

DECEMBER 2012

MAGAZINE OF THE MARINES

Leatherneck

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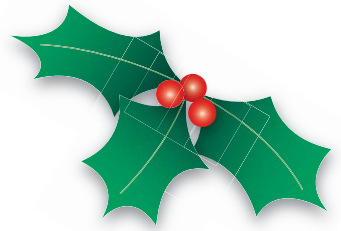
24th MEU Aviation— Wrenching It on the High Seas



Why Do They Enlist
And What Do Their
Families Think?

Hagaru-ri, 1950:
It Had to Be Held

“Sky Pilot”
Paul A. Hyder
Is a Mustang



Welcome to *Leatherneck Magazine's* **Digital Edition**

Welcome to our December 2012 digital edition of *Leatherneck*—Magazine of the Marines. We hope you are enjoying our digital edition in its new format, and we encourage you to visit us for frequently updated Marine Corps content on our website (www.leatherneckmagazine.com) and in our social media postings.

This is a special time of year—a time to remember friends and to appreciate those who serve our country and Corps, as well as their families. The *Leatherneck* staff thanks you for your support in 2012 and hopes you will remain connected to the Marine Corps through *Leatherneck* in the coming years.

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays,

Col Walt Ford, USMC (Ret)
Editor



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COVER: An MV-22B Osprey refuels from a KC-130J Super Hercules on Sept. 23, 2012, in the 5th Fleet's area of responsibility. Both aircraft are assigned to VMM-261 (Rein), the aviation combat element of the 24th MEU. See more about the squadron's deployment beginning on page 21. Photo by Cpl Michael Petersheim. 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 Anonymous letters will not be published.—Sound Off Ed.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.)

I recently had occasion to visit Lindbergh Field, San Diego International Airport. Between Terminals 1 and 2, there is an entrance to the United Service Organizations [USO]. I noticed two white buses with large USMC emblems parked in front of the USO entrance. There were about 90 young men hurriedly boarding the buses, counting and shouting their numbers until reaching number 40 when a bus was full. One drill instructor was present, fit and trim, about 6 feet 2 inches tall, and skinny as a rail, wearing the traditional “Smokey,” and shouting instructions.

As I departed to enter Terminal 1, I noticed the “overflow,” who had to wait for another bus to arrive. Those remaining recruits were lined up, standing four abreast in tight formation—faces, bodies and eyes as if cast in concrete. They were staring into space and focused directly ahead. Not an eyebrow moved, nor a muscle twitched, even though the drill instructor was nowhere to be seen. I think it occurred to them that their moment of truth and reality had just begun.

After I entered Terminal 1, I noticed two or three groups of five or six young men smiling happily, meandering around the lobby, shoving one another, laughing and joking while carrying identical envelopes that obviously contained their orders. Apparently, they had a later reporting time and did not realize it at the moment, but they were only a few steps from reality.

It was fun to observe, and it jogged my memory back to 1952 when I, at about 5 feet 9 inches tall and 119 pounds, with approximately 200 other youngsters, arrived at the Santa Fe Depot in San Diego. After getting off the train, we saw an old Navy chief with gold stripes from his wrist to his shoulder, who began shouting for everyone going to the Naval Training Center [NTC] to line up in formation. After the NTC guys were assembled, they started to march off. One other youngster and I shouted at the chief that the two of us were going to the Marine Corps Recruit Depot. The chief said, “Get out of here!”

So, as everyone else marched off to NTC, the other guy and I were left standing alone on the train platform. Imaginatively, we walked over to a pay phone, put in a nickel or dime (I can’t remember which) to call the Marine Corps Recruit Depot, and they sent a ¾-ton truck to pick us up. Shortly thereafter, our reality began.

The reason that I recount this is because in this modern age when a lot of our daily lives and world events seem so confusing, last Monday evening was refreshing and enjoyable ... at least to me as a bystander. I had just witnessed a group of young men, all volunteers, who had decided to accept the challenge to become Marines and to serve our country. I am hopeful that most, if not all of them, will make the grade and graduate as Marines. I guarantee the moment of their graduation from boot camp will be the proudest moment in their lives.

Robert Stebbins
USMC, 1952-55
Encinitas, Calif.

Leatherneck Is Your “Lifeline” To Our Corps

The October issue gave a blast from the past not once, but four times!

First, in regard to the letter about “Hanoi Jane,” I am a Vietnam veteran, 1966 to 1967, and 1969 to 1970, and in complete agreement with Joseph Nichols and yourself.

Then, the photo of 2d Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment hiking back to Camp Wilson at the Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms ... been there done that, many years ago!

Now retired from active duty and living in Yuma, Ariz., I recently spoke to a couple of Canadian troopers at the Marine Corps Air Station about their participation in “Javelin Thrust 2012” and how Yuma and Twentynine Palms differed from their home-base area near Ottawa. (I had served seven years in the Canadian Army prior to enlisting in the Corps in 1961.)

The article “The Skyhawk’s Last Hurrah” took me back to Chu Lai, Vietnam, in 1966 where I recall watching A-4 Skyhawk landings on the short airfield for tactical support, or SATS, metal-matting

runway using carrier-cable arresting gear. On one particular occasion, during a cable-arrested landing, a rocket slid from the pod and cartwheeled down the runway ... quite a sight!

“Gitmo and the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962” reminded me of being a member of 1st Bn, 6th Marines aboard USS *Boxer* (LPH-4) and being pulled off training on Vieques, Puerto Rico, to cruise between Haiti and Cuba, wondering which island we’d be called on to make a landing.

Every edition of *Leatherneck* gives me that Bob Hope “Thanks for the Memories” feeling—this goes along with my thanks for also keeping me up to date on what is happening with today’s Marines.

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

I just finished the October issue and all I can say is “Great Snakes of the Rockies,” but this is a great issue. I couldn’t put it down until the last page was turned.

I’m always interested in stories about the Korean War, and Major Allan C. Bevilacqua writes those best. The story about Maj Peter Ortiz was excellent; he should be more of a legend than he is. I loved the Code Talker article, for many of them live in my home state of Arizona. I’ve met some of them during my fishing trips to Lake Powell, usually at a gas station in Flagstaff. Each one impressed me by his graciousness and modesty.

I was a Marine at Marine Air Reserve Training Detachment Los Alamitos, Calif., during the missile crisis of 1962 and will never forget those days. Thanks for the look at how those on the very front of the crisis were handling it. Back here, when our duties permitted, we were glued to the television watching the news as it developed. We all had our seabags packed.

Well done to everyone at *Leatherneck* for putting together a terrific issue.

Finally, the letter in “Sound Off” about the unsung Marine combat artist, Austin Deuel, written by Colonel H. Avery Chenoweth (whose book, “Semper Fi,” co-authored by Col Brooke Nihart, I had the privilege of reviewing for *Leatherneck*) brought back another memory.



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I was the press chief of the Joint Informational Services Office at Camp Pendleton, Calif., in 1967 when Deuel reported in for duty. I remember many conversations with him as he awaited orders to Vietnam. By the time he was getting ready to pack his bags, I had become editor of *The* (Camp Pendleton) *Scout* with a reduced staff because of Vietnam deployments. I was desperate for a spectacular front page for *The Scout* for the Marine Corps Birthday, and PFC Deuel obliged by presenting me with a pen-and-ink drawing that I used as a full front page. I had the drawing framed, and it has hung in every house I've lived in since then.

Keep up the good work; so many of us use *Leatherneck* as our lifeline to the Corps. You and your staff have never let us down.

GySgt John Boring, USMC (Ret)
Phoenix

• *Great Horny Toads, "Gunny"!* You and MGySgt LeDrew made our day. Both Marines are longtime friends of *Leatherneck*. GySgt Boring also was my first press chief when, as an on-the-job trainee, I checked into the JISO at Camp Pendleton.—*Sound Off Ed.*

Meritorious Masts Are Great Recognition For Jobs Well-Done

In the last years, I've noticed that listed in the "In the Highest Tradition" department there are a few medals with which I am unfamiliar. These are the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation and Achievement Medals with combat "V."

Do these medals take the place of the Meritorious Mast and Letter of Appreciation that were awarded when I served from 1964 to 1967?

I am very proud of all Marines and glad that *Leatherneck* posts awards that some receive and probably more deserve.

Sgt Jim Biegger
USMC, 1964-67
Maxwell, Iowa

• *The quick answer is no. The Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, formerly the Navy Commendation Medal, and the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, formerly the Navy Achievement Medal, are separate awards. The combat V is a combat distinguishing device.*

Meritorious Masts are in recognition of work well-done. They come written on a formal certificate but with no ribbon and medal. Perhaps that's why one does not hear much about them. Apparently, most Marines would rather have a medal.

But don't discount them or the Letters of Appreciation and Certificates of Com-

mendation. Those of you in leadership positions will find them useful tools and relatively easy to do. The result is that those written kudos of recognition go into a Marine's record book and are important when it is time for promotions and promotion boards. It says that someone appreciated professionalism and took the time to let the Marine's seniors and command know of his or her job well-done.

Navy tradition has it that at sea all hands gathered around the main mast to deliver punishment and receive awards; thus, Meritorious Masts were read for lads who routinely "stepped lively." For administrative and issue procedures, check MCO 1650.19J, Administrative and Issue Procedures for Decorations, Medals, and Awards.—Sound Off Ed.

Would That We All Were True Believers as LCpl Quinones

I have learned a lot over the years about life, but nothing has taught me more about life and how to live it than the United States Marine Corps.

I always dreamed of being a Marine, so once I graduated from high school I went straight to the recruiting office, signed up without hesitation and began the most grueling three months of my life. I have friends in all the branches, and when they complain about certain things such as long marches and heavy packs, I always have the biggest smile on my face because I know that for us, that stuff is child's play.

Test after test, and march after march, I learned what it meant to be a Marine. I was broken down and redesigned not only as a young man, but as an American fighting man. I am the man I am today because of the Marine Corps. From the decisions I make, to my work ethic, and how I treat others are all based upon honor, courage and commitment.

Unfortunately, I was not able to complete my career in the Corps, as I suffered a massive right knee injury halfway through boot camp. At the time, I wasn't aware of the severity of my injury, but I did know one thing, I was not going home a failure. I used all of the "Icy Hot" I could find to ease some of the pain and swelling and powered through the remaining month and a half.

It was not until the day after graduation that my knee finally gave out and I was rushed to the emergency room. It turned out that I had broken off a piece of my femur, which floated around my knee. My surgeon said he had no idea how I had been able to walk thus far, much less complete Marine Corps training. I swelled with pride, but then sadness crept in at finding out I would never regain full function of my knee. I underwent four sur-

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geries over the next year and enjoyed my time on Camp Geiger while I could, but despite my pleading, there was nothing the medical officers could do, and I was honorably discharged in 2006.

I never had the privilege of going to combat with my brothers and sisters, but I contributed any way I could, and I would not trade that year for anything. When people ask me why I walk "that way," I laugh and tell them how I was injured, not with regret but with joy. I may never walk or run properly again, but I gained something so much bigger, and to paraphrase Major General John A. Lejeune, 13th Commandant of the Marine Corps, no matter what titles or awards I may gain, nothing could mean more to me than to be able to say, "I am a Marine."

This letter is long overdue. Thank you to my Corps for giving me the honor of serving it, however short that time was. I am better because of that experience and will continue to be in the future. I will be a great psychologist because you taught me patience and etiquette. I will be a great husband because you taught me to treat everyone with respect. And, I will be the father I never had because you taught me selflessness and to put the needs of others before my own, even if it meant making the ultimate sacrifice.

I carry this scar on my knee with pride and dignity because I know the price I paid to achieve my dream of being one of the few and the proud.

Former LCpl Jon Quinones
Fairbanks, Alaska

MP Who Oversaw Korea Cease-Fire Wants More on DMZ—No Problem!

In 1953, I served as a rifleman with 1st Platoon, Company E, 2d Battalion, Seventh Marine Regiment. About late September or early October, I was assigned to temporary additional duty with 1st Provisional Demilitarized Zone Police Company (Demzel's). We were a new type organization that was specially trained to oversee the cease-fire at Korea's Demilitarized Zone. Captain Sam Goich was the first commanding officer and Master Sergeant Elmer G. "Blackie" Shaw was the first sergeant.

We had heavy map reading classes, so we could report accurately the position of anybody within the DMZ. We also had extra first aid training and classes on the provisions of the cease-fire.

The main reason for this letter is that we are fast approaching the 60-year mark of the cease-fire. I have never seen any mention of the DMZ in *Leatherneck* or any other Marine publication.

GySgt Cecil R. Sowers Jr., USMC (Ret)
Bonsall, Calif.

• "Gunny," I don't know what you are reading, but it certainly isn't *Leatherneck*, at least not for very long. I did a quick check in our archives and there are a number of stories about the Korean DMZ, including one or two written by me, our late managing editor MSgt Tom Bartlett, and Maj Al Bevilacqua. There was even one written in August 2003 by MSgt Bob Caulkins that focuses on your unit.

Perhaps, we will find another reason to write about your unit and the DMZ again sometime in the future, but in the interim, as a member of the Marine Corps Association and a *Leatherneck* reader, you have free access to all the articles in *Leatherneck* since 1921 and all those in the *Marine Corps Gazette* back to 1916. Go to our website, www.mca-marines.org/leatherneck and search the archives to enjoy the history you helped write.—*Sound Off Ed.*

The Somewhat Weird Odyssey Of John McLaughlin

As I read "Sound Off" in the October issue, for some unknown reason, I started thinking of why I joined the Marine Corps shortly after high school graduation. I remember talking to a recruiter, who was outside his office smoking, but that's it. I

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Leatherneck's MGySgt Renaldo R. Keene Receives Col Robert D. Heinl Jr. 2012 Award

As we wrap up the year, *Leatherneck* wants our readers to know that our own associate editor, Master Gunnery Sergeant Renaldo R. Keene, is the winner of the 2012 Marine Corps Heritage Foundation's Colonel Robert Debs Heinl Jr. Award for history writing.

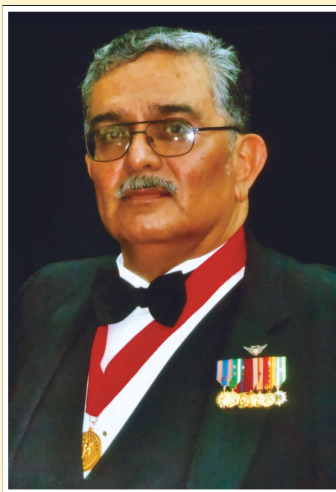
Each year, the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation presents awards to both Marines and civilian community members, recognizing their exemplary work in advancing and preserving Marine Corps history.

This award is "for distinguished feature writing by an individual dealing with U.S. Marine Corps history or Marine Corps life, giving prime consideration for high literary quality and originality."

"Master Guns" Keene received the award for his two-part article about Saipan and Tinian, titled "Because Marines Never Forget," published in *Leatherneck* magazine in the October and November 2011 issues.

He is the first *Leatherneck* or Marine Corps Association & Foundation staff member to win this very prestigious award.

Well done, Ron, you make us proud.



MGySgt Renaldo R. Keene

Editor, *Leatherneck*

Marine Corps life. I have a daughter who retired as a Mustang commander after 29 years in the Navy. Her son is in his third year at the Naval Academy, and her daughter is a midshipman at Villanova College of Nursing.

Former Cpl John E. McLaughlin
Cape May Court House, N.J.

• *Cardinal John J. O'Connor (1920-2000), a Navy chaplain for 27 years, served as Archbishop of New York from 1984 until his death and was created a cardinal in 1985. He previously served as auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese for the Military Services (1979-83). He rose through the ranks to become a rear admiral and Chief of Navy Chaplains.— Sound Off Ed.*

When Should Marines Wear Utilities? Any Time the Corps Says

The Sept. 24 issue of *The Washington Post* contained an extensive article about the death of Lieutenant Colonel Christopher K. Raible, USMC, who was killed in action in Afghanistan earlier that month.

He was described as a hero whose actions during a Taliban attack saved the lives of others. Accompanying the article was an Associated Press photo showing Marines at Dover Air Force Base, Del., carrying his casket. They are attired in the camouflage work uniforms. It seems to me that dress blues should be the appropriate uniform for such an important and dignified duty.

Former SSgt Jack M. Sands, USMC
Waldorf, Md.

• *Our "In Memoriam" department this issue includes more on LtCol Raible's death in combat.*

Here is the latest on the wearing of the Marine Corps Combat Utility Uniform (MCCUU) as it is officially known in MCOP 1020.34G, the Marine Corps Uniform Regs.

In change 5 to the uniform regulations, the Marine Corps authorized utilities for parades, reviews or other ceremonies: "Change 5-1. Commanders may prescribe the utility uniform as the uniform of the day, in accordance with the below guidance. The uniform is authorized for parades, reviews or other ceremonies, and informal social functions. The utility coat may be removed only for physical training and work details."

However, Change 5 also reinforced the fact that the utility uniform is a working uniform and not appropriate for wear in a civilian environment (off base).

We also often are asked about the utility uniform in ceremonies at the National Museum of the Marine Corps. Marine

recall a few months later at the Philadelphia Naval Hospital taking a physical and leaving for Parris Island, S.C., the next day.

Other than the fact that I just didn't want to wait for the draft to come and get me, I have no idea why I chose the Marines. I had no relatives who were Marines; on the contrary, they served in the Army, Coast Guard and Army Air Corps.

Since I have found no reason for joining the Marines other than some movie I saw, I turned to the last place that I have no memory of, and that was four years of high school. I was amazed at what I found, and it could be the answer to my "why," not that I have any regrets, other than voluntary self-induced memory loss.

