net, www.parrislanddi.org.

• **TF Delta, MCAS Rose Garden, Nam Phong, Thailand**, May 25-28, Quantico, Va. Contact Harold Delamater, 169 Ketchamtown Rd., Wappingers Falls, NY 12590, (845) 297-8865, hgd1025@aol.com.

• **2d Recon Bn Assn.**, June 21-24, Jacksonville, N.C. Contact 2d Recon Bn Assn., P.O. Box 1679, Westminster, MD 21158, or Bob Moody, sgtrecon73@gmail.com.

• **2d Bn, 4th Marines Assn.**, June 13-17, San Clemente, Calif. Contact Frank Valdez, valcone@hotmail.com, or Becky Valdez, (714) 281-2846, fxala@hotmail.com.

• **3d Recon Bn Assn.**, Sept. 25-30, Williamsburg, Va. Contact Doug or Aggie Heath, (770) 684-7668, dnaheath@aol.com, or Bob or Sandy Hoover, (843) 302-2151, 2826rjh@gmail.com, www.3drecon.org.

• **1/27 (and supporting units, RVN, 1967-68)**, Sept. 20-23, San Diego. Contact Felix "Sal" Salmeron, 1406 Nighthawk Dr., Little Elm, TX 75068, (469) 583-0191, mar463@aol.com.

• **2/1 (RVN)**, Nov. 8-15, San Diego.

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• **2/9, Nov. 8-12, Branson, Mo.** Contact Gabe Coronado, (810) 334-0377, member [3107@aol.com](mailto:3107@aol.com).

• **3/3 Reunion and Auction of Military Memorabilia**, July 31-Aug. 5, Branson, Mo. Contact C. W. Hopkins, P.O. Box 744, Gentry, AR 72734, (573) 673-5441, [ThirdMarinesNet@aol.com](mailto:ThirdMarinesNet@aol.com), [www.33USMC.com/auction.html](http://www.33USMC.com/auction.html).

• **7th Comm Bn, 1stMarDiv (RVN)**, June 21-23, Las Vegas. Contact Keith Christensen, (530) 333-1916, [K9notails@aol.com](mailto:K9notails@aol.com).

• **3/10 (Camp Lejeune, N.C.)**, June 22-24, Jacksonville, N.C. Contact Donald Jones, [mr.djones@mail.com](mailto:mr.djones@mail.com).

• **11th Engineer Bn Assn.** is planning a reunion. Contact Charles Luhan Jr., 8451 S. Kilbourn Ave., Chicago, IL 60652, (773) 585-9629, [CL1lengbrn@sbcglobal.net](mailto:CL1lengbrn@sbcglobal.net).

• **E/2/5 (RVN, 1966-70)**, Oct. 18-21, Quantico, Va. Contact Ochal Caudill, (909) 271-5323, [ochal@roadrunner.com](mailto:ochal@roadrunner.com).

• **F/2/5**, Sept. 16-20, Nashville, Tenn. Contact 1stSgt William B. "Sam" Henderson, USMC (Ret), (775) 980-9603, [deh1262@aol.com](mailto:deh1262@aol.com).

• **H/3/5 (and attached units, 1950-53)**,

May 2-7, Kansas City, Mo. Contact James Skidmore, (316) 721-2876, [jsbsl@cox.net](mailto:jsbsl@cox.net).

• **A/1/7 (Korea, 1950-53)**, Oct. 8-11, Charleston, S.C. Contact Leonard R. "Shifty" Shifflette, 25 Emery St., Harrisonburg, VA 22801, (540) 434-2066, [CaptShifty@comcast.net](mailto:CaptShifty@comcast.net).

• **G/2/7 (RVN, 1965-70)**, Aug. 15-20, Palm Springs, Calif. Contact Ron Myers, (916) 723-7324, [rlmyers5@comcast.net](mailto:rlmyers5@comcast.net).

• **H/3/7 (Korea, 1950-55)**, May 8-13, Lisle, Ill. Contact MSgt Ed Parungo, USMC (Ret), (919) 414-7468, [parun3@aol.com](mailto:parun3@aol.com), or Bob Nichols, (727) 392-2886, [jarheadh37@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:jarheadh37@tampabay.rr.com).