I graduated from St. James High School, Chester, Pa., in 1952. You can find my picture (which I believe proves I did graduate), but you will find no activity and/or awards.

Now to the point of the connection between St. James and the Marines: the school mascot was a "bulldog," but that's not all. I remember sometime before graduation, a young priest, the Reverend John J. O'Connor, left to join the Marines. Naturally, not being a person of detail, I didn't know that priests could serve Marines only as Navy chaplains. But it is my understanding that he spent a lot of time

with Marines. I believe he went on to become Chief of Chaplains and retired with the grade of admiral, before becoming Cardinal of New York.

But the clincher to my "WHY" was a photo of our school band (and it took me only 60 years to find) and in the photo was a Marine, in all his glory. I find no one who really knows who or why he is in the picture, but it is rumored that he was a recruiter in Chester who was a friend of the bandmaster, and, since the school was fairly new, helped with the ragamuffins in the band.

So it is my conclusion that back in 1952, the Marine Corps experimented with subliminal messages using bulldogs, priests and uniformed Marines just standing around. I also believe that when I was probably the only one who fell for it, they realized it was a huge mistake and discontinued the use. But, as I said, I have no complaints; I do believe that after PI, I did start to pay a little more attention. Apparently, the drill instructors did a better job than my old teacher, Father Francis P. O'Reilly. I even would have stayed, but my wife said it was too dangerous, so I got out and became a cop for 40 years.

But, in my small way, I think I've made up for my less-than-stellar scholastic and

Corps Base Quantico Order 1020.1E addresses that with: "the wearing of the utility uniform in Quantico Town and at the National Museum of the Marine Corps is authorized at any time."

So, you will see Marines in utilities at official ceremonies on base and you will see Marines at the museum in utilities for ceremonies because it is authorized. While we, and all the readers we have heard from, may see the decision to authorize the utility uniform for ceremonies as regrettable, it is currently the one Marines will salute and carry out. Of course, the blue dress, blue-white dress and service uniform may be prescribed by the commander.—Sound Off Ed.

Colors and Standards Not Cased

I just read the October issue. I was startled and embarrassed by the picture accompanying the article on page 15 about Combat Logistics Battalion 5 casing colors and heading home.

The picture shows a major faux pas on the part of the unit. In the picture, the national colors are being cased while the unit colors are still being carried by the unit color bearer. The national colors are never cased before the unit colors. Just as the national colors are always lowered last, they are always cased last or simultaneously with the unit colors.

A quick read of MCO P5060.20, paragraph 7305 (3), shows, "The organizational color bearer, followed by the national color bearer, will lower their staffs so that their colors may be furled and cased."

The battalion sergeant major should have caught this and corrected the problem. In that he didn't, someone on the *Leatherneck* staff should have seen this and not selected this picture to run with the article!

Richard Johnson
Marine Instructor
Irving High School
Irving, Texas

Pete Ortiz's Sergeant Major Bodnar

Laura Lacey's article about Major Peter Ortiz in your October issue brought back memories of my tour with Marine Wing Support Group 17, First Marine Aircraft Wing, Da Nang, Vietnam, from 1969 to 1970.

All us young Marines (I was a corporal) knew that both of our sergeants major, Shaw and Bodnar, had served in World War II, but I had never heard a hint of John Bodnar's time in the Office of Strategic Services in Europe. I had the opportunity to speak to him on one occasion and asked if he might be related to my father's friend and co-worker of the same last name at the New York *Daily News* composing

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room. He responded with a smile: "Son, where I come from in Pennsylvania almost everybody is named Bodnar." That was about the extent of our conversation.

Fast forward to 1992 and I was home in upstate New York in my den, surrounded by more than a few USMC mementos, watching the Winter Olympics from Albertville. Suddenly, there was SgtMaj Bodnar being interviewed by Charles Kuralt about his recollections of Maj Ortiz and their courageous mission in France in 1944. The Sergeant Major did not look much older than when I had spoken to him in 'Nam more than a decade before.

I sat transfixed by the extraordinary story and felt proud and grateful that I had a chance to serve with such an outstanding Marine. In her article, Laura Lacey notes that the stories of these giants give Marines the feeling of being special. As has been said before, while not all of us are heroes, we have traveled among heroes. I look forward to the release of Ms. Lacey's book.

Bill Payne
Saugerties, N.Y.

After having read of the daring exploits of Peter Ortiz, I could not believe any of the events described in the story happened,

[continued on page 62]

ORIGINAL ISSUE



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Hagaru-ri: The Vital Link

By Maj Allan C. Bevilacqua, USMC (Ret)

As a frigid Korean dawn broke on 27 Nov. 1950, the commanding general of the First Marine Division did not like the situation one bit. The picture he saw from his command post at Hamhung was of a division scattered over a much wider area than he wished. As required by orders from his higher headquarters, X Corps, his division was strung out over miles of a tortuous, single-lane mountain road that could be blocked by bad weather or enemy action at a dozen points.

Seventy-eight miles to the north at the point of the advance, two of his regiments, Lieutenant Colonel Raymond L. “Ray” Murray’s 5th Marines and Colonel Homer

L. Litzenberg Jr.’s 7th Marines, were dangerously out on a limb at the flyspeck hamlet of Yudam-ni in the mountains on the west side of the frozen-over Chosin Reservoir.

Major General Oliver P. “O.P.” Smith’s third regiment—Col Lewis B. “Chesty” Puller’s 1st Marines—was engaged in building up intermediate bases at Chinhung-ni and Koto-ri along that inadequate road that would have to do as a main service route (MSR). Each base was to be manned and provisioned for protracted and intense combat. Protracted and intense combat was precisely what MajGen Smith expected and intended to be prepared for.

The dispersal of his main combat units was cause for serious reservations, but MajGen Smith’s most troublesome concern was the base being constructed at Hagaru-ri at the southern tip of the reservoir. Located between Murray and Litzenberg to the north and Puller to the south, Hagaru-ri was vital to all three. There, engineers of LtCol John H. Partridge’s 1st Engineer Battalion were working around-the-clock to scrape an airfield out of the frozen, rock-hard surface of the only reasonably level ground for miles in any direction.

It was Hagaru-ri and its vital half-completed airfield that were foremost in Oliver



Marine tanks scramble around a blown bridge south of Koto-ri as the allies push to break out from Chinese Communist encirclement en route to the beachhead at Hungnam in December 1950.

P. Smith's mind. Hagaru-ri was the key link in the chain. Were Hagaru-ri to be lost the situation of the 5th and 7th Marines at Yudam-ni would go from exposed to perilous. Hagaru-ri, in MajGen Smith's words, "had to be held."

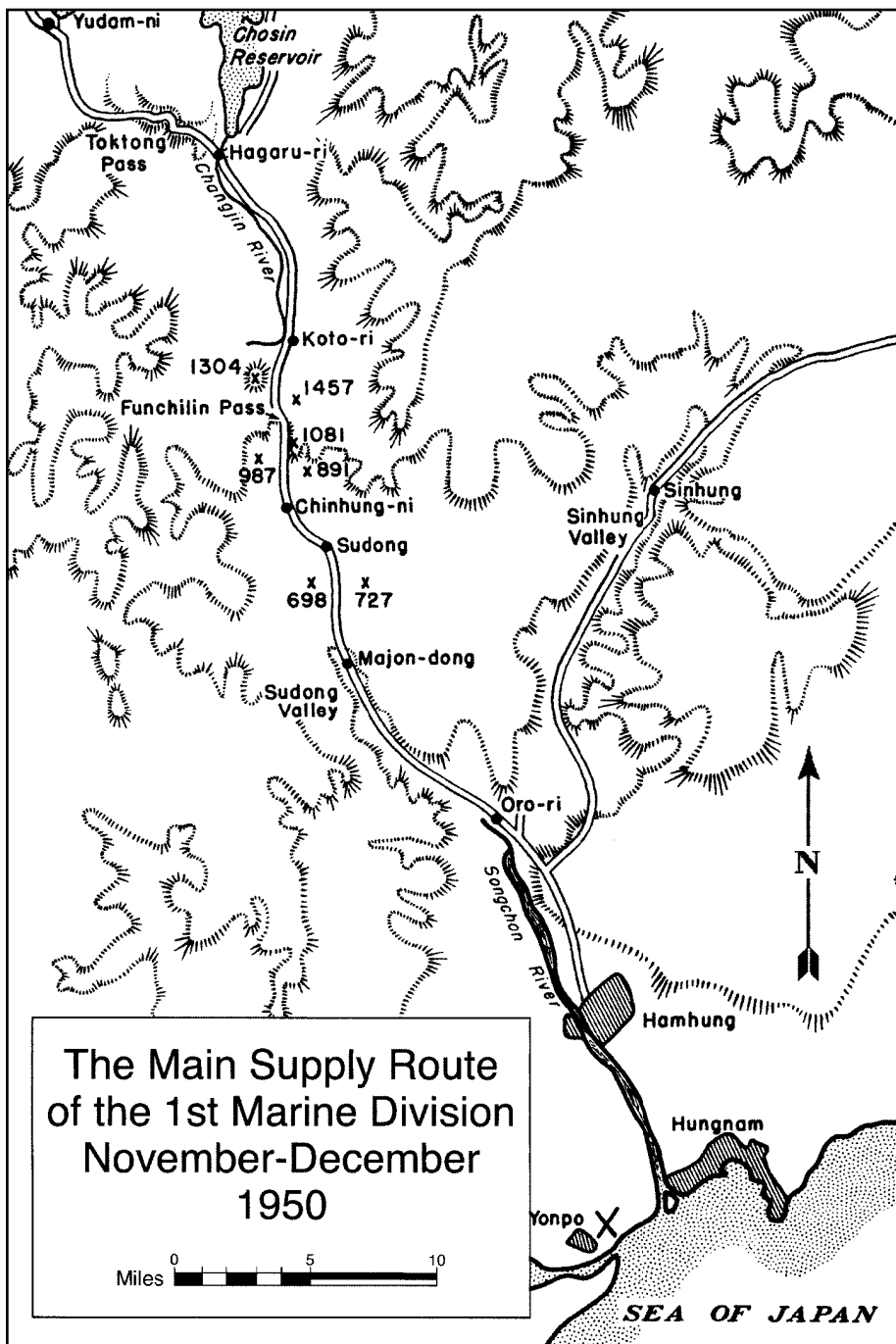
What enemy was there to overrun Hagaru-ri? The battered and beaten remnants of the North Korean People's Army (NKPA), pounded mercilessly since being driven from South Korea back in September, were little more than disorganized bands of fugitives fleeing for the Yalu River and sanctuary in Manchuria. Would the Chinese enter the war to save the NKPA from complete destruction? Higher headquarters didn't think so.

Intelligence reports from X Corps and the headquarters of the supreme commander, General of the Army Douglas MacArthur, USA, in Tokyo discounted any significant presence of the Chinese. As seen by Tokyo, any Chinese Communist Forces (CCF) units in Korea were little more than a handful of "volunteers." "There aren't two Chinese Communist divisions in the whole of North Korea," was the assessment of Lieutenant General Edward M. Almond, USA, commanding X Corps.

MajGen Smith didn't believe the reports. There had been increasing sightings of CCF units in 1stMarDiv's zone of action for weeks. At Yudam-ni, 5th Marines reported more and more daily Chinese radio traffic. Marine patrols were running into CCF units with disturbing regularity. North Korean civilians voluntarily were providing information indicating the presence of large numbers of Chinese. Aerial reconnaissance disclosed significant bodies of heavily camouflaged troops tucked away in remote canyons and valleys.

Even as MajGen Smith was considering the situation, reports were coming in from LtCol Harold S. "Hal" Roise's 2d Bn, 5th Marines. The battalion's attempt to advance to the west from Yudam-ni at first light was encountering heavy resistance by a large CCF force in well-prepared defensive positions. Were there or were there not Chinese in North Korea? As far as MajGen Smith was concerned, there were, and they were there in fairly substantial numbers.

X Corps and MacArthur's headquarters were wrong. Oliver P. Smith was right. As he was preparing to displace his command post to Hagaru-ri the following morning, 60,000 Chinese, lying low in the snow-clad mountains about the Chosin Reservoir, were waiting for him. They were Gen Sung Shin-lun's 9th Army Group, 12 divisions in all. Carrying everything on their backs, moving by night and hiding by day, they had infiltrated undetected



from staging areas in Manchuria. Their mission was to destroy the 1stMarDiv, and they were waiting.

In the pitch-black night of 27 Nov., as the thermometer skidded to minus-20 degrees, seven CCF divisions attacked all along the MSR. The roadway between Chinhung-ni and Koto-ri was cut, as was the link between Koto-ri and Hagaru-ri. CCF elements north of Hagaru-ri severed the roadway linking Hagaru-ri with Yudam-ni. Heavy fighting raged throughout the night at Koto-ri and Yudam-ni as waves of attackers threw themselves at Marine positions.

Particularly hard-pressed were the defenders of Yudam-ni, under ferocious attack by two CCF divisions, the 79th and

89th. Marine firepower cut bloody swathes in the serried ranks of the attackers, but it wasn't a one-sided affair. Marine casualties, especially in LtCol Randolph Lockwood's 2/7, were frighteningly high.

At Hagaru-ri not a shot was fired. Only the distant sounds of combat at Koto-ri and Yudam-ni broke the night silence. There wasn't a Chinese alive within rock-throwing range of Hagaru-ri, where Partridge's engineers worked under arc lights to extend the runway beginning to take shape.

Could Sung Shin-lun have failed to appreciate the fact that possession of Hagaru-ri was the key to the entire situation? Not exactly. No less than MajGen Smith's Marines, the CCF were victims of inade-

"FROZEN CHOSIN: U.S. MARINES AT THE CHOSIN RESERVOIR." U.S. MARINE CORPS HISTORICAL CENTER



quate maps of the area. The Taebaek Mountain Range, the most remote, rugged and inhospitable region in Korea, had never been adequately mapped. Tasked with assaulting Hagaru-ri that night, the CCF 58th Div, forced to rely upon what were little more than sketch maps, became hopelessly lost among the trackless mountains west of Hagaru-ri. It was dawn on the 28th, time to go to ground to escape detection by Marine air, before the 58th Division finally reached its objective.

About the same time that the 58th Div was getting itself sorted out, MajGen Smith arrived at Hagaru-ri by helicopter to set up his command post. What he found

wasn't exactly comforting. To defend a 4-mile-long perimeter were only two rifle companies and Weapons Co of LtCol Thomas L. "Tom" Ridge's 3/1 and Weapons Co, 2/7. Manning the bulk of the line were elements of such unlikely units as Headquarters and Service Co, 3/1; 1st Motor Transport Bn; 1st Service Bn; a company of Army engineers; and hastily assembled cooks, clerks and mechanics.

A pair of artillery batteries, "How" 3/11 and "Dog" 2/11, even had been pressed into front-line service. It was probably the first time since the Civil War that artillery had manned a position on the firing line.

Help was on the way in the form of

George/3/1 and 41 Independent Commando, Royal Marines, but they wouldn't arrive until the following day and would have to fight their way north from Koto-ri.

First, though, they had to make it through the night. Fully conscious of the damage Marine air could inflict on them, the Chinese preferred to do their fighting under cover of darkness. With full confidence in his ability to swamp the defenders of Hagaru-ri, the commander of 58th Div waited for the sun to set behind the mountain peaks west of the thinly manned post. But he had not considered Second Lieutenant (later LtGen) Richard E. Carey.

Carey, until only recently a rifle platoon



Left: The Seventh Marine Regiment at Yudam-ni prepares to depart, ready to fight its way back to Hagaru-ri and on to the sea for extraction in December 1950.

Below: Soldiers, wearing the distinctive short parkas, and Marines advance south of Hagaru-ri along the main supply route on 6 Dec. 1950. (Photo by Sgt Frank C. Kerr)



cepted the extremely dangerous mission of actually mingling with the Chinese and determining the heaviest areas of concentration. The result was a gold mine of information.

“I expected little or no information,” Carey remembered, “but apparently these men had a way with them. Upon reporting back they told me that they had talked freely with enemy troops, including several officers who boasted they would occupy Hagaru-ri on the night of 28 November.”

With full confidence, Carey reported that the Chinese would attack that night between 2100 and 2400 in division strength. The main attack would be against the western and southern sectors of the perimeter, while a secondary attack would be directed against East Hill, the prominent terrain feature. The Chinese did exactly that at 2230. On 100 percent alert along the southern and western sectors, Capt Clarence Corley’s How Co and First Lieutenant Joseph “Bull” Fisher’s Item Co were waiting for them.

Both company fronts were well-sited behind concertina wire, trip flares, booby traps and 5-gallon gasoline cans rigged with thermite grenades. By packing C3 plastic explosive in C-ration cans to fashion handmade shaped charges, the Marines were able to blast loose the frozen surface layers of earth to permit relatively easy digging for fighting holes. The earth excavated from those holes was shoveled into 1,000 sandbags that had been “bor-

rowed” to make a respectable fortified position. Weighing in with additional firepower was a pair of M4A3 medium tanks from LtCol Harry T. Milne’s 1st Tank Bn.

As the bottom fell out of the thermometer and a thick curtain of snow reduced visibility to mere yards, the 58th Div threw its Sunday punch at the defenders of Hagaru-ri. The main attack fell as predicted on the southern and western sectors of the perimeter where the fighting quickly reached volcanic levels as massed waves of attackers threw themselves at the defensive positions of How and Item companies.

Hand-to-hand battles raged all along the line, as the Chinese attempted to overcome the defenders by sheer numbers. Leading Item Co’s 3d Platoon, 2dLt Wayne M. Hall used his .45-caliber service pistol to shoot a pair of attackers at such close range as to leave powder burns on their clothing. A third attacker pitched forward into Hall’s hole before dying.

Similar scenes played themselves out all around the arc of fire that outlined the perimeter. Marine firepower ripped through the attacking waves, piling bodies in blood-soaked heaps. Still the Chinese attacked.

Under the cover of accurate mortar fire, a wedge of mustard-colored uniforms broke through an outnumbered How Co position and cut a path toward the bulldozers and graders that continued to work

leader in George/3/1, had just days before assumed duties as the battalion’s S-2 (Intelligence) officer. Beyond his Intelligence chief, Staff Sergeant Saverio P. Gallo, an interpreter and four scouts, Carey had only a pair of Korean Counterintelligence Corps (CIC) agents to determine the enemy’s capabilities and intentions. What young 2dLt Carey did with those meager assets was a masterpiece of intelligence work.

Utilizing selective interrogation of local civilians and constant sweeps for information by his CIC agents, Carey built a continually emerging picture of the 58th Div’s dispositions. The same CIC agents ac-

Leathernecks with the First Marine Regiment, advancing up a hill outside the Koto-ri perimeter, had to repel repeated attacks by Chinese Communist Forces. Employing Marine air and artillery, they blasted, bombed and napalmed their way out of encirclement.



through the height of the battle. Second Lt Robert D. McFarland, a heavy-equipment officer, led a counterattack by a hastily assembled handful of Dog Co engineers that sealed off and then threw back the breakthrough. That done, the engineers slung their weapons and went back to work extending the airfield.

The Chinese pressed their attacks despite staggering losses, and the battle continued to reach higher heights of intensity. In the How Co CP, Sergeant Keith E. Davis saw crisscrossed paths of red and green tracer rounds from Marine and Chinese machine guns looking “so thick they lighted up the darkness like a Christmas tree.” Surgeons working over the wounded in the clearing station of Charlie Co, 1st Medical Bn repeatedly were required to duck for cover as bullets burst through the rickety building’s wooden walls.

The Chinese seemed to be everywhere at once. Somehow the line held, and in the

midst of it, the engineers continued to work on the airfield in a blizzard of bullets and a curtain of snow.

On East Hill the situation wasn’t going well. A massive Chinese attack had forced the defenders of CPT Philip A. Kulbes, Co D, 10th Engineer Combat Bn, USA, from the crest of the hill. A two-pronged Marine counterattack regained some of the ground, but the large body of Chinese at the crest could not be dislodged. Caught squarely between the two forces, Marine radio operator Private First Class Bruno Podolak lay flat on the ground and continued to transmit constant reports on the situation.

That situation would have been much worse except for the constant drumbeat of fire kept up by the artillerymen of Capt Benjamin S. Read’s How Battery, 3/11 and Capt Andrew J. Strohmenger’s Dog/2/11. At one point, firing almost point-blank, Dog Btry poured 1,200 rounds into the

oncoming Chinese. The command “Fire at will,” almost never heard on the gun line, passed over the battery conduct of fire channel. Sgt Vince Mosco counted more than 100 empty 105 mm shell casings around his gun alone. Somehow the line held.

Another freezing dawn revealed a scene of carnage all around the Hagaru-ri perimeter. One entire regiment of the 58th Div, the 172d, had been all but annihilated, the frozen corpses ringing the perimeter. The division’s 173d Regt, while not as badly mauled, still collected a bloody nose for its efforts.

Friendly casualties, although not on the scale of those suffered by the Chinese, were not negligible. Almost 500 defenders of Hagaru-ri died or were wounded during the night of 28 Nov. Their numbers were cause for serious concern given the small size of the garrison holding the vital installation. The arrival of George/3/1 and



CPL W. T. WOLFE

41 Independent Commando at Hagaru-ri late in the day of the 29th after a daylong running gunfight was a welcome sight. The 58th Div wasn't about to go away.

Neither were John Partridge's engineers. Working around-the-clock while fierce fighting raged all about them, they sometimes pitched in to lend a helping hand. Then, the Marines of 1st Engineer Bn continued to extend the runway that was becoming more and more vital with each passing hour.

By dawn of 1 Dec., after another night of massed Chinese attacks, with a pitched battle for ownership of East Hill raging and the airfield less than half-completed, it was decided to attempt landings and takeoffs. Chancy? Yes, very chancy. The runway was barely 3,800 feet long and 50 feet wide, with no taxiways and a 2 percent grade at the north end. The front lines were scarcely 300 yards from the south end. However, casualties were mounting, and replacements were needed. The situation quickly was becoming critical.

The first twin-engine R4D of MajGen Field Harris' First Marine Aircraft Wing (MAW) that touched down on Partridge's airfield on 1 Dec. was the first of hundreds of other flights by 1st MAW and the C-47s of Far East Air Force's Combat Cargo Command. Inbound flights carried supplies and replacements. Outbound flights were reserved exclusively for wounded tagged for evacuation.

A priority system was designed by Division Surgeon CAPT Eugene R. Hering, MC, USN. The first outbound medevac carried 24 stretcher cases. In time, with the 5th and 7th Marines ordered to withdraw from Yudam-ni, the Hagaru-ri airfield would load out 4,300 casualties.



CPL PETER W. McDONALD

After five days and nights of slugging it out with Chinese Communists to return some 15 miles to Hagaru-ri, wounded leathernecks of the 5th and 7th Marines find rescue at hand, as Marine engineers had hacked out a landing strip, and evacuation flights helped take wounded and frostbitten men to rear areas for treatment or hospitalization.

Through it all the 58th Div, badly bloodied and battered, never let up in its attempt to overrun the Hagaru-ri perimeter. Having finally been ousted from their positions on East Hill, the last remaining 1,500 members of the 58th Division threw themselves in a do-or-die attempt to regain the hill in the early morning hours of 1 Dec. Almost every one of them died.

Daylight revealed the slopes of East Hill covered by a solid carpet of the dead. The 58th Div ceased to exist. Hagaru-ri, the position that had to be held, had been held.

MajGen Smith's assessment of the critical importance of Hagaru-ri was more than vindicated less than 48 hours later as the lead column of the Yudam-ni garrison entered the perimeter. They were bone weary after fighting every step of the way through two CCF divisions who attempted to bar their progress. They were badly in need of a respite to regroup before continuing the march to the south, and they had taken more than 900 casualties with them. Food and ammunition both were beginning to run low, but, thanks to MajGen Smith's foresight, Hagaru-ri was well-stocked with both.

When all was said and done, it remained for MajGen Smith to sum up everything. In a personal letter to the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen Clifton B. Cates, he wrote, "I am understandably proud of the performance of this Division. The officers and men were magnificent. They came down the mountains bearded, footsore, and physically exhausted, but their spirits were high. They were still a fighting division." They also were led by a commanding general who stands among the giants of the Marine Corps.

Now, more than 60 years later, it is tempting to speculate about what might have happened had Hagaru-ri fallen. Without Hagaru-ri as a base to rest, resupply and reorganize, could 5th and 7th Marines successfully have withdrawn from their exposed position at Yudam-ni, taking only what equipment and ammunition they could carry with them and those casualties who could not be evacuated otherwise? Many veterans, grandfathers now, of both regiments would more than likely be glad they never had to find out.

Editor's note: Maj Bevilacqua, a Leatherneck contributing editor, is a former enlisted Marine who served in the Korean and Vietnam wars. Later in his career, he was an instructor at Amphibious Warfare School and Command and Staff College, Quantico, Va.



THE WAR ON TERROR

Edited by R. R. Keene

OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM

■ Camp Bastion, Afghanistan

Running Toward Gunfire:

The Firefight at Camp Bastion

Sergeant Rasheem Thomas never thought his first night working on Camp Bastion would turn into a gun battle with 15 insurgents.

When Sgt Thomas was told he was transferring from 1st Platoon to 2d Plt, the landing support specialist with Combat Logistics Battalion 2, Combat Logistics Regiment 15 thought nothing of it. Instead of working on Camp Leatherneck, Thomas would be working at the rotary wing Arrival/Departure Airfield Control Group (A/DACG) run by the British Armed Forces on Camp Bastion. He would be responsible for getting coalition forces and cargo on helicopters departing Camp Bastion's airfield heading for remote forward operating bases.

Thomas' first night on Camp Bastion was Friday, Sept. 14. He and a fellow ser-

geant were driving through a checkpoint close to the airfield when they heard an explosion.

"At first we didn't know if the explosion was on base or off," said Thomas. "We decided to go check on our Marines at the cargo lot and we saw an explosion by the [cryogenics] area. That's when we knew the base was under attack."

Fifteen insurgents dressed in U.S. Army uniforms armed with automatic rifles, rocket-propelled grenade launchers and suicide vests breached the base's perimeter fence at approximately 10 p.m. The insurgents, who were organized into three teams, began to attack fixed and rotary wing aircraft parked on the flight line, aircraft hangars and other buildings.

"When I actually saw it was happening on Bastion, I was in a bit of shock," Thomas said. "Then rounds began to impact close to our position, and I think everyone's training just kicked in."

When the attack began, the landing sup-

port specialists were in three different locations. Three Marines were at the A/DACG, four Marines were at the cargo lot, and the remaining Marines were in their living spaces.

"I started hearing explosions, so I went outside to see what was going on," said Staff Sergeant Justin Pauley, the landing support detachment chief. "I saw a RPG flying overhead, and I immediately told my Marines to get their [personal protective equipment] on."

Despite small-arms fire and indirect fire impacting around his position, Pauley knew he had to make contact with his higher headquarters on Camp Leatherneck to inform them of the situation. "I called the [Command Operations Center] and told them we were under attack and taking fire. I told them about the situation and what I saw."

After relaying the information to his chain of command, Pauley ensured that his three Marines and one civilian at the A/DACG had proper cover, and then he and his fellow Marines began to provide security.

When the first explosion happened, Lieutenant Colonel Stephen Lightfoot, Commanding Officer, Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron (HMLA) 469, knew the blast must be relatively close. Occasionally, friendly forces conduct controlled detonations outside the perimeter fence; however, this explosion seemed to be a little louder and closer.

"I went outside after hearing the first explosion, and within 15 seconds I heard another explosion," said Lightfoot. "That's when I saw the flames on the Harrier flight line. I yelled out for everyone to get to the [indirect fire] bunkers."

One of the teams of insurgents went to the AV-8B Harrier flight line and began to attack the jets and the Marines. By the conclusion of the assault, six Harriers were destroyed and two others were significantly damaged. Upon seeing the fire and explosions, Lightfoot knew he needed to get his aircraft in the sky, not only to provide overwatch and close air support, but also to protect the remaining aircraft.

"I told the duty [operations officer]



SGT JOHN JACKSON

Landing support specialists with CLB-2, CLR-15 spent the night, providing security and fighting off insurgents on Camp Bastion, Sept. 14. For Sgt Rasheem Thomas, back row on the right, his first night working on Camp Bastion is something he and his Marines will not soon forget. Back row, from left: Sgt John Thornton, Cpl Timothy Bruce, SSGT Justin Pauley and Sgt Thomas. Front row, from left: PFC Jacob Karnes, LCpl Danielle Ritter and Cpl Jenna Owings.



CPL MARK GARCIA

Marines kneel beside a battlefield cross to pay their final respects to Sgt Bradley W. Atwell during a memorial ceremony Sept. 20. Atwell, an aircraft electrical, instrument and flight control systems technician with MALS-16, from Kokomo, Ind., was killed in action while engaging insurgents during an attack on Camp Bastion, Sept. 14.

to sound the ‘Troops in Contact’ alarm and get the alert aircraft airborne immediately,” said Lightfoot.

Hearing the Troops in Contact alarm at the HMLA-469 compound is nothing new for the Marines. The AH-1W Super Cobras and the UH-1Y Super Huey helicopters often are called to provide air support to coalition forces who are engaged with enemy forces. However, responding to their own alarm is something these Marines had not done before.

“Usually we respond to TICs for other units,” said Lightfoot. “However, everyone acted instinctively, got to the aircraft and got the alert aircraft launched despite taking fire on the flight line.”

Once airborne, the alert aircraft flew through challenging conditions. “It was a very dark night. There was no moon,” said Lightfoot. “However, on the flight line there were multiple aircraft on fire, and a couple other areas were on fire as well, so it was extremely bright. There were 50- to 100-foot flames and a lot of thick smoke.”

While the flying conditions were complex, the commanding officer’s biggest concern was with the Marines and coalition forces engaging the insurgents.

“We knew we had a lot of friendly [forces] on the ground,” Lightfoot said. “We wanted to make sure we did no harm to them or to their positions.”

Meanwhile, Sgt Thomas and his landing support specialists at the cargo lot on Camp Bastion saw four insurgents make their way down the flight line. They knew they needed to maneuver to find better

positions to engage the enemy. At the same time, a British Quick Reaction Force (QRF) was arriving on scene to assist in the counterattack.

“I attached myself with the British QRF while some of my other Marines held and maintained security at the cargo lot and on the flight line,” Thomas said.

The British QRF, along with Marines



JASON MONROE

from CLB-2 and Third Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward) began to push toward the enemy and engage their position. Additionally, overhead the alert aircraft from HMLA-469 were able to see coalition forces engaging the insurgents.

“One of our Marines on the ground was using night vision goggles and engaging the enemy from the ground,” Lightfoot said. “Additionally, the pilots saw the QRF engaging the same position.”

Once the pilots confirmed the enemy position, they were able to employ their respective aircraft’s weapons systems to eliminate one team of insurgents.

Following their first engagement, the alert aircraft maintained radio communication with Marine Attack Squadron 211, the AV-8B Harrier squadron, on the ground. The Harrier squadron was able to relay information about the location of another group of insurgents to the helicopters providing close air support.

“[VMA-211] told the pilots where the enemy was,” Lightfoot said. “They used the information to engage the enemy from approximately 200 feet in the air.

“The pilots were danger-close to friendly positions, but were able to use the information received to engage the enemy without endangering friendly forces,” said Lightfoot.

Fires continued to burn through the night, but rounds ceased being fired a few hours after the first explosion. Fourteen insurgents were killed and one was wounded and taken into custody by coalition forces.

Two Marines, LtCol Christopher Raible, the commanding officer of VMA-211, and Sgt Bradley Atwell, an aircraft electrical, instrument and flight control systems technician with Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16, were killed during the attack. Additionally, eight coalition personnel and one civilian contractor were wounded.

Marines with CLB-2 and 3d MAW (Fwd), as well as British forces with the QRF, maintained security of the airfield for the remainder of the evening. Five aircraft with HMLA-469 patrolled the skies over Camp Bastion until the sun rose.

“This was totally new to most of the Marines,” said Sgt Thomas. “But everyone listened, everyone stayed together. We had great communication, maintained proper sectors of fire and had full accountability of our Marines.”

“Every Marine is a rifleman,” Lightfoot said. “Marines of every military occupational specialty in the squadron, to include AH-1W and UH-1Y aircraft mechanics, dropped their wrenches and grabbed their rifles to defend the HMLA-469 compound from a well-armed enemy. Through the coordinated use of ground and aerial delivered fires, in danger-close proximity to

friendly forces, all enemy insurgents were killed or captured. I am extremely proud to serve with such high-caliber men and women.”

Sgt John Jackson

Combat Correspondent, 3d MAW (Fwd)

He Unknowingly Drove Right Into Insurgent Ambush

Lance Corporal Ethan Burk, a hazardous materials management coordinator with Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16, Third Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward), was on his way to work when he heard the first rocket-propelled grenade explode behind him.

He had driven straight into an ambush by heavily armed insurgents firing at his four-wheeled tractor, which had no armor to stop the barrage of bullets striking all around him.



LCpl Ethan Burk stands before a bullet-riddled concrete barrier from the insurgent’s Sept. 14 night attack on Camp Bastion. Wounded and carrying a bullet-scarred rifle, Burk and another Marine maneuvered out of the kill zone to inform the British Army’s Quick Reaction Force of the insurgents’ fighting position.

“I could see the muzzle flashes from the corner of the compound,” said Burk. “That’s when I realized they were all aiming at me. I felt something hit my arm, but I thought I had just banged it on something. Then I rolled out of the [tractor] and ducked. When I reached for my rifle, they started shooting at me again, and that’s when I realized they had a lot more firepower than I did because they were firing too fast for just regular AK47s.”

Maneuvering behind a barrier, Burk could only see and judge the insurgents’

movements in the darkness by their muzzle flashes. He pressed on, trying to use the light from the flight line to see where the insurgents had holed up.

After moving to a covered position, one of his friends and the only other Marine in the area, LCpl Kevin Sommers, a cryogenics technician with MALS-16, 3d MAW (Fwd), jumped over a barrier and almost landed on top of Burk. The two Marines waited for the insurgents to try and flank them. When they didn’t, the pair climbed over concrete barriers to get better firing positions.

“Once we realized they weren’t coming after us, we jumped over the T-walls and cleared out the area behind the barriers. At that point the British [Quick Reaction Force] showed up, and the [helicopters] were shooting from their main guns at the insurgents’ fighting positions overhead,” Burk said. “We flagged the soldiers down with a light and yelled, ‘Marines, Marines, Marines’ to let them know the situation. The guy in charge of the British QRF told us to go get my arm checked out because he saw the blood on my uniform.”

After Burk and Sommers checked in for accountability, Burk went to a corpsman and found out he had been shot in the elbow.

“After I had it X-rayed, they found two pieces of the bullet still lodged in my arm.” The pieces were surgically removed, Burk explained. “After the whole ordeal, they asked if I wanted to go home because I was injured, and I told them: ‘I just got here, why would I want to go home?’”