• **I/3/7**, April 25-29, Myrtle Beach, S.C. Contact Dennis E. Deibert, 6007 Catherine St., Harrisburg, PA 17112, (717) 652-1695.

• **K/3/7 (RVN)**, Sept. 20-24, Oklahoma City. Contact William Rolke, (262) 780-0993, [k37usmc@att.net](mailto:k37usmc@att.net).

• **L/3/9 (RVN, 1967-69)**, Sept. 6-9, Colorado Springs, Colo. Contact Robert Citron, 16365 Crescent Dr., Southfield, MI 48076, (248) 569-4771.

• **A/1/12 (RVN)**, Oct. 18-21, Charlotte, N.C. Contact Dale Punch, 131 Boulder Dr., Lincolnton, NC 28092, (704) 477-8829, [dalepunch@charter.net](mailto:dalepunch@charter.net).

• **1st ANGLICO**, June 11-17, Cleveland. Contact John Maurer, (614) 262-

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- **"Kilo" Btry, 4/13 (RVN)**, May 2-7, Wilmington, N.C. Contact Tom Gafford, (434) 369-8032, tag30@me.com, or Joseph Pizzi, (973) 300-9896, joseph.pizzi@gmail.com, www.kilo413.com.

- **Co B, 1st Tanks, 1stMarDiv (RVN, 1966-68)**, May 16-20, St. Charles, Mo. Contact Ron "Snoopy" Davidson, 65 Beasley Dr., Lexington, TN 38351, (815) 764-0124, bravo34@charter.net.

- **Marine Ammo Co (all units, all eras)**, May 2-5, San Antonio. Contact Tom Crotty, (513) 451-4694, tomandcar@fuse.net.

- **USMC Postal (MOS 0160/0161)**, Sept. 30-Oct. 5, Branson, Mo. Contact MSgt Harold Wilson, USMC (Ret), 835 N. Wood St., Logan, OH 43138, (740) 385-6204, handk.lucerne06@gmail.com.

- **Yemassee Train Depot**, Oct. 19-20, Yemassee, S.C. Contact Roy Hughes, P.O. Box 265, Yemassee, SC 29945, (843) 589-3385.

- **Marine Security Force Co, Marine Barracks Adak, Alaska (all years)**, July 20-22, Deep Creek Lake, Md. Contact Pete Cunliffe, (256) 379-2080, acunliffe@hotmail.com, or Mike Herdering, (301) 746-7776, herdering@earthlink.net.

- **Marine Barracks, Subic Bay and**

**Sangley Point Marines**, Sept. 10-16, Bremerton, Wash. Contact Bob White, 205 Pebbles Ave., Belvidere, IL 61008, (815) 544-3932, bobwhiteludy@aol.com.

- **Korean War Recon Marines**, Oct. 3-6, Houston. Contact James Sauser, (281) 332-5725, jimsauser1@gmail.com.

- **MarDet, USS Juneau (CL-119)**, Aug. 29-Sept. 2, Branson, Mo. Contact William S. Gerichten, 141 Pinelawn Dr., Kernersville, NC 27284, (336) 993-5415.

- **American Embassy Saigon (RVN)**, Sept. 26-29, Chesapeake, Va. Contact MSgt Gus F. Tomuschat, USMC (Ret), (804) 693-3007, saigongunny@yahoo.com, www.saigonmac.org.

- **21st Special Basic Class (1953)** is planning two reunions for 2012. Contact Shirley Fry, (703) 469-3750, ssfry@juno.com.

- **TBS 5-62**, May 10-13, Washington, D.C. Contact Hal Gibbs, (252) 756-8817, lghtng1@live.com, or Harvey Ross, (269) 782-3601, harvey\_ross@hotmail.com.

- **7th WOCS (1966)**, August 2012, Quantico, Va. Contact Bob Dalton, (443) 203-6408, prdalton@msn.com.

- **Plt 115, Parris Island, 1965**, is planning a reunion for 2012. Contact SgtMaj D. J. Farrell, USMC (Ret), (918) 689-1989, or Steve Holton, (301) 375-6036.