Sgt James Mercure

Combat Correspondent, 3d MAW (Fwd)

Air Superiority: Harriers Continue Operations Over Helmand

Two AV-8B Harrier II Plus aircraft appeared in the sky as ground crewmembers prepared for their arrival. The aircraft, more than 46 feet long with a wingspan of 30 feet, roared through the Afghanistan sky: a symbol of air superiority.

After a recent insurgent attack at Camp Bastion, Afghanistan, Marine Attack Squadron (VMA) 211 endured not only the loss of several of its aircraft, but also the loss of its commanding officer, Lieutenant Colonel Christopher Raible.

Despite this, the squadron pushed forward to complete its deployment in Helmand province. The Harrier squadron remains fully operational and continues to provide support to ground troops throughout Regional Command Southwest’s area of operations.

“We are used for close air support for the infantry battalions,” said Captain Matthew Pasquali, a pilot with VMA-211, Third Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward).

An AV-8B Harrier II Plus with VMA-211, 3d MAW (Fwd) awaits its next mission on the tarmac at Camp Bastion, Afghanistan, Sept. 18. Despite personnel and aircraft losses on Sept. 14, VMA-211 remained fully operational, supporting ground troops throughout Regional Command Southwest's area of operations until the squadron returned to the States in early November. (Photo by Cpl Timothy Lenzo)



“We are providing patrol overwatch, scanning for known improvised explosive device implementing spots and looking ahead of patrols for typical ambush positions.”

This is Pasquali’s fifth deployment and third to Afghanistan. The squadron deployed in May 2012 and has stayed busy throughout their approximate five months in country.

“We’ve been employed in support of ground operations more than 50 times thus far,” said Pasquali.

With a max speed of 673 mph, the Harrier provides fast air support to coalition forces throughout the area. Armed with a 25 mm five-barreled Gatling gun, the aircraft can do much more than provide reconnaissance.

“If it comes to it, we provide close air support with 500-pound bombs or 25 mm gun runs,” said Pasquali.

The squadron provides ground units with a precision targeting capability for close air support, which makes the Harrier squadron a vital piece of the Marine air-ground task force.

“The insurgents have no air force,” said Pasquali. “They can attack our friendlies with rocket-propelled grenades and small-arms fire, but we can answer back from altitudes ... [from which] they can’t attack us.”

Harriers allow a commander the flexi-

bility to operate from ship or shore, providing the ability to conduct fire support, close air support, aerial reconnaissance or be an aerial escort for other aircraft or troops on the ground.

“Without the Harriers, the Marine Corps would rely on outside sources for fixed wing attack aviation,” said Capt Tim Otten, a pilot and command adjutant with VMA-211.

Otten said the Harriers are piloted and manned by Marines, which creates a level of familiarity between the air and ground units. This makes operating easier and more efficient.

“We have a better understanding of what is happening on the ground because those are our brothers that we went through boot camp or officer candidates school with,” said Otten.

The squadron continues to support the ground units with the Harriers when needed. They understand the importance of their mission.

“Every Marine knows another Marine that is out on the ground,” said Otten. “This job gives me the unique ability to help Marines. That’s the best part, trying to provide the best support I can.”

While recently there were some difficult days for VMA-211, the squadron has overcome adversity in its history. During World War II, the squadron was attacked by Japanese forces who destroyed seven

of the squadron’s 12 aircraft. Despite the losses, the two weeks following the attack, VMA-211 continued to take the fight to the enemy. The squadron fought off several enemy attacks and destroyed four naval warships.

Just as VMA-211 did during World War II, it pushed through. The “Wake Island Avenger Squadron” Marines know they have a job to do and intend to complete their mission and to provide the close air support for Marines on the ground.

Cpl Timothy Lenzo

Combat Correspondent, 3d MAW (Fwd)

■ Patrol Base Detroit Brothers in Arms With Afghan National Army

On the edge of Trek Nawa, an area between the Nawa and Marjah districts, stands a small patrol base where Marines and Afghan National Army soldiers come together and work side by side.

United by a common enemy, the Marines with Weapons Company, 1st Battalion, First Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 6, and Afghan National Army soldiers with 1st Kandak, 1st Brigade, 215th Corps, strengthened an already solid friendship.

“Our principal role is to guide the Afghan National Army through the transition period,” said Captain Glen Taylor, Weapons Co commander. “We’ll get them fully



CPL TIMOTHY LENZO

Above: Afghan National Army 1stLt Asrar Hussain, left, with 1st Kandak, 1st Brigade, 215th Corps, and 1stLt Stephen Huff, Platoon Commander, Wpns/1/1, RCT-6, developed a strong bond as brothers in arms in Trek Nawa, a known insurgent stronghold between the Marjah and Nawa districts.

Below: SSgt David Simons, left, a platoon sergeant with Wpns/1/1, exits a compound during a partnered patrol with the Afghan National Army. The Marines work side by side with their ANA counterparts during all operations.



CPL TIMOTHY LENZO

prepared logistically and tactically to conduct combat operations against the enemy.”

Trek Nawa is a known insurgent stronghold, and from the first patrols, the Marines took enemy small-arms fire.

“We were in the lead during Ramadan while it was difficult for [the ANA] to conduct operations,” Taylor added.

During Ramadan, the Afghan soldiers fasted from sunrise to sunset, making it dangerous when on patrol in temperatures reaching more than 130 degrees Fahrenheit.

“The ANA soldiers are tough,” said First

Lieutenant Stephen Huff, a platoon commander. “They weren’t eating or drinking through the day, but every morning they step out [on patrol] with no water or food. Some days we’d fight until the afternoon.”

Marines took the lead in the partnered patrols during the Islamic holy month, helping to take some pressure off their Afghan counterparts during this special time of year. They engaged the enemy in numerous firefights while patrolling and, on one occasion, spent three consecutive days in Trek Nawa fighting the insurgency. When Ramadan ended, the Marines re-

turned to more of a supporting role.

“The main ways we have an impact is through training the Afghan army and advising them on their patrols and operations,” Taylor said.

Every couple days, the Marines teach a variety of classes to the ANA, including mortar systems, marksmanship, night movements and land navigation.

The classes are designed to help the Afghans contain and disrupt the insurgents’ operations and to develop more independence from coalition forces.

“The classes have really helped us against the enemy,” said ANA Capt Aziz Mohammad, the company commander of 1st Kandak.

Mohammad’s soldiers work closely with the Marines, and he said he would like to work with them in the future.

The Afghan soldiers plan and conduct their own patrols and operations, with the Marines in a supporting role.

“Our mission is disruption operations to keep some of the [pressure] off the Nawa and Marjah districts,” said 1stLt Huff.

The ANA soldiers welcomed the Marines, and the two units built strong friendships during the past months.

Afghan National Army 1stLt Asrar Hussain said: “I like these Marines. They work hard with us and give us lots of training.”

The Marines stood side by side with the Afghan soldiers in combat, which created an instant bond.

“We were in firefights from day one,” Huff said. “The cultural barrier quickly melted away, and we found each other sitting down and talking soldier to Marine.”

Now, during their down time, the Marines play sports with the Afghans. There is a volleyball court set up, and some evenings the shouts and cheers from both sides can be heard throughout the patrol base.

Recently, when the Marines returned to base, the Afghans invited them over for dinner. They prepared enough rice, fresh fruit, beef and *naan*, a common bread served in Afghanistan, for all the Marines. To the Afghans, it was a kind gesture and showed a level of respect for their Marine counterparts. The Marines welcomed the gesture, more than happy to enjoy a fresh meal with their brothers in arms.

The Marines and ANA soldiers realize they have the same goal, and it united them on this small patrol base.

“We have the same target, and we have the same enemy,” said Hussain. “Living on one base made us like one family.”

Cpl Timothy Lenzo

Combat Correspondent, RCT-6





2012 JOSHUA LARSON

Cpl Lonnie Bowen, a flight-line mechanic with VMM-261 (Rein), 24th MEU, performs corrosion prevention maintenance on a CH-53E Super Stallion aboard USS *New York* (LPD-21) while under way in September 2012.

Aircraft Maintenance Aboard Amphibious Shipping Keeps U.S. Marines Mission Ready

By Capt Robert Shuford

With nonstop flying in the 5th Fleet area of responsibility comes nonstop maintenance for aviation mechanics of the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit.

The little-known heroes in the maintenance crews of the 24th MEU's aviation combat element, Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron (VMM) 261 (Reinforced) stayed busy during the MEU's recent deployment, ensuring the MV-22B Ospreys, AV-8B Harriers, CH-53E Super Stallions, UH-1N Hueys and AH-1W Super Cobras were always mission capable while at sea.

In August alone, the maintenance crews for each type of aircraft tallied a combined total of 9,823 man-hours of work doing things as simple as checking wires and tightening screws, to replacing entire engines by using cranes and lifts.



2012 JOSHUA LARSON

At sea, corrosion is an even more aggressive enemy of the aviation combat element, and battling it is a daily chore as this Marine demonstrates.

An average workday for these crews began an hour before their daily maintenance meeting when the day crews and night crews conducted a shift turnover—one crew completing its 12-hour shift, as another crew came on.

“Without the dual shift, 24-hour maintenance effort, the daily mission readiness of the 24th MEU's aviation assets would fall apart. Aviation mechanics are the unsung core of that effort,” said Major Dale Behm, the maintenance officer for the squadron.

Behm, who has been with the squadron since 2011, explained the intensity and thoroughness of the 24th MEU's aviation maintenance efforts with a comparison to normal automotive maintenance: “Aviation maintenance is much more complex than having your car inspected once a year and the oil changed every 3,000 to 5,000 miles. Aircraft maintenance strives



The VMM-261 (Rein) aviation maintenance Marines, shown working on the MV-22 Osprey on the flight deck of USS *Iwo Jima* (LHD-7), perform maintenance at sea at every opportunity.

CAPT ROBERT SHUFORD

to maintain balance between the multitude of hourly inspections that are unique to specific types of aircraft and parts.

“Instead of just sending the car in for a 60,000-mile transmission check, an aircraft maintainer tracks the age [component life] of any one of the many bolts that are part of that transmission,” Behm continued. “During a daily inspection, all of those bolts on an aircraft’s transmission need to be torque checked and inspected for evidence of integrity, fatigue and wear.”

And that’s just the small stuff.

What makes their work more impressive is that these Marines don’t have the luxury of using a full hangar facility like they do at an air station. Their work was performed under way aboard the amphibious assault ships USS *Iwo Jima* (LHD-7) and USS *New York* (LPD-21)—two of the three ships belonging to the *Iwo Jima* Amphibious Ready Group, which deployed the MEU.

“At a dedicated automotive shop, your frame-off restoration might take months, while our maintenance Marines complete these types of overhauls in seven to 10 days,” said Behm, a Strausstown, Pa., native.

Such checks were just part of the daily, and nightly, grind for the 320 maintainers of the unit, who could be found on the flight and hangar decks performing their jobs in temperatures consistently reaching more than 110 degrees throughout the summer months in the Middle East.

Other factors unique to the expeditionary environment of performing maintenance at sea include working on a moving ship in rough seas, working under the dim, green lighting in the hangar at night, and balancing the limited work space available with flight operations and the daily routine of the ship’s crew.

Since the 24th MEU deployed, its aircraft have flown to support exercises in Morocco, Jordan, Kuwait and Djibouti. The squadron executed a continuous flight schedule while moving personnel and equipment between ship and shore for training and operations and also supported requirements of the pilots and crews to maintain qualifications and required flight hours to stay proficient.

Day in and day out, Behm said, these young Marines dedicate countless hours to the repair and preventive maintenance “on completely unique, different types of aircraft, which keep the 24th MEU ready to support missions anywhere in the world. It’s humbling to be a part of this team.”

The 24th MEU embarked with the *Iwo Jima* Amphibious Ready Group on a regularly scheduled deployment to the U.S. Navy’s 6th and 5th fleets while serving



LCPL TUCKER WOLF

Above: The AV-8B Harriers of VMM-261 (Rein) also receive routine daily maintenance, as these fixed-wing aircraft airframe mechanics inspect, maintain and repair aircraft hydraulic/pneumatic and structure systems while embarked on USS *Iwo Jima*.

Below: Inspection after maintenance on an AV-8B Harrier is a task for LCpl Timothy Moore, left, a collateral duty inspector with the airframes section of VMM-261 (Rein), aboard USS *Iwo Jima*.



LCPL TUCKER WOLF

as a crisis response force for the U.S. European and Central commands. The MEU began its deployment in late March 2012 and returned home to Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., in November.

Author’s note: Our 24th MEU Communication Strategy Team performed above and beyond during our deployment. Our Marines have done an outstanding job highlighting and documenting the MEU/ARG team while increasing awareness about our operations to a variety of audiences around the world, including potential friends and potential enemies.

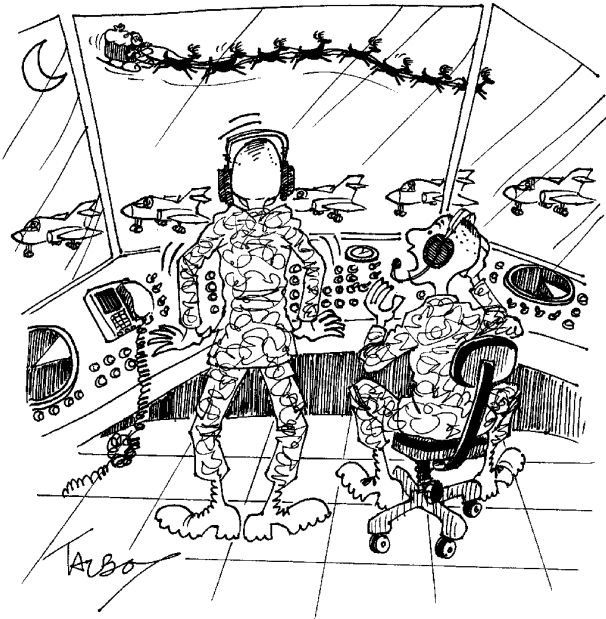
The goal of establishing a narrative of the 24th MEU being a flexible, scalable,

forward-deployed crisis response force capable of supporting a variety of missions, which include full-scale combat, humanitarian assistance, theater security cooperation, force projection and support to maritime security efforts, has been accomplished.

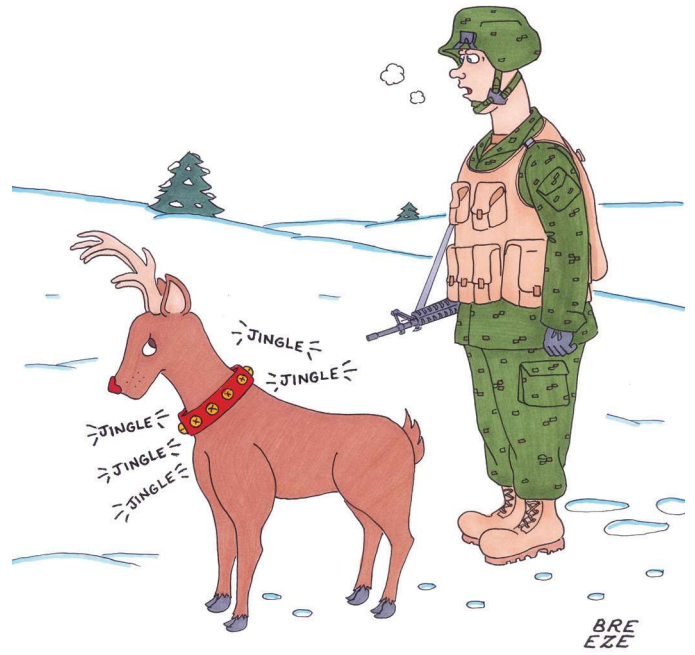
Editor’s note: Commissioned in 2002 via the Platoon Leaders Class program, Capt Shuford is the PAO and OIC of the 24th MEU’s Communication Strategy Team. He completed his fourth deployment in November. He served as an instructor and staff platoon commander at The Basic School from 2006 to 2009.



Leatherneck Laffs



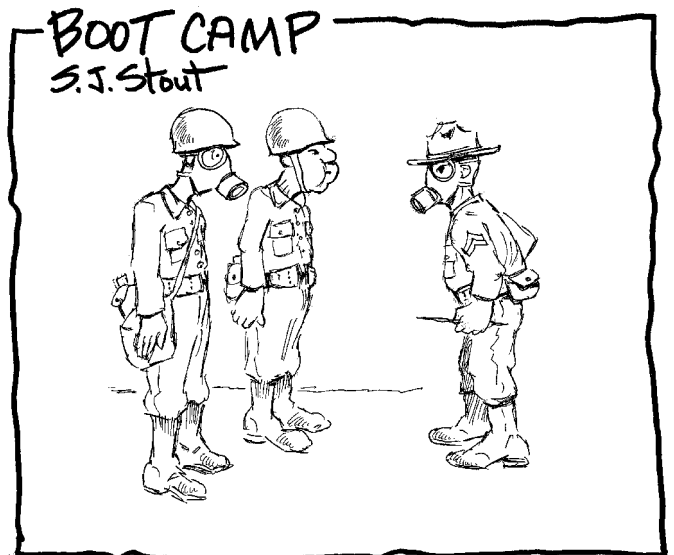
"He's requesting permission for a high performance flyby."



"The idea of noise discipline is just lost on you, isn't it?"

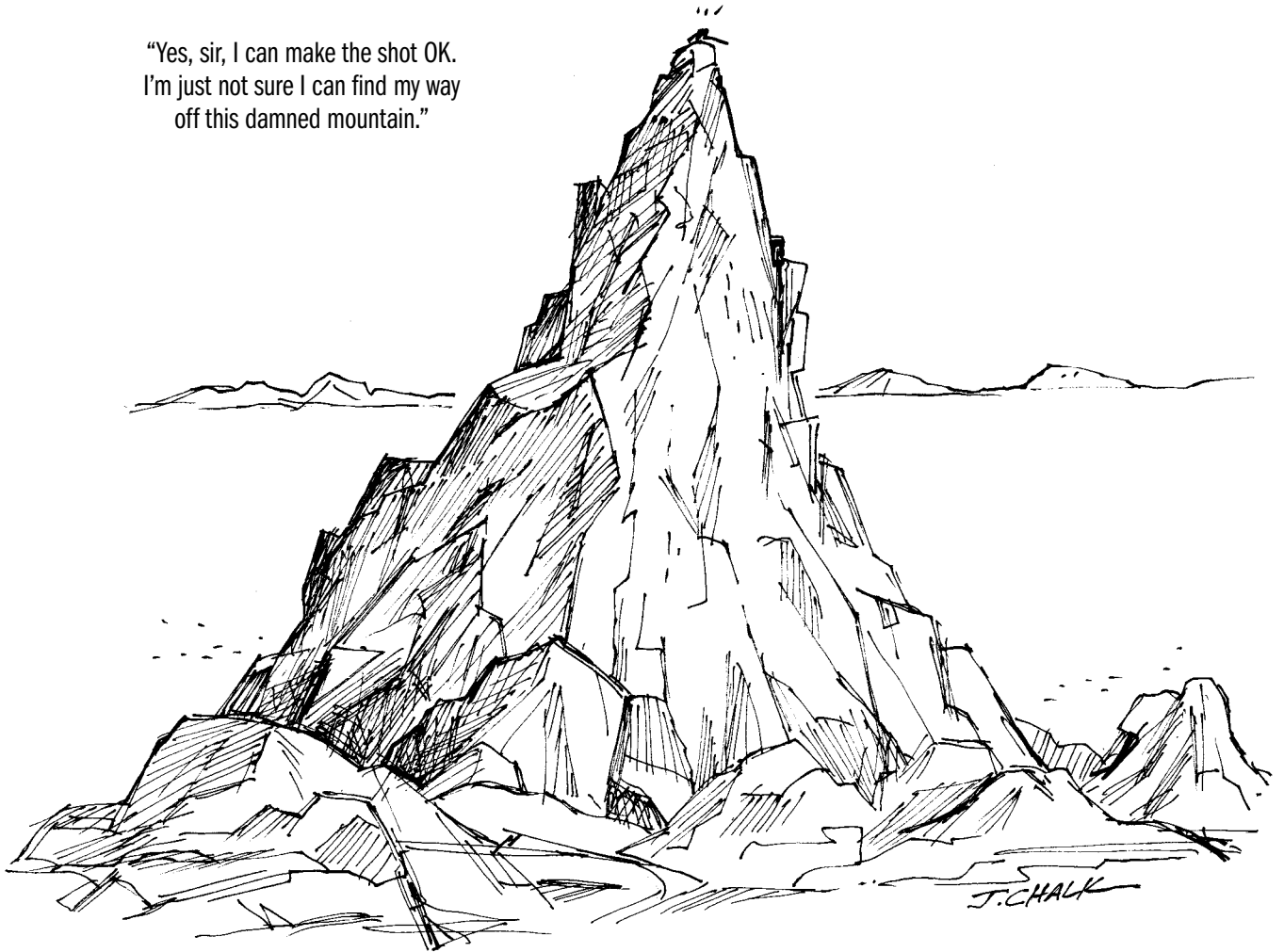


"Sorry, Perkins, but we're giving the meritorious promotion to your smartphone."



"Forgot your gas mask ... again!"

"Yes, sir, I can make the shot OK.
I'm just not sure I can find my way
off this damned mountain."



"Weight standard: Unsat! Grooming: Unsat!
And I want to see my face in those boots!"



"Lord, what have they done to him? He made his own bed!"

The Advisor Training Group: Making Afghanistan “Transition” Successful

Story and photos by Andrew Lubin

A stable country needs competent military, police and border units to provide security for its citizens, and in Afghanistan, the army and police are being mentored by Marines trained specifically for the task by the Advisor Training Group based at Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif.

“The mindset of an advisor needs to be different than that of a typical Marine hard-charger,” explained Colonel William Gillespie. “It’s like the difference between a recruiter and a drill instructor, plus you’ve got to take into account the U.S.-Afghan cultural differences.”

Gillespie is the director of the Advisor Training Group (ATG), a small, but vitally important cog in the Marine effort to turn the fledgling Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) into effective organizations able to provide the protective and support services a country requires.

The ATG trains the Marines for the Security Forces Assistance Advisor Teams (SFAAT) who mentor, advise and train the Afghan forces, including the Afghan National Army (ANA), Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP), Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP) and Border Police (BP), along with military intelligence and combat service support personnel.

A typical advisor team consists of 14 to 32 Marines and sailors, many of whom have volunteered for the duty. Military occupational specialties (MOSs) vary, but the Marine Corps makes a concerted effort to match the MOS makeup with the requirements of the Afghan unit with whom the advisor team will be embedded. Many if not most of the Marines going through the training have prior combat experience.

There are two levels of advisors. On one level the typical team is assigned with the Afghan army and police in Regional Command-Southwest, where the allied effort is led by a Marine, on a local, district or *kandak* (battalion) basis, advising on a one-up or one-down level. On another level is a specialized team of field-grade officers working at regional, provincial, (Helmand and Nimroz provinces), zone and at brigade and corps level, with a Marine colonel or lieutenant colonel mentoring an Afghan major general or brigadier general.



In a very realistic advisor training mission rehearsal exercise during advisor team training, Capt Jose Castillo, center, calls in a medevac, and role player Omar, right, acting as an ANA captain, receives a situation report from platoon commanders engaged in battle.

No.	Comparison Group	Core Team Members (89)
		Number of Evaluations
		963
1	Participates (interact with role players)	90.5
2	Patient (capacity to endure, controlled)	89.3
3	Respectful (polite, considerate, courteous)	88.9
4	Culturally Sensitive (displays understanding of Afghan culture)	82.4
5	Confident (self assured, well adjusted)	86.5
6	Social (friendly, displays warmth and interest in others)	86.9
7	Flexible (adaptable, accepting, agreeable)	85.7
8	Sincere (attentive, genuine desire to help)	86.6
9	Competent (effective, accepted, capable)	86.5
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Realistic Training a Necessity

With the recent spate of “green-on-blue,” or Afghan attacks on allies, building Marine-ANSF relationships has been raised to even greater importance. The cultural differences, which are stated as one basis for the green-on-blue attacks,

are studied, with the goal of better understanding the Muslim religion and Pash-tunwali, which literally means “the way of the Pashtuns’ life.” With the Pashtuns being by far the largest ethnic group in RC-Southwest, knowledge of their culture is very important.

Mission Rehearsal Exercises

Scene #1: A *Shura*

It was a typical *shura* scene reminiscent of hundreds of others in which Marines have participated in recent years—except that the Afghans were in control.

The small group consisted of the Afghan National Army (ANA) chief, elders from the village of Fatwan Gul, the Marine advisor in training and his interpreter. The Afghan National Police were responsible for security, and they were thorough in frisking the civilians as they arrived. With the idea being that the Afghans need to govern on a local level, the Marine advisor, Team 1's Captain Jose Castillo, did more listening than talking, and after 30 minutes, the group broke up and began to leave.

As the elders and *shura* participants slowly walked toward the base's exit, suddenly a local (role player) dressed in an Afghan army uniform walked nervously up to the checkpoint, attracting the attention of two Afghan policemen, who challenged and tried to grab him. Breaking free from the policemen's grasp, the individual dressed as a soldier ran a few meters, turned toward the crowd and, with a small fireworks charge, notionally blew himself up.

There was instant pandemonium. As Capt Castillo and his ANA counterpart Omar went running, they encountered a horrific scene: several Afghan policemen were down and badly wounded, the suicide bomber lay dead, and across the street, both male and female role-player-civilians lay screaming in pain from wounds notionally suffered in the bombing.

As a corpsman ran from wounded to wounded, caring for their simulated wounds, a dispute broke out between the Afghan army soldiers and the Af-

ghan police. The dispute escalated from shouting to screaming and pointing rifles and handguns at each other. The police blamed the army for the assault and seemed on the verge of starting a fire-fight. As an Afghan soldier was denying the accusations, Omar and Castillo pushed into the milling Afghan forces, separating the two sides.

Calm finally resumed and Castillo called for a medevac. The notionally wounded policemen and civilians were readied for evacuation. Then another role-playing insurgent leaned out of a second-story window and opened fire on the crowd. The already-wired Afghan police sprang into action.

As the gunman fled down the stairs and ran through the town, the Afghan National Security Forces discovered that he had an accomplice. They quickly divided themselves into two groups, one gunning down the accomplice, the others chasing the shooter a few blocks before he escaped. Through the action, however, Castillo and Omar continued to work together, with Castillo arranging a second medevac and Omar maintaining control of his troops.

Scene #2: An Ambush and Civilian Casualties

The Marines of Team 1, led by Capt Castillo, accompanied two platoons of notional ANA soldiers on a patrol into Sarob. Sarob was believed to be a semi-permissive town where a presence patrol was accepted easily by the locals. In a scene reminiscent of many villages through which Marines have patrolled since 2001, a few role players acting as Sarob residents sat outside their shops casually waving and smiling as the patrol slowly moved past under the hot desert sun.

But in another scene reminiscent of

Role player Omar and Capt Jose Castillo confer after a notional suicide vehicle IED attack during an advisor mission rehearsal exercise.



Understanding these cultural differences is a major part of ATG's mission—teaching the Marines the subtleties of how to successfully mentor and advise the ANSF. "It's not just how to teach tactics," Captain Alex Luedtke said. "It's using the trust and respect so important in the Afghan culture to reinforce the tactical and soft skills necessary to be effective."

An infantryman by trade, Luedtke is one of the captains who oversees the training; he is responsible for the Influencing Human Behavior classes. "Our [advisor] Marines aren't teaching," Luedtke explained. "We're mentoring and advising, and it's important the Marines understand the difference."

Every advisor team must complete a 25-day graduate level Advisor Skills Course, Gillespie explained. The course includes both hard and soft skills as well as a final field exercise designed to emphasize the mentoring role of the mission.

To assist in making the training as realistic as possible, a contractor supplies some 190 Afghan-American citizens who act as role players. The men and women play a variety of roles including that of Afghan soldier, shopkeeper, Afghan policeman, townspeople and village elder. A weeklong mission rehearsal exercise (MRX), where the team must deal with various Afghan-related scenarios, finishes the training.

During the rehearsal exercise, the Marines are observed and graded in how they interact and advise their Afghan counterparts throughout a series of high-stress exercises that include complex ambushes, vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices, detainee processing, *jirgas* (tribal assembly of elders), force protection, morale and discipline, and aerial medical evacuations. It's not just keeping one's composure during a mortar attack or IED strike, but ensuring the Afghan counterpart is able to keep his.

Although the advisor requirements in Afghanistan call for both combat and non-combat MOS capabilities, Afghanistan still is very much a combat zone, and ATG ensures the advisors maintain a high combat proficiency.

Capt Douglas Seaver directs the foreign weapons courses while Capt Shanen Dawson supervises basic and refresher machine-gun courses. Capt Chris Conanan manages "lane training," which includes counter-IED programs, both mounted and dismounted patrolling, medevacs and tactical site exploitation. There also is a defensive weapons course, specially tailored to teach the Marine how to defend himself in a green-on-blue attack.

To prepare deploying Marines for current and future urban combat situations, the Marine Corps built the largest urban

Female Afghan-American role players, with simulated wounds, rest between mission rehearsal events.



many Afghan villages in which Marines have patrolled, the bucolic scene disappeared in a burst of machine-gun fire and the blast of an improvised explosive device (IED).

“We plan the attacks carefully,” said Sergeant Philip Lubin. “We’re able to conduct complex ambushes, with multiple points of attack, which are designed to stress the Marines we’re training.”

Assigned to the Advisor Training Group a year ago, Lubin is on the Role Player Control Team with Sgt Paul McAllister, the ATG expert in foreign weapons. He and Lubin plan the attacks that include the

use of crew-served weapons, AK47s and rocket-propelled grenades. Contractors are hired to emplace and fire the IEDs. The Marines and contractors don Afghan garb and firing blanks from their Afghan rifles and machine guns, ambush the joint patrols from various locations within the town.

Today’s attack began less than 10 minutes into the patrol. Omar, a role player acting as the ANA commander, and Castillo immediately fell into a rhythm with Castillo talking to the two Marines accompanying the patrol as the Afghan took reports from his platoon commanders.

training facility, or combat town, in the American military, with 1,550 buildings spread over 284 acres. It’s a 20-minute drive in the desert beyond Camp Wilson at Twentynine Palms.

Built primarily from 20-foot and 40-foot shipping containers, the buildings replicate jails, hospitals, bazaars and even multiple-story hotels, complete with furniture. The roads have been reinforced to allow Marine armored vehicles including M1 main battle tanks, amphibious tractors and light armored vehicles to participate in the exercises. Graveyards, Afghan women and bazaars add to the cultural atmospherics. The 284 acres have been subdivided into seven different districts, with ATG owning its own battlespace.

Grading the Individual Marines

In order for the Marines to be effective overseas, they receive feedback on their dealings with the role players. The ATG

utilizes a “Rapport Index” in which each Marine is graded on such relationship-related concepts as respect, sincerity, confidence and competence.

The index was developed by Dr. Thomas D. Affourtif, a psychologist and management consultant, who was a Marine advisor in Vietnam. There are nine questions, perhaps more likely viewed as questions posed by Dr. Phil or Oprah than in grading Marines, but mentoring is a different mission than combat, and getting outside the standard combat training box is of great importance.

Advisor trainers look to these questions in evaluating future advisors: Is he stand-offish, or does the Marine interact with the role players? Does he demonstrate a genuine desire to help? Is he social; demonstrating warmth and interest in others?

As Col Gillespie explained, “Since we can’t measure what’s in the heart, we focus on [the] advisor’s demonstrative behavior.”

This is exactly as it should be. Standard operating procedures call for the Marines to control logistics and air, while the ANA controls the fight. So while Omar was busy receiving information from his platoon commanders, Castillo positioned a vehicle in order to evacuate a wounded Afghan soldier as another soldier laid down suppressing fire so the ANA troops could rush the insurgents.

But the attack was far from finished, and suddenly gunfire and indirect fire raked the neighboring bazaar, causing more civilian casualties. An ANA mortar team disobeyed orders not to fire, and their short rounds landed in the bazaar.

Following the shouts of the angry men and the screaming women in the bazaar, the Marine and Afghan corpsmen and troops found a scene that would have been horrific if real. Three Afghan male bodies lay crumpled in the bazaar, with a notionally wounded male raising a bloody arm as he begged for aid. However, only a few meters away, the situation was worse. Three women had been theoretically wounded, and with culturally appropriately clad women shrieking and trying to aid their friends, the Marines and Afghans rushing to their aid had to push through them to attend to the wounded. Yelling wildly, the ladies pushed their way into the shop that the Marines had commandeered for a hasty aid station and continued to add their voices to the shrieks of the wounded ladies.

It was an intense event in the day’s training.

—Andrew Lubin

“We take this very seriously,” said Omar, a role player acting as an Afghan army officer. “Most of us were born in Afghanistan, but now are American citizens. This gives us the chance to help both our home and adopted countries. We’re grateful for the opportunity to help the Marines succeed.”

Each MRX closes with a Warrior Lunch, where the Afghan role players and Marines sit, break bread and talk as friends in reviewing the training. It’s more than just a meal in the sand; it’s yet another subtle example of how relationships are built on trust and commonality of purpose.

Editor’s note: Andrew Lubin is a frequent Leatherneck contributor and has embedded with Marine units in Iraq and Afghanistan many times.





During his four-year tour as an enlisted Marine motor transport operator, one of Paul Hyder's assignments was with the 12th Marine Regiment in Okinawa where he, center with glasses, gained an appreciation for all things "Marine," including nature walks.

Mustang Spirit

Story by Roxanne Baker
Photos courtesy of
LT Paul A. Hyder, CHC, USN

Chaplain Paul A. Hyder, Lieutenant, Chaplain Corps, USN, doesn't need a pulpit or a church to preach God's word to his congregation of sailors and Marines. A muddy hill and open ears will do just fine.

Proud of his time as a young enlisted Marine, Hyder said, "One of the things I enjoyed about being a Marine is that we roughed it. That's going out in the woods and the mud, and that's exactly what God was calling me to do. I felt like I was good at bringing the gospel to an expeditionary situation; it was something I was wired to do."

Hyder both holds to his roots as a Marine and embraces his new role as a Navy officer and chaplain. The Marine Corps Mustang Association (MCMA) recently recognized his service and spirit and named him as an honorary member.

The term Mustang has long been a nickname for Marines and sailors who have advanced through the ranks from enlisted to officer. Chaplain Hyder was not able to qualify as



Chaplain Paul Hyder baptizes sailors in Camp Bucca, Iraq, during 2008.

an association member, however, because he transitioned to the officer side through the Navy.

MCMA board member Major Joe Featherston, USMC (Ret) described Chaplain Hyder as "remarkable" and as an exemplary Mustang officer. He presented Hyder with the honorary Mustang Association certificate during a ceremony Aug. 25 at The Clubs at Quantico aboard Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., coinciding with a reunion of the Officer Candidates School 7th Warrant Officer class and The Basic School class of 1966.

Hyder is the association's fifth honorary member, with predecessors including two Marine Commandants, General Alfred M. Gray and Gen Carl

E. Mundy Jr.; a Medal of Honor Marine, Colonel Wesley L. "Wes" Fox; and a Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Jeremy Boorda, USN.