- **Plt 296, Parris Island, 1965**, is plan-

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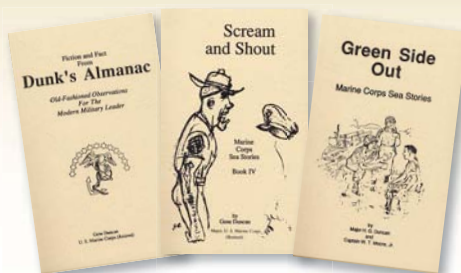
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ning a reunion for 2014. Contact SgtMaj James Butler, USMC (Ret), (910) 340-7074, [jbutler29@ec.rr.com](mailto:jbutler29@ec.rr.com).

• **Plt 331, Parris Island, 1959**, June 27-30, Parris Island, S.C. Contact MGySgt Bob Daniels, USMC (Ret), (904) 579-4346, [bertojotol@gmail.com](mailto:bertojotol@gmail.com), or Bob Wood, (205) 856-3416, [bwood9@bellsouth.net](mailto:bwood9@bellsouth.net).

• **Plt 339, Parris Island, 1962**, is planning a reunion for 2012. Contact LtCol Bob Mullins, USMC (Ret), (740) 417-9112, [rmullins11@columbus.rr.com](mailto:rmullins11@columbus.rr.com).

• **Plt 529, Parris Island, 1952**, is planning a reunion for September. Contact Chris Vail, (770) 321-5018, [greenmtchris@comcast.net](mailto:greenmtchris@comcast.net).

• **Plt 1066, San Diego, 1969**, May 3-6, Branson, Mo. Contact Bob Deal, (443) 608-0008, [robert.c.deal@gmail.com](mailto:robert.c.deal@gmail.com).

• **Plt 1089, Parris Island, 1986**, is planning a reunion. Contact Mark Smith, P.O. Box 828, Columbus, MS 39703, (662) 549-7712, [msmith@cpi-group.com](mailto:msmith@cpi-group.com).

• **Plt 2085, Parris Island, 1966**, is planning a reunion. Contact Bill Simmons, [jst1putt@aol.com](mailto:jst1putt@aol.com), [mkboyle@myfairpoint.net](mailto:mkboyle@myfairpoint.net).

• **Marine Corps Aviation Assn. VMFA-531 "Gray Ghost" Squadron**, May 16-19, Oxon Hill, Md. Contact Paul Domalik, (352) 475-2231, [pauldvmfa-531@windstream.net](mailto:pauldvmfa-531@windstream.net).

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• **VMA (AW)-533 (1969-70)**, June 2, Las Vegas. Contact John Murphy, 3524 Dora Ln., West Palm Beach, FL 33417, (856) 848-7557, jmurphy425@gmail.com, or Jerry Callaway, 6545 Union St., Arvada, CO 80004, (303) 467-9896, j2callaway@q.com.

• **VMFA-212 (1977-80)**, April 21-22, Pensacola Beach, Fla. Contact J. D. Loucks, P.O. Box 1, East Jewett, NY 12424, vmfa212reunion@aol.com.

• **VMF/VMA-311**, Sept. 5-9, Dumfries, Va. Contact Jim Galchick, 1290 E. 12th St., Salem, OH 44460, (330) 337-9383, jgalchick@neo.rr.com.

• **VMO-6 Reunion and Memorial Dedication**, May 16-18, National Museum of the Marine Corps, Triangle, Va. Contact Ed Kufeldt, (703) 250-1514, edkufeldt@gmail.com.

• **Marine F-4 Phantom Reunion**, Nov. 1-4, San Diego. Contact AFRI (Attn: F-4 Phantom), 322 Madison Mews, Norfolk, VA 23510, f4phantom@afri.com.

### Ships and Others

• **USS Antietam (CV/CVA/CVS-36)**, Sept. 19-23, Portland, Ore. Contact Lyonel Young, (316) 425-5693, lyonel.young@cox.net.

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

• **USS Hornet (CV-8/CV-12/ CVA-12/ CVS-12)**, Sept. 11-16, San Mateo, Calif. Contact Carl or Sandy Burket, P.O. Box 108, Roaring Spring, PA 16673, (814) 224-5063, horneteva@aol.com.