"I was very surprised and honored and humbled," Hyder said of the recognition. "I think it has made me appreciate my prior service in a way that's deeper and richer. I gratefully accept the award on behalf of all my fellow Marines who are now chaplains serving in the Navy."



CPL JAHN R. KUPFER



Above: During 2007, after going on active duty in the Navy's Chaplain Corps, Hyder had the opportunity to preach in the Dominican Republic.

Left: After providing the Benediction, Chaplain Hyder stands next to retired Col Bruce Meyers, the father of Marine Force Reconnaissance, at the dedication of the Force Recon Memorial at the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Triangle, Va., Nov. 10, 2010.

Road to Seminary

A Texas native, Hyder enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1988 fresh from high school. He worked in the motor pool for about two years at MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif., and one year at Camp Foster, Okinawa, Japan.

Not the best student in his teenage years, Hyder said his experience in the Corps taught him discipline and helped him grow in his faith.

"The Marine Corps is the stick that God hit me over the head with to make me teachable, to get me to a point where [God] was able to get a hold of me in a way that I probably wouldn't have [been] able to hear without the Marine Corps squaring me away," Hyder said.

Hyder was honorably discharged as a corporal in 1992 and later earned his bachelor's degree in sociology from Dallas Baptist University. He then spent seven years as a prison guard in Texas. It was during that time he married his wife, Aprile, and the two became heavily involved in their church.

But Hyder felt God was calling him to serve as a missionary in Africa, so in 2000, he and Aprile sold off most of their belongings and moved to Wake Forest, N.C., so he could attend Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. By then the couple had three daughters: twins Kaye and Maddy, now 15 years old; and Ally, now 12 years old.

But during his four-year stay at the seminary, Hyder realized his heart was set on chaplaincy instead of missionary work. He said he still needs a mission mindset because a chaplain must connect with a diverse group of military personnel.

"In a church, you're surrounded by people who agree with you and you're preaching to the choir so to speak," Hyder



Among his duties as a motor transport Marine on Okinawa, Hyder was a dispatcher.

said. "But as a chaplain, not everybody you run into is on board with what you believe, and you need to be able to operate in that environment. You can imagine there's some tension there."

"Trial by Fire"

To qualify as a Navy chaplain, each candidate must earn a master's degree in religious studies, be endorsed by a religious group, be eligible for a Navy officer's commission, and have at least two years of professional experience.

Hyder spent his two years as the director of religious

education at Naval Air Station Fort Worth Joint Reserve Base, Texas. He was a civilian contractor working with two Navy chaplains at the base chapel. In 2006, Hyder was fully endorsed by The North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention and reported to active duty.

The transition from Marine to chaplain was relatively smooth, Hyder said, because he was a civilian for 14 years in between those two titles. Yet sometimes he does have to remind himself of his new role when old Marine instincts kick in.

“I have to remember that I don’t need to comment on their haircut or be a drill instructor,” Hyder said. “They don’t need another Marine yelling at them; they need a chaplain listening to them.”

Hyder spent his first three years in the Navy as the chaplain for a squadron of minesweepers at Naval Station Ingleside, Texas, and during that time deployed to Camp Bucca, Iraq.

Hyder said his 10-month tour was “trial by fire” as a chaplain, and it challenged him to grow in his leadership. His flock of 400 sailors guarded suspected terrorists in detainment on the largely Army base.

Deployments are chock-full of stressful situations, Hyder said, and it’s essential those troops have the freedom and access to practice their religion for their emotional and spiritual needs.

“We’re more than just flesh and blood,” Hyder said.

But it’s often during those hard times that breakthroughs are made, he said. When many of those deployed troops struggled with killing other humans, Hyder relied on Romans, Chapter 13, to show the Bible’s explanation of using lethal force in the name of a government.

“A lot of Marines think they have to check their faith at the door,” Hyder said. “They say, ‘I can’t be a good Christian and use deadly force.’ Your faith is not mutually exclusive to being a good warrior.”

A Marine at Heart

Hyder and his family moved to MCB Quantico in 2009. He served as the chaplain for The Basic School the first year, then as the chaplain for Headquarters and Service Battalion his second year and served his third year as the chaplain for the U.S. Marine Memorial Chapel. He preached the traditional Protestant service at the chapel each Sunday.

Commander Roger Vanderwerken, USN is the deputy command chaplain and describes Hyder as successful at the balancing act of being a chaplain.

“He walks in both worlds quite well—that of the officer and the clergyman,” Vanderwerken said. “It’s the kingdom of God and the kingdom of man.”

Hyder directly worked with four religious program (RP) specialists, but as the division officer, Hyder also oversaw all RPs at Quantico.

Religious Program Specialist Second Class (RP2) Jeff Raynor said Hyder’s enlisted experience is apparent in how he interacts with his juniors.



The Marine Corps Mustang Association named LT Paul A. Hyder, Chaplain Corps, USN, an honorary member during a ceremony on Aug. 25, 2012, at The Clubs at Quantico. MCMA member Maj Joe Featherston, USMC (Ret), left, presents Chaplain Hyder his certificate as a new member of the MCMA.

“Some officers get respect by what they wear on their collar,” Raynor said. “But [Chaplain Hyder] has a better understanding of how it is on the enlisted side. He never talks down to us and always goes to bat for us.”

Hyder and his family left Quantico this past October and now are stationed at Naval Station San Diego. He is the command chaplain and a plankholder for USS *Somerset* (LPD-25). The ship is the third in a series dedicated to 9/11, including USS *Arlington* (LPD-24) and USS *New York* (LPD-21). Hyder said he’s pleased to be attached to the ship and to be part of the inaugural crew.

RP3 Alex Farmer worked with Hyder at the Quantico chapel and said the chaplain has been missed. Farmer said he respects Hyder because he always kept his office door open and listened to the perspectives of the enlisted Marines and sailors.

“Mustangs make excellent officers,” Farmer said. “They understand what it’s like to spend four hours straight swabbing the deck. A Marine Corps officer leads from the front.”

Hyder may be a Navy chaplain, Farmer said, but he still has the heart of a Marine.

“He is still a Marine,” Farmer said. “He didn’t put on a new collar device and forget what he had worked to become. He remembers what it’s like to get dirty, and I’m lucky to have [had] him. I can say that he is my leader, not just placed higher in the command.”

Editor’s note: Roxanne Baker is the writer and media coordinator for MCA&F. A Marine wife, she is an experienced multimedia journalist with hundreds of published works.



We—the Marines

Edited by Clare A. Guerrero

Boston College Inducts Star Athlete, Vietnam War Hero Into Hall of Fame

■ Captain Lucien Tessier, from Manchester, N.H., who captained the Boston College track team from 1964 to 1965, was born to run. He also was born to fly. As his sister, Priscille De Sena, put it, “His loves were the Marine Corps, flying and Boston College.”

Tessier was a sprinter and a Golden Gloves boxer during his years at Bishop Bradley High School in Manchester, N.H. He was a “red chip” athlete, not a scholarship winner, but the kind of self-made star that BC fans especially appreciate. He also was a Marine Corps helicopter pilot who became a hero when he gave his life for his country during the Vietnam War.

Tessier was one of 29 BC graduates who died in the line of duty in Vietnam. Tessier and eight other athletes were inducted into the college’s Varsity Club Hall of Fame on Sept. 7.

De Sena said that Tessier shared a love of flying with his father, Robert. The two frequently would travel to the airport to watch planes take off and land. From the

time he was young, Tessier wanted to be a pilot.

While enrolled at BC in fall 1961, Tessier walked onto Bill Gilligan’s track team, earned a roster spot and transformed himself into a top-notch, three-season college athlete. His primary events in outdoor track were the men’s 100-meter and the 220-yard dash. Five times during his career he won both races in dual meets. He captured the 100 at Greater Boston and New England intercollegiate track meets with a time of 9 minutes, 7 seconds, a Boston College school record.



COURTESY OF THOMAS BURKE

2dLt Lucien Tessier

Indoors, he won the 60-yard dash at the University of Connecticut relays in 6.4 seconds, and he tied the school record in the 50-yard dash at Brown University with a time of 5.4.

Paul Delaney, a former teammate of Tessier’s, recalled: “When Lou went to the blocks, you could bet that he was going to win. He doubled or tripled in all the meets, indoor and outdoor. He could do the sprint, the hurdles, a leg in the relays, and the quarter in the mile relay. Whatever the team needed, he would do. He was

always up, a gung-ho Marine, and he was always ready to go out and get some points for the team.”

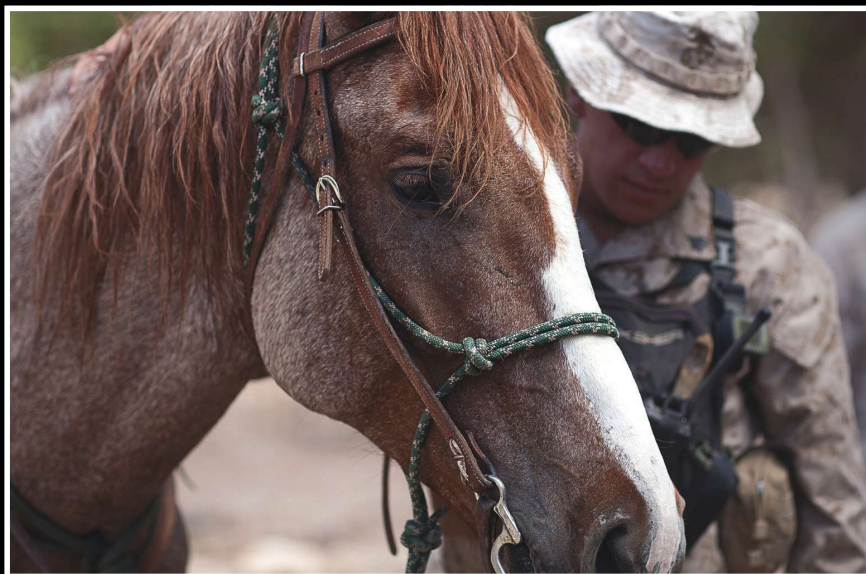
Tessier’s performance in the dual meet at rival College of the Holy Cross during his junior year clinched his team captaincy. He won the 100 and the 220 and anchored the relay. As the meet’s end approached, the Boston College Eagles trailed the Holy Cross Crusaders by a few points and were running short of athletes. Tessier volunteered to compete in the hurdles, an event he’d never run. He nabbed third place and BC eked out a victory.

The team elected him captain for the coming season at a restaurant stop on the way home.

Tessier’s speed made him a perfect lead-off runner for the indoor 4x440-meter relay team. He would grab the lead and hold off challengers, who found it almost impossible to pass on the short, tightly banked wooden tracks.

The Eagles won the 4x440 at both the New York Athletic Club games and the Millrose Games at Madison Square Garden, New York, N.Y., in Tessier’s senior year.

He majored in French at Boston College’s School of Education and graduated in 1965. According to his sister, Tessier



HORSE COURSE—Sgt Justin D. Head, Animal Packing Course chief instructor, works with his mustang, Hondo, at the Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center, Pickel Meadow, Calif., Aug. 21. The course is the only one of its kind in the Department of Defense and teaches Marines and other military personnel how to effectively and efficiently work with animals to transport munitions, supplies and wounded personnel to and from areas inaccessible to mechanized and air transportation. The course teaches service animal packing, an anatomy of pack animals, animal packing techniques, casualty evacuation techniques, animal first aid and bivouac considerations.

SGT KUANDE HALL



GySgt Daniel Flack, left center, and Cpl Steven Haley, right center, assigned to Transportation Service Company, CLB-3, discuss where to place an ambush while serving as an opposing insurgent force in the new counter-IED trainer at the Boondocker Training Area, MCB Hawaii, Sept. 18.

CPL RECE LODDER

planned to teach or to be an airline pilot. But military service came first, and he prepared for it by enrolling in the Marine Corps Platoon Leaders Class (PLC) program at BC. The program was one of the country's largest PLCs at the time. After completing the program, Tessier was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Corps and trained to fly CH-53 Sea Stallion helicopters.

Although Corps life is challenging, for Tessier it wasn't all work. He was one of the lucky officers who got to don dress whites and escort beauty queens on runways. Because he spoke perfect French, he squired Michèle Boulé, Miss France, in the Miss Universe competition in 1966.

While in flight training at Marine Corps Air Station El Toro, Calif., Tessier escorted Miss Orange County, Caylene Walt, in a competition. They fell in love and planned their wedding for June of 1968. But when the war in Vietnam escalated with the Tet offensive in January of that year, Tessier's helicopter, with eight men aboard, crashed into a mountain in South Vietnam on Feb. 19, 1968.

Capt Tessier and his companions were listed as missing in action for several months until the crash site was discovered. His name is engraved with those of 209 other alumni on the Veterans' Memorial Wall at BC.

One week before Tessier's last mission, Delaney, who graduated a year after Tes-

sier and served in the Army, was able to pay his former track captain a visit at Da Nang. "Lucien Tessier lived his life with intensity and commitment to Boston College, the USMC and his country. He was truly a man one would never forget," Delaney said.

Thomas Burke
Boston College, '71

Hawaii Marines Learn to Defeat IEDs Using Interactive Bomb Trainer

■ A suite of four tan trailers at Marine Corps Base Hawaii may look unimpressive on the outside, but a peek inside reveals its worth.

A plethora of high-definition TVs and intricately crafted visual displays deck out the trailers that form the base's new Mobile Counter-IED Interactive Trainer (MCIT). The MCIT, which is geared toward junior Marines and officers, provides a practical education on one of the most significant and deadly threats currently facing troops on the ground—the improvised explosive device (IED).

"If we can save one Marine's life by sending him or her through this trainer, then our mission is accomplished," said Chris Shott, the MCIT site lead.

Approximately 25 Marines with Transportation Service Company, Combat Logistics Battalion 3 were among the first to employ the MCIT in the Boondocker Training Area, Sept. 18.

Their journey began in the first trailer, where they received an overview of IED components recently employed by enemy forces. Colorful plastic jugs, lumpy bags of fertilizer and scrap material fashioned into pressure plates were all-too-familiar objects for those previously deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq.

"Anyone, anywhere around the world can find junk and make a bomb out of it," Shott said.

A moment later, a grainy video of an insurgent speaking his native tongue appeared on the screen. English subtitles flashed across it as he shared instructions with a fellow insurgent, affording the Marines a glimpse into their enemy's mindset. Next, they watched another video in which a junior Marine described his fears and experiences during his first combat deployment.

Stepping into another dimly lit trailer decorated like an IED factory, the Marines explored IED indicators. Meticulously constructed visual displays revealed hidden bomb components in order to educate the Marines on how to find them. A subsequent video rolled, showing insurgents how to keep materials hidden.

"The insurgent talks to the viewers like they're fellow insurgents," Shott said. "He trains them how to effectively hide IED components so opposing forces don't find them, which brings them into the insurgent mindset."



CPL MICHAEL PETERSHEIM

TRAINING FORCE CHALLENGE—LCpl Andrew Green, a rifleman with 1st Platoon, Company B, Battalion Landing Team 1st Bn, Second Marine Regiment, 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit, throws a rock for distance while competing against other Marines in the Training Force Challenge, Sept. 16. The competition was the culmination of a three-week training package in Djibouti that focused on the application of infantry skills in rugged mountain terrain. The 24th MEU is deployed with the *Iwo Jima* Amphibious Ready Group as a theater reserve and crisis response force throughout U.S. Central Command and the Navy's 5th Fleet area of responsibility.

Corps Deployment Training Evolves to ITX

■ Since 2001, the Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif., has provided comprehensive and collaborative training for combat operations in the Middle East. Training exercises have evolved from the Combined Arms Exercise (CAX) to what is known today as Enhanced Mojave Viper (EMV).

As the demands of war have evolved, so has training. So, the Corps is taking a new step in training evolutions and pre-deployment preparation, establishing the Integrated Training Exercise (ITX) to take the place of the EMV.

The ITX will consist of many of the same training objectives as the EMV. The exercise will still focus on preparing Marines to fight and win in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). Additionally, Marines will be trained to support general contingency operations for the Unit Deployment Program and Marine expeditionary units.

"It is essentially a melding of the [Marine air-ground task force—MAGTF] ... consisting of 129 integrated events involving the [ground combat element, GCE; logistics combat element, LCE; and aviation combat element, ACE]," said Colonel Kip J. Haskell, Commanding Officer, Technical Training Exercise Control Group (TTECG).

The MAGTF Training Command initially planned, staffed and briefed the future training syllabus to concur with exercise design and training objectives. The TTECG currently is completing the necessary requirements to build, publish and execute those mission-essential tasks contained in the ITX design, Haskell said.

Since the requirements and missions for the Marine Corps forces changed during Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, so did the training requirements and support for the Combined Arms Exercise, Mojave Viper (MV) and EMV training.

CAX began in 1975 as a 23-day exercise developed to train Marines in essential combat skills and it allowed for both brigade- and battalion-size live-fire and maneuver exercises. During CAX, Marines were able to move on foot and mounted in vehicles through live-ordnance impact areas. Most air and ground weapons found commonly within the MAGTF were employed as well. The CAX not only prepared Marines for desert warfare but other terrains as well.

In 2004, in preparation for Operation Iraqi Freedom, the CAX was revised. The revised CAX was known as a leaner and meaner exercise due to a shortened training period that was tailored to suit the

In the third trailer, the Marines learned the nine principles of IED combat. They were familiarized with electronic warfare equipment used to counter radio-controlled IEDs and refreshed on casualty evacuation procedures. Finally, they received an operation order for the MCIT's last stage of training—combat scenarios simulated through an interactive video game.