• **USS Iwo Jima (LPH-2/LHD-7)**, June 6-10, McLean, Va. Contact Robert G. McAnally, 152 Frissell St., Hampton, VA 23663, (757) 723-0317, yujack@megalink.net.

• **USS Portsmouth (CL-102)**, April 26-30, Herndon, Va. Contact Walt Hohner, 448 Hillside Ave., Piscataway, NJ 08854, (732) 463-1745, wphohner@aol.com.

• **USS Providence (CL-82, CLG-6, SSN-719)**, May 2-6, Washington, D.C. Contact Jim Chryst, (717) 284-6996, jchryst@embarqmail.com, ussprovidence.org.

• **USS Ranger (CVA/CV-61)**, Sept. 22-29, New England/Canada cruise leaving from Manhattan, N.Y. Contact Brian Forrester, (800) 998-1228, brian@hcttravel.com, or Herb Boudrot, (207) 251-3793, boilerman006@yahoo.com.

• **USS Smalley (DD-565)**, May 15-19, Savannah, Ga. Contact Sid Gilbreath, 110 Breen Ln., Cookville, TN 38506, (931) 526-7283, sgilbreath@tntech.edu.

• **USS Tarawa (CV-40/LHA-1)**, April 19-22, Nashville, Tenn. Contact Ken Underdown, 31 Islet Rd., Levittown, PA 19057, (215) 547-0245, or Walter Tothoro,



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• NOB/NAS Trinidad Reunion Assn. (including FASRON-105, VPB-208, VPMS-8, VP-48, VPB-213, VP-34, Seabee Dets and USMC), Aug. 29-Sept. 1, Washington, D.C. Contact F. D. Barrett, ADCS, USN (Ret), 1448 W. Highway 16, Witts Springs, AR 72686, (870) 496-2285, [barrett27@dishmail.net](mailto:barrett27@dishmail.net).

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## Wanted:

• Former Cpl Gerald R. Jurado, 115 Victoria Ct., Dixon, CA 95620, (707) 678-3438, [jerryjurado@att.net](mailto:jerryjurado@att.net), wants a recruit graduation book for Plt 121, San Diego, 1957.

• Former Sgt Emidio J. Lupini, 2025 Rockstone Pl., Henrico, VA 23238, (804) 363-0972, needs his platoon number in order to locate his recruit graduation book. He arrived at MCRD Parris Island July 12, 1954.

• Marine veteran James D. Cannon, (562) 595-8008, [canjimmc98@yahoo.com](mailto:canjimmc98@yahoo.com),

# New LtCol Earl "Pete" Ellis Annual Essay Contest!

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- Both civilian & military writers eligible
- 2,000 – 3,000 words maximum length
- Entries due between 1 May – 30 June with entries judged in July 2012 and winners announced shortly after.
- All entries eligible for publication in *Marine Corps Gazette*

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wants a **recruit graduation book for Plt 215, Parris Island, 1958.**

• Marine veteran Larry M. McGrath, (520) 885-5344, [larrymtucson@juno.com](mailto:larrymtucson@juno.com), who was in 1st RTB and graduated on Oct. 4, 1957, needs his platoon number to locate his **Parris Island recruit graduation book.**

• Marine veteran Jack V. Abrahamson, 5209 Richwood Dr., Edina, MN 55436, (952) 927-8200, wants a **dress blue blouse and belt, size 46R or larger.**

• Former Sgt Spencer Framke, 3300 N. Manor Dr., Lansing, MI 60438, (773) 818-9071, [usmcpride10@sbcglobal.net](mailto:usmcpride10@sbcglobal.net), wants a cruise book from **WESTPAC 85, USS Okinawa (LPH-3), HMM-164 (Rein), 13th MAU, and a photograph of Gen P.X. Kelley promoting him to sergeant.**

• Marine veteran Tom "Moose" Morton, P.O. Box 3528, Vista, CA 92085, (760) 727-5921, wants a photo of himself, when he served with **D/1/4, RVN, 1969.**

• Marine veteran Patrick Turley, [patrick\\_turley316@yahoo.com](mailto:patrick_turley316@yahoo.com), wants **Marine Corps boot camp stories to publish in his anthology called "From Pain to Pride."**

• Marine veteran William Tusch, 3724 Mactibby St., San Diego, CA 92117, (858) 349-3308, [wtusch@san.rr.com](mailto:wtusch@san.rr.com), wants a 1958 "Guidebook for Marines" and a



COURTESY OF BOYCE CLARK

If you are in this photo, Marine veteran Boyce Clark, bottom row (standing), far right, has a copy for you.

**MARS-17 patch from Iwakuni, Japan, 1960.**

#### Sales, Trades and Giveaways:

• Marine veteran Howard E. Sweitzer, 1417 N.W. 62nd Way, Margate, FL 33063, (954) 972-0555, has for sale: **a model helicopter collection; issues of *Leatherneck* (1984-2011); a Korean War-era Navy G-1 flight jacket; a Marine Corps**

**"battle jacket" (size 38-40); sergeant chevrons (1954) and other Marine Corps items, including books and art.** Will send photos.

• Marine veteran Boyce Clark, (425) 778-1672, [bclarkusmc@comcast.net](mailto:bclarkusmc@comcast.net), has a **recruit graduation photo for Plt 114, San Diego, 1945.** He will send a copy of the photo to anyone who is in it.



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## CIVILIAN MARINES— Securing the Future





# Mail Call

Edited by Clare A. Guerrero

"Mail Call" entries are free and printed on a space-available basis. *Leatherneck* reserves the right to edit or reject any submission. Allow two to three months for publication. Send your e-mail to: leatherneck@mca-marines.org, or write to: Mail Call Editor, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134.

- Marine veteran Steve Toman, P.O. Box 543, Nashville, MI 49073, (517) 852-0334, to hear from members of **Plt 2031, San Diego, 1956**. Drill instructors were **SSgt ZACKERY, Sgt REID and Sgt CALLAWAY**.

- Shelia Cassity, P.O. Box 1268, Crossett, AR 71635, scassity@windstream.net, to hear from anyone who may have known her late husband, **Alvin CASSITY**, who served from 1969 to 1972 with **H&S Co, 2d Bn, 4th Marines, 3dMarDiv; Hq Btry, 12th Marines, 3dMarDiv; Sub-Unit 1, Hq Btry, 12th Marines, 3dMarDiv; and in USS *Denver* (LPD-9)**.

- Alison G. Porter, (502) 931-7371, alusmc@ymail.com, to hear from or about **Robert W. WILLIS Jr. and Timothy J. KOVACS**, both recruiters stationed in **Pueblo, Colo., 2000**.

- Former PFC Vernon "Rusty" Bridges, 9501 Linden St., Overland Park, KS 66207, (913) 383-3040, Rusty1935@hotmail.com, to hear from members of **Plt 2041, San Diego, 1956**, and **Base Material Bn, MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif., 1957-58**.

- James Cervinski II, 289 Poplar St., Mansfield, OH 44903, (419) 524-2433, jimcervinski@yahoo.com, to hear from anyone who may have served with his father, **James CERVINSKI, at Marine Barracks Clarksville, Tenn., April 1962-August 1963**.

- Former LCpl Robert A. Plant, 835 Adelaide Ave. N.E., Warren, OH 44483, bob835plant@yahoo.com, to hear from anyone who served with him at **MCB Quantico, Va., 1972-75, or at Camp Kuwae or Camp Butler, Okinawa, Japan, 1975-76**.

- Marine veteran Ed Amstutz, 10363 Grove Rd., Bluffton, OH 45817, (419) 358-5437, amstutzje@gmail.com, to hear from members of **Plt 3032, San Diego, 1967**. Drill instructors were **SSgt DUNN and SSgt RODERICK**. Also to hear from those who served in **MarDet, USS *Saratoga* (CVA-60), 1969**.