Instead of employing the "death by Powerpoint" traditional training method, Shott described the simulated combat scenarios using a hands-on approach. Teams of motor transportation operators crawled into armored vehicle mock-ups as machine-gunners and drivers. Viewing TV screens in front of them, they navigated their vehicle convoy through a detailed simulation of an Afghan city.

In an adjacent section of the room, a team of fellow Marines acted as insurgents on the ground, the convoy's opposing force in the simulation. They clicked away on their game controllers, emplacing IEDs in specific locations and equipping themselves with rifles and rocket-propelled grenades. Another Marine used his controller to guide an insurgent cameraman to a vantage point to capture video footage of the attack.

"The training was very realistic and easy to learn because it was hands-on,"

said Private First Class Garrett Callahan, a motor transport operator with CLB-3. "It gave me a better idea of what to expect in a situation involving an IED, but also helped bring my mind to focus on what was important."

With each team came a new scenario. Drivers guided their vehicles through crowded streets and gunners rattled attackers with storms of machine-gun rounds; together they watched for IEDs along their route. They simultaneously reported each event through their command structure while a computer graded their responses.

Corporal Steven Haley, a motor transport operator with CLB-3, said the scenarios allowed the users to experience the variation in IED placement and employment. He described them as "much more in-depth" than the IED lane training he received before deploying to Afghanistan.

"Looking at ways in which insurgents attacked us gave us the opportunity to think like them," said Haley.

"This helped improve our understanding of their mindset, and for our junior Marines to experience a situation involving IEDs before even leaving on a deployment," Haley added.

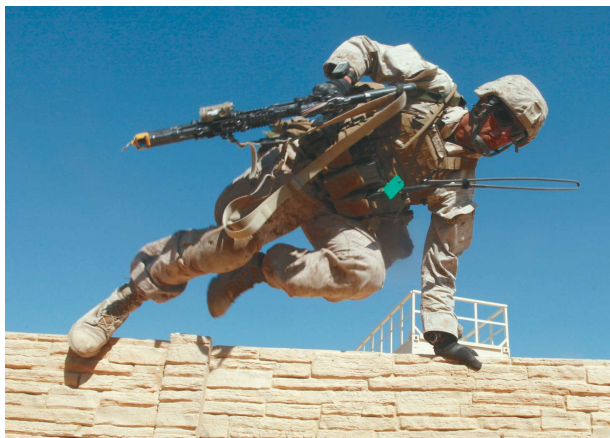
Cpl Reece Lodder
PAO, MCB Hawaii

needs of the Iraq-bound warrior. It no longer consisted of typical large-scale battlefield scenarios. It was modeled to resemble the occupation mission in Iraq and less like a fast-moving invasion. Marine leaders said that the CAX signature maneuver training was simply not a priority for duty in Iraq.

Mojave Viper was a 30-day combination of the revised CAX and the Security and Stability Operations (SASO) training formerly conducted at March Air Reserve Base, Calif. The revised CAX portion went from 22 days of training with a three-day final exercise, to 14 days of intense training involving a series of progressive live-fire exercises. SASO became 10 days of training involving role players, facilities and scenarios that mimicked modern-day combat zones. The two parts were concluded with a battalion-level final exercise that lasted three days.

In 2009, the training evolved to EMV—from that which prepared units for stabilization and combat in Iraq to what was the culminating predeployment training for units deploying to Afghanistan.

Enhanced Mojave Viper's "greatest contribution to the Corps was preparing Marines to fight and win in OEF, and the in-



L CPL WILLIAM C. GOMEZ

A Company L, 3d Battalion, Seventh Marine Regiment leatherneck bounds over a wall while participating in Enhanced Mojave Viper (EMV) predeployment training at Range 220, MCAGCC Twentynine Palms, Calif., July 19, 2011. The Marine Corps is replacing EMV with the Integrated Training Exercise (ITX) as the new predeployment exercise.

tegration of the MAGTF into a combined arms full spectrum exercise that can [help a unit] fight and win in any future contingency operation," Haskell said.

The nature of modern-day war continually changes. With that, the Corps must rise to the occasion and adapt and overcome. The Combat Center is ensuring that Marines stay one step ahead of the enemy.

"The main difference between CAX and EMV/ITX is the integration of GCE, LCE and ACE Mission Essential Tasks [METs] and the inclusion of METs associated with stability operations in a full

spectrum operational design," Haskell said.

"This is the best training venue where combined arms training, in a full-spectrum environment, can be performed," Haskell said. "ITX will shape the Corps' forces still deploying in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and any future combat operations."

LCpl Lauren Kurkimillis
PAO, MCAGCC Twentynine Palms, Calif.



Crazy Caption Contest

Winner



CPL JOHN ROBBART III

"We just found him like this, honest."

**Submitted by
Cpl Dana Cushing
Sierra Vista, Ariz.**

This Month's Photo



L CPL SARAH ANDERSON

(Caption) _____

Name _____

Address _____

City/State _____ ZIP _____

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. The winning entry will be published in two months.

Why Do Young Americans Become Marines?

What Drives Them To Enlist and Why Their Families Support Them

By CWO-4 Randy Gaddo, USMC (Ret)

What makes young men and women of America want to become Marines? What leads them to the point in their lives when they volunteer to leave their homes and families to embark on a new and probably dangerous lifestyle, a new culture, a new belief system; to step off the bus onto the yellow footprints that will forever change them?

And what do their families think about it?

Somewhere in the halls of the Marine Corps Recruiting Command or at Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, there are probably useful scientific studies that predict propensity in this regard; however, perhaps the words of the applicants, pool-ees, recruits, their families and the Marines who recruit and train them are equally—and maybe more—enlightening.

“I just wanted to prove everybody wrong,” said recruit Hayden Taylor, 19, who graduated from boot camp at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C., in December 2011. He was diagnosed with ADHD (attention deficit hyperactive disorder) as a child and was told he would never make it through boot camp.

When Taylor was 5 years old, he asked his grandfather what he’d done for a living. His grandfather had been a Marine, a Vietnam vet, a drill instructor and a retired Mustang (former enlistee) captain.

“I asked him what a Marine does,” said Taylor, whose dad was in the Air Force and mom was in the Army Reserve. “He said they go in first, come out last and do all the things others don’t want to do. I said, ‘That’s what I want to do.’”

During his last five days in 13 weeks of boot camp, Taylor talked about the stress of boot camp and how he handled it.

“It’s not a bad thing,” said Taylor, who is slated for the communications MOS



(military occupational specialty). “The stress is mostly mental. The drill instructors are preparing us for combat or whatever tough situations in life we may face. One of my drill instructors is one of the smallest Marines I’ve ever seen, and he still scares me.”

Alex Keller, 19, from Dayton, Maine, was in the same platoon as Taylor. Keller always knew he was going to serve even though nobody in his family ever had.

“I wanted to serve my country, and the Marine Corps was the best way to go,” he said. “When you see a Marine on the street, you can see the self-respect, the pride, the honor, just the way they walk.

It shows, and that has always been a motivating factor for me,” said Keller, who described boot camp as an “outstanding experience.”

Staff Sergeant Christopher Lawther, 29, was a senior drill instructor in the same company as Taylor and Keller. His grandfather was in the Army Air Corps of World War II. His dad did two tours in the U.S. Navy. Lawther is a “re-tread”; he joined the Corps, got out in 2004 and came back in 2005. He said he missed the commitment, the camaraderie.

“We point out during recruit graduation ceremonies that less than 1 percent of the American population has served in the

SSgt Antonio J. Curry, a Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego drill instructor, barks out instructions to align his platoon of fresh recruits on Aug. 30. (Photo by Sgt Kuande Hall)



Opposite page: Aaron Johnson, a poolee with RSS Maple Heights, Ohio, takes the oath of enlistment with fellow greater Cleveland area poolees during Marine Week Cleveland. MajGen Joseph L. Osterman, the Marine Corps Recruiting Command commanding general, swore in the new Marine recruits on Marine Night before the Cleveland Indians took on the Pittsburgh Pirates at Progressive Field, June 15. (Photo by LCpl Michelle Piehl)

military, so if you think about it these young men and women have really good intentions,” he said. “They’re here for the right reasons, especially as volunteers.”

Since December 1972, when the last men were drafted, the U.S. military has been an all-volunteer force. Applicants sign up knowing what they’re getting into.

“I won’t lie; you’ll be scared at first,” Private First Class Kevin Carson, 20, told a group of poolees in Atlanta just after he graduated from Parris Island as honorman



PFC Raquel Talbot and her dad, Rob, pose after she graduated from boot camp at Parris Island on July 13.

COURTESY OF ROB TALBOT



CWO-4 RANDY GIACCO, USMC (RET)

Above: A drill instructor gives members of an Educator's Workshop the same introductory guidance that recruits receive when they step onto the yellow footprints at MCRD Parris Island.

Below: PFC Kevin Carson walks and talks with poolees from RS Atlanta one day after he graduated as platoon honorman from MCRD Parris Island.



CWO-4 RANDY GIACCO, USMC (RET)

of Platoon 2040, "Golf" Company, 2d Recruit Training Battalion. (Poolees are applicants 17 or older who are in the Delayed Entry Program (DEP) preparing to go to boot camp.)

Carson spoke at a Recruiting Station Atlanta DEP event to give poolees a firsthand view of what to expect at boot camp.

"The drill instructors will be yelling and screaming, but they will never mis-

treating you," he told the wide-eyed poolees. "All those recruiting posters you see, all that stuff is true. Honor, courage, commitment: That is what they're looking for in every recruit. It's hard, and you earn the title 'Marine,' but when they put that eagle, globe and anchor in your hand for the first time and call you 'Marine,' it's the best feeling. You see the drill instructors giving you the respect you earned."

Carson's mother was not in favor of his decision at first, but he said his recruiter talked with her, and after a while she felt better about the decision. When he graduated as honorman, "She said they treated me like a celebrity," he said, laughing.

SSgt Kwami Williams is Carson's recruiter. Now in charge of Recruiting Substation Duluth, Ga., he was a recruiter at RSS Stone Mountain when he talked with Carson.

"Carson was at the recruiting office every day," Williams told the poolees. "He worked hard and set his goals high. His goal, before he went to boot camp, was to be platoon honorman."

Samuel Mills, 19, from Lawrenceville, Ga., has wanted to be a Marine since he was 8 years old. Members of his extended family were Marines, and he grew up hearing, "Marines fight the hardest, and when their back is against the wall is when they fight the best," he said. "I like the Marine Corps mission, the sort of smash and grab when everyone else hangs back."

Mills was in the DEP at RS Atlanta slated for boot camp in September 2012. He was in the Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) all four years in high school and played lacrosse for two, so he was in pretty good shape going into the pool. At a DEP physical training session in June, he did 27 pull-ups, 85 crunches and ran 1½ miles in less than nine minutes.

He once went to MCRD Parris Island on a JROTC field trip, where he got a firsthand look at the training and also drill instructors. "It was an experience," he said with a grin and a grimace. "We got to do some of the easier obstacles, the ones that can't hurt you. The drill instructors weren't nearly as mean as I hoped they'd be, but I know they don't treat high-school students like they do recruits."

"I want to go infantry and eventually go into recon or be on a FAST (Fleet Anti-terrorist Security Team). I want to make the Marine Corps a career," he said.

Antoine Alcazar-Vargas graduated from boot camp in December 2011. He said his best friend, who joined the Corps before him, convinced him to join. "He kept talking about it and asked me to join, and we've been friends since seventh grade, so I just did it."

Alcazar-Vargas is going into the Reserve as an 0311, infantryman. Eventually, he would like to go into an officer program. He was meritoriously promoted to private first class out of boot camp, chosen by his senior drill instructor, which is a distinctive honor.

He recalled getting off the bus onto the yellow footprints with drill instructors shouting orders. With a reflective grin, he remembered thinking, "This is intense."



CWO-4 RANDY GADDO, USMC (RET)

MCRD Parris Island drill instructor SSgt Amanda Dunn provides motivational PT using Marines instead of recruits to show members of an Educator's Workshop some of the "shock and awe" of DI motivation.

This is going to be a long 13 weeks."

He conceded that after he adjusted to waking up early, doing everything he was told at double-time and after the homesickness wore off, "It went by really fast because we were always doing something so it takes your mind off the time."

Families frequently are amazed at the transformation they see in their new Marines.

Alcazar-Vargas' sister, Diana Herrera, said his joining was a total surprise to the family.

"One day he just said, 'I'm going to become a Marine.' We did not picture Antoine doing this, following such a strict lifestyle," she said. "I'm not saying he wasn't responsible or anything like that. He just did not seem like a person who could tolerate the yelling and the boot-camp environment.

"He is a very determined, fine young man," she said proudly. "He has goals and little by little he is achieving them."

Jacob Leonard, 21, from Douglas, Wyo., always has wanted to be a Marine.

"My granddad was a Marine from 1954 to '58," said the 21-year-old Redwood, Calif., native, who graduated from boot camp in December 2011 and went into the infantry. "When I was a kid, I liked watching war movies. One of my favorites

was 'The Sands of Iwo Jima' with John Wayne. I knew what a Marine was from that movie, and it inspired me."

Leonard said he went to college just after high school, changed his major every other week, and after two years decided it was time for the Marine Corps. "I was ready for the physical aspects of boot camp because I spent five months in the DEP getting in shape, and the recruiters prepared us with Marine Corps history and traditions," he said. He added that he'd even had brief interaction with drill instructors in the DEP, but he wasn't as prepared as he thought.

"I didn't realize how much mental it would be," he said, adding with a smile that the recruiter had prepared him well, but didn't tell him all the minute details. "It was harder to adjust to the changes that took place, the lack of freedom, the lack of sleep and short time to eat. The drill instructors definitely lived up to my expectations."

His mother said that when he decided to join, she was "scared to death, but not surprised."

"Our family has always had a great respect for the military and veterans, which may have influenced that," said his father.

Zackery Myers, 21, also is from Douglas

and enlisted at the same time as Leonard. Myers took a year or so off after high school and then went to the University of Wyoming in Laramie for a couple of semesters, mostly for his mother. He had talked with the Army ROTC instructor and was considering it, but changed course.

"I was passing through the student union one day, and a Marine officer recruiter was there talking about the PLC [Platoon Leaders Class program]. I was real interested, but my grades didn't measure up, so he handed me off to the enlisted recruiter, who called within an hour. He knew I was interested; I didn't take much convincing."

Myers' mother knew he was thinking about the Army, so she had mixed emotions when he called to say he'd signed up for the Marines.

"I was surprised, worried, angry," she remembered. "I said, 'Shouldn't we talk about this before taking such a big step?' But then I thought, 'He's 21; he's got a good head on his shoulders; and I know when he sets his mind to something, he's going to do it, so I support him.'"

Myers' younger brother, Alex, 17, also signed into the DEP and was slated to graduate from high school in May 2012 and go to boot camp in August. How does Mom feel about both her boys joining?

Poolee Samuel Mills, 19, from Lawrenceville, Ga., easily tops the bar as he works his way toward 27 pull-ups during an initial strength test in Atlanta.

“If that is what they want in life, then the best I can do is support them. I look forward to seeing Alex march across the parade deck in August.”

Raquel Talbot, 18, graduated from boot camp on July 13, 2012. Her dad, Rob, said she had many other options.

“She had swimming scholarships from several colleges; she could have gone to state college; she had access to resources because I am a 100 percent disabled Vietnam veteran,” said the Vietnam-era Marine. “She made this decision all on her own.”

Private Talbot remembered the exact moment in high school when she decided to be a Marine. “It was in my senior year; it was November; I was sitting in economics class,” she said. “A recruiter came to talk to our class. He was telling us about his experience as a Marine, how his parents saw progress after he joined. He told us that each and every one of us would have a different experience with the Marine Corps and about what it could offer to each of us in terms of our character.”

It suddenly struck Talbot that she probably lacked the maturity and discipline to be successful in college and that the Marines would help her. “I saw the Marine Corps as a tool to be successful in my life,” she recalled, adding that now she is looking to make it a career, maybe as an officer through an enlisted commissioning program. However, she said, “I think it is important that I experience the enlisted side for three years or so first.”

Talbot spent only five weeks in the DEP, but she was well prepared, turning in a perfect 300 final boot-camp PFT. “I think the recruiters actually made it harder for us than boot camp,” she said.

She admitted that her dad had an impact on her decision as well. “Just the way he carries himself, the way he thinks, some of the things he did that I didn’t really understand until I got into boot camp, like the way he plans everything, every detail, before he does it. ... Now, I’m going to think that way too.”

Jennifer Burns, from Providence, R.I., said her 18-year-old son, Scott, has wanted to be a Marine for a long time. “His father was a Marine, but he was never the active kid. He wasn’t into sports,” she confided. “He was a video gamer, not the captain of the football team. So for him to come here and accomplish this is amazing.”

Mrs. Burns said the family saw the change in Scott when they visited with him for the first time at family day, one day before graduation.

“He was very reserved,” she said. “He



CWO-4 RANDY GADDO, USMC (RET)



CWO-4 RANDY GADDO, USMC (RET)

Recruits Ashley Hutchins (left) and Erin Caulfield are all smiles just days before their graduation from MCRD Parris Island.

had to be back at 3 p.m., and at 2, I wanted to see the yellow footprints, and he said no, he had to get back in time ... this coming from a kid I had to drag out of bed in the morning.”

Sauveur Genelien, a native of Haiti, was at Parris Island to watch his 18-year-old

son, Michael, walk across the parade deck on graduation day. “Out of the blue, he brought home a sergeant one day in high school to talk with us,” he remembered, laughing. “He said he wanted to join the Marine Corps.