- Former Sgt Lyle J. Summerfield, 560 Lutzke Rd., Saginaw, MI 48609, (989) 781-4032, lylesummerfield@yahoo.com, to hear from members of **Plt 2108, San Diego,**

**1975, or from anyone who served with him at MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C.; Iwakuni, Japan; Korea; or Okinawa, Japan.**

- Marine veteran Glenn T. Fiore, 15 Lazy St., North Hudson, NY 12885, (518) 532-9799, to hear from **then-Lt Richard E. LYMAN**, who served as an **artillery officer in Vietnam in 1969**.

- Former SSgt Tomas Santos, (906) 932-2014, tomasusmc45@aol.com, to hear from **MajGen Constantin Dean SANGALIS**, with whom he served in **Tientsin, China, and the Reserve company in Gary, Ind.**

- Marine veteran Roy Eakin, W8326 Wildlife Ln., Crivitz, WI 54114, (715) 854-7634, hawg@cbrzn.com, to hear if a book about **Capt Gilbert HOLMES** has been published.

- MSgt George L. Schaudel, USMC (Ret), 2802 Woodfern Ct., Woodbridge, VA 22192, (703) 494-3241, to hear from any of the Marines in the **photo (below), taken at his wedding in Jersey City, N.J., Aug. 1, 1959.**



**SSgt (E-5) now retired MSgt George L. Schaudel and new bride, Loretta, with their wedding party in Jersey City, N.J., Aug. 1, 1959.**

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# Gyrene Gyngles

Edited by Clare A. Guerrero

Please submit copies of original poems with first publishing rights and author's permission to print granted to *Leatherneck*. Poems may be edited or shortened, as necessary. Due to volume received, submissions will not be acknowledged or returned.

## Reflection

I saw you take your first step and I caught you as you fell,  
The little boy with a big heart I got to know so well.

When a little puppy followed you home,  
You asked if you could keep him.

You and your friends loved to play and run;  
You were always lots of fun.

I helped you through your growing years,  
And I held you when you cried your tears.

You always thought of home and country,  
Then you went away, a U.S. Marine to be.

You were tall and proud and handsome too.  
Now we gather to sadly bid you adieu.

We will always remember you.  
God bless you, dear. You did us proud.

Maureen L. Hornung

## Ever See a Service Flag?

I took a drive today,  
Observing some things along the way.  
American flags were flying high,  
But, something else caught my eye.

Marine Corps flags were on display,  
The only branch to be seen this way.  
There must be a reason why this is so;  
Something that we all should know.

God bless all U.S. soldiers, sailors and airmen,  
Receiving their titles at their swearing in.  
But Marines have a rule, and each must learn it,  
To get the title, you must first earn it.

"The Marines' Hymn" tells of what is right,  
And how sometimes it's a real tough fight.  
Others sing of an ode to fun,  
Joyful riding, sailing, flying into the sun.

Other branches have uniforms spiffy enough,  
With pins, badges, patches and all sorts of stuff.  
Marines don't display assignments or bling,  
Just the eagle, globe and anchor, the essential thing.

And, why do Marines only promise you pain,  
Whilst others proclaim there is much to gain?  
Of course, there is a reason this is so,  
It's a story that began a long time ago.

So, why do only Marine service flags fly  
In every neighborhood as I drive by?  
It's not an arrogant boast or brag,  
Just a quiet, fluttering flag.

It's a message I noticed long ago;  
You'll see it everywhere you go.  
Marines are signaling for us to hear,  
A proud Marine is "stationed" here!

Marine veteran Michael Spataro

## A United States Marine

There's the soldier and the sailor  
And the aviator keen,  
As fine a group of fighting men  
As one has ever seen.

But for me I have a soft spot  
For the boy in forest green,  
The dashing, gallant leatherneck,  
The United States Marine.

I shall never be first lady,  
Nor grace a magazine,  
I'll never be world famous,  
Nor will I be a queen.

But I would never change my lot  
With any I've seen,  
For you see, I am the mother  
Of a United States Marine.

I'd like to shield this boy of mine,  
From all that's wrong and mean—  
I'd gladly sacrifice my life,  
But he needs no go-between.

For God has given to my son  
The gift of life supreme,  
The red, white and blue blood  
Of the United States Marine!

Dora Alma Gilmore Hunter

(Written in 1943 for her son, Cpl Jeniece D. Hunter)





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