“He knows I love the military institu-



CPL SALVADOR R. MORENO

Getting their poolees ready for the physical demands of recruit training, Sergeants Hugo Delgado and Timothy Bicker, recruiters with RSS Poway, RS San Diego, lead a poolee formation run at Del Mar Beach, Camp Pendleton, Calif., July 20.

tion,” Genelien said. “He was strong; he has great conviction.”

Michael’s younger brother, Christian, said Michael wanted to join because people said he couldn’t; they said he should go to college. “But he wasn’t ready for college, and he didn’t want to go on financial aid. He wanted to earn the money for his college,” said Christian, who joined the Marine Corps JROTC at his school.

PFC Erin Caulfield, 22, after one year of college realized she didn’t want student-loan debts. Her grandfather had been a Marine in Korea, and she’d been thinking about going into the military. She had talked with both Air Force and Navy recruiters before she talked to the Marine recruiter.

“He didn’t talk about money or jobs; he talked about the Marine Corps lifestyle and how it would help me improve myself and about becoming part of something bigger,” she said four days before she graduated from boot camp in July 2012.

Her husband of one year had joined the Marines, but couldn’t complete boot camp due to an injury. They had discussed her going into the Air Force, so he was surprised when she joined the Marines.

“He had no idea; he was pretty shocked,” she confided. “But he supported me and was as excited as I was for me to go to boot camp,” said the Raleigh, N.C., native,

who will go into MOS 6842, meteorology/oceanography.

A Delta, Colo., native, PFC Ashley Hutchins was in the same platoon as Caulfield and said her story is different in some ways from Caulfield’s, but oddly the same.

She went to college for one year and didn’t like it, spent about 18 months at home on her family’s farm and then completed a technical-college police academy course to become a certified peace officer. She said it was always in the back of her mind to join the military even before the police academy.

“It was an idea, percolating in the back of my mind,” said the 21-year-old Hutchins, now assigned the military police MOS. “I had talked with the Army recruiter, but it just didn’t feel quite right, so I talked with the Marine, and he talked a good talk. He didn’t focus on the financial aspects of joining, and I find financial reasons the wrong reason to join the Armed Forces.”

So what drew her to the Corps? “There is just an aura about the Marines. It’s about being part of something bigger than yourself,” she stated.

Why do they enlist in the Marine Corps?

The reasons are as varied as the unique personalities who make the cut. They all have a story. They are all looking for something. Some need discipline; some need commitment; some seek honor and duty;

others need to test themselves or want to earn money for college.

The Marine Corps prides itself on not taking applications, only commitments. The Corps’ ethos is to make Marines, win battles and return quality citizens to the nation.

Marines seek individuals who are mentally, morally and physically qualified to be transformed into Marines and embrace their “Elite Warrior” culture. Each potential prospect must internalize the core values of honor, courage and commitment.

Once they have met and conquered the test of boot camp, the transformation is apparent. Platoon honorman PFC Kevin Carson said, “When my mother saw me graduate, she saw that I came out the man she wanted me to be.”

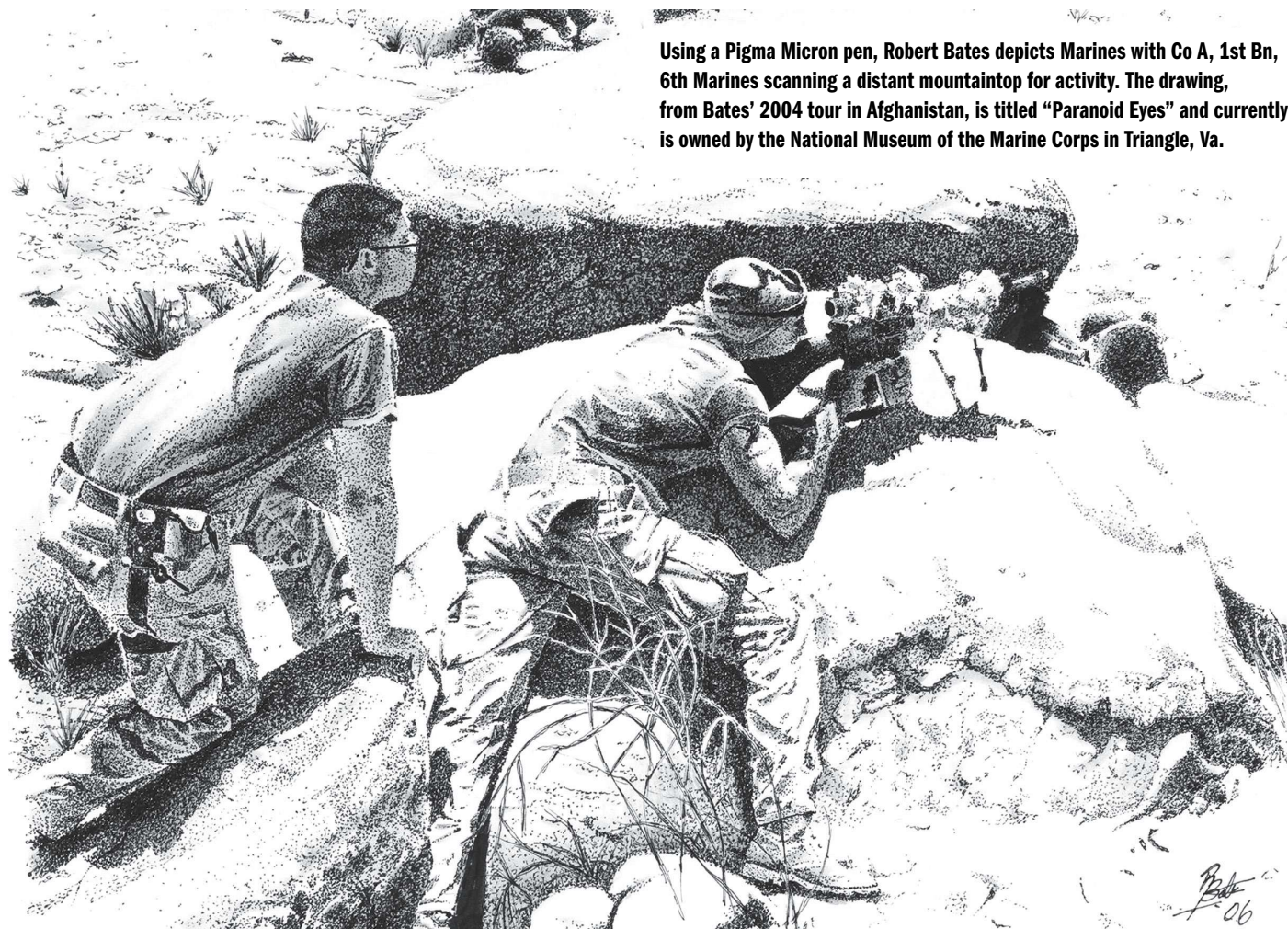
Editor’s note: The author, CWO-4 Randy Gaddo, USMC (Ret), was a combat correspondent as an enlisted Marine and later a public affairs officer. He retired from active duty in 1996 and now is a contributing editor for Leatherneck.



Leatherneck—On the Web

See more photos at
www.mca-marines.org/leatherneck/whytheyjoin

CONFESSIONS OF A COMBAT



Using a Pigma Micron pen, Robert Bates depicts Marines with Co A, 1st Bn, 6th Marines scanning a distant mountaintop for activity. The drawing, from Bates' 2004 tour in Afghanistan, is titled "Paranoid Eyes" and currently is owned by the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Triangle, Va.

Story by Clare A. Guerrero
Illustrations by Robert Bates

UNCERTAIN BEGINNING

Sketching the details of war was not what Robert Bates imagined doing when he joined the Marine Corps. He enlisted straight out of high school in 2001 and became a gung-ho infantryman, an 0311, forged in the traditional spirit of the Corps, but Bates had more than that Marine spirit. He had an eye for lines; he had perspective and depth perception—a talent that gave him a full impact view through the scope of a rifle.

The self-taught artist thought drawing was just a hobby. But when his command needed a sketch of village compounds in a remote region of Afghanistan during a 2004 deployment with 1st Battalion, Sixth Marine Regiment, Bates raised a hand and uncovered his vocation.

"We didn't have laptops [for a digital camera] because there was no real FOB [forward operating base]," he explained.

"We were just in the mountains for three months. So they wanted someone who could draw, who had some talent, to crawl up on top of the mountain, and look down on the village and sketch the layout [of the] compounds."

Bates took the drawing back to the makeshift Combat Operations Center (COC) and recreated it on a large piece of plywood; he included elevation, labeled the compounds and included a map of the village routes.

"It made our job easier the next couple of days to go from compound to compound and split up the platoon," he said.

After that, Bates was commissioned as the unit's unofficial artist-in-residence. "And that's how it began," said Bates. "It was combat art in a way, but in a practical way, in a way that supported the mission."

Bates' side job was the beginning of what he described as "reporter's art." "I always just liked drawing what I saw," said Bates, who began drawing at age 2 or 3. "It was just very journalistic."

THE MAN BEHIND THE PENCIL

Bates' life in the Marine Corps wasn't picture-perfect. But Bates claims his mistakes helped to shape him as an artist.

After Bates left 1/6, he left active duty for a time, then re-enlisted. He hit some trouble spots during his second four-year tour while serving with 3d Bn, 8th Marines, based out of Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C. In an accidental discharge, Bates shot a member of his squad in the legs during a Mojave Viper training exercise at Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif.

The time and place is etched in Bates' mind forever. "It was August 28, 2008; it was 10:30 p.m. We had completed our first live-fire range, Range 108," said Bates, who was a sergeant and a squad leader at the time.

He said the platoon commander had been rushing them along a dirt road back up range to the place where others were preparing to sleep for the night. They were suddenly stopped and ordered to clear

their weapons, Bates said. “[We were] condition one: round in chamber, magazine inserted. There was a lot of chaos and screaming because guys were blinded; there was no night vision. People were looking through optics the entire night.”

Bates admitted that he was at the very back of the group, and had he taken care of his squad, things might have turned out differently. “That’s something I really regret,” he said.

In the midst of the darkness and confusion and what Bates described as a momentary lapse of reason and judgment, he reached to clear his magazine, and a round went through the legs of the Marine in front of him.

The Marine—who was shot through his right leg and into his left calf—turned out to be OK, but Bates was relieved as a squad leader and reduced to corporal.

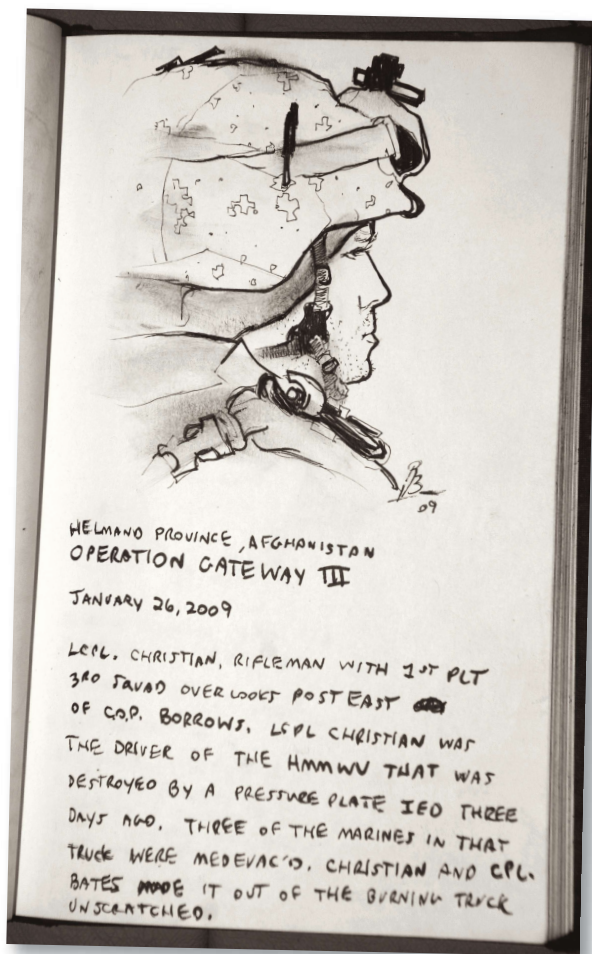
Despite the bleak outlook on his career, Bates considered his loss of the squad and reduction in grade the fortunate outcome of what could have easily resulted in a tragic ending. “I was really drawn about the entire ordeal and continued to work really hard, no matter the billet I was put in.” Bates eventually returned to his squad and deployed again later that year. “I guess [the command] still had faith in me,” he said.

The picture of Bates’ 2009 deployment experience was even less colorful than his career to date. In Helmand province, Afghanistan, the sandy, terror-stricken world was documented by Bates in a haphazard fashion with dark, bold, or scratchy sketch lines, for the subject of focus had little or no background scenery, which created a sense of emptiness or austerity of place. His subjects often were essentials of survival: the patrol, weapons, equipment, sleeping and COC areas. The drawings frequently were captioned with diary-like memos, giving the feeling of days dragging on.

Much of Bates’ artwork during that deployment was connected to a traumatic encounter with what he describes as “the day he dodged death.” Bates and his fellow Marines routinely patrolled Route 515 in Helmand. It was a nightmarish experience for the leathernecks, who often embarked on rescue missions for other patrols that were hit by improvised explosive devices (IEDs) on the same road.

“Our gun truck was hit January 23, 2009,” Bates said. “At that point we were the third truck hit in three weeks.”

Bates noted the heroic actions of his shell-shocked fellow Marines that day, saying that Hospital Corpsman Second Class Adam Smolski and Lance Corporal Matthew Earle rescued a Marine trapped in a burning humvee. Bates said they never received the recognition they deserved.



This drawing from Bates’ sketchbook, titled “A Man and his Thoughts,” was created during his 2008-09 deployment to Afghanistan with Co I, 3d Bn, 8th Marines and is owned by the National Museum of the Marine Corps.

Bates faced more trouble back at home after being involved in a hazing and assault incident that left him with yet another demotion and cost him his position as a team leader.

Knowing his career in the Marine Corps was coming to a swift end, Bates was surprised to find that (while on restriction) members of his battalion cast a merciful

glance his direction when the sergeant major presented an artful idea for Bates to atone for his sins. He asked Bates if he wanted to paint murals at the 3/8 Command Post.

“People loved it,” said Bates. “And some of those murals turned out great!”

Members of the community began soliciting Bates for portraits; a Facebook page was generated and he was able to make enough money on the side to make

up for lost pay. He was assigned to assist his family readiness officer, Mark Seymon, up until his end of active duty in early 2012. His new position allowed him the flexibility to take college courses at the base education center and to take on other projects as well, such as creating memorial service portraits for his battalion, 3/8, as well as 1st Bn, 8th Marines, and 2d Bn, 3d Marines.

It was then that Bates’ career as an artist began to take off, which led to his meeting with former Marine combat artist Chief Warrant Officer 2 Michael D. Fay, USMC (Ret). “I don’t think I really found myself as an artist until the day I met Mike Fay,” he said.

At the time, Bates was interested in Fay’s former position as the National Museum of the Marine Corps Combat Artist-in-Residence.

Although Bates was not chosen for the position, he was picked from several applicants to have his work exhibited as part of the combat art collection at the museum.

Later, Bates became a contributing artist to Fay’s concept exhibit, called the Joe Bonham Project. The project focuses on collecting and creating pieces that parallel the plight of the character Joe Bonham in the 1938

World War I novel by Dalton Trumbo, “Johnny Got His Gun.” The story is centered on the struggle of the main character Joe Bonham, who, after being hit by an artillery blast, lost his arms, legs and face, leaving him communicatively isolated. Bonham, seeking to express this suffering using his own body, requests to be displayed around the world in a glass encasement.

According to Fay, the artists for the Joe Bonham Project are united in the mission to reveal, through art, the overlooked and marginalized Joe Bonhams of our generation.

Bates’ contribution to the project in-

volved several trips to visit Marines with the Wounded Warrior Battalion-East at the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Md.

The artist spent hours, sometimes days, getting to know his subjects in order to capture their experiences from a personal standpoint.

"It was a tense moment," Bates remembered of his first trip to Walter Reed to visit Corporal Matt Bowman, who also served in 3/8 and lost his legs, some fingers and teeth in an IED explosion.

"His parents were in the room ... I felt they were sort of apprehensive and I didn't know how to break the ice, but I developed a friendship with him ... over the course of a few days and did several sketches."

The Matt Bowman piece ended up being one that Bates finds most meaningful as an artist.

next week, he was enrolled in classes at the University of North Carolina-Charlotte. During his first semester, Bates curated the Joe Bonham Project art exhibit at UNCC. It was an immediate hit.

"I wanted to make splashes at my school. I wanted to make an impact—I didn't want to just be another walk-on art student," he said.

Bates didn't make splashes; he made waves. His art gained considerable media attention including that of American Public Media, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Chicago Tribune*, *National Review*, *Marines Magazine*, *Illustrator Magazine* and the Great American Country channel (GAC), as well as numerous online media outlets.

His work and that of others was featured as part of an artists' documentation of war

the Art Instruction Schools' 2012 Outstanding Graduate for superior academics and contributions to the field of art and contributions to the public by volunteer artwork.

FULL CIRCLE

Bates is returning to Afghanistan in December, this time, armed with a pencil. Embedded with one of the few remaining units to deploy to Afghanistan, Bates will be employing his experience and artistry in a project he coined "Sketching the Drawdown," a voluntary mission on his part for which he has raised more than \$3,500 in funds to cover his costs.

With American casualties still occurring overseas, Bates hopes to communicate the story of what he calls the lost war. "[I want to tell people] Hello, America, there's still a war going on, and whether it's as hot as it was a year ago or not, our guys are still getting killed every day, so here's your drawdown ... I'm doing this to preserve history, because it's a very big part of our history."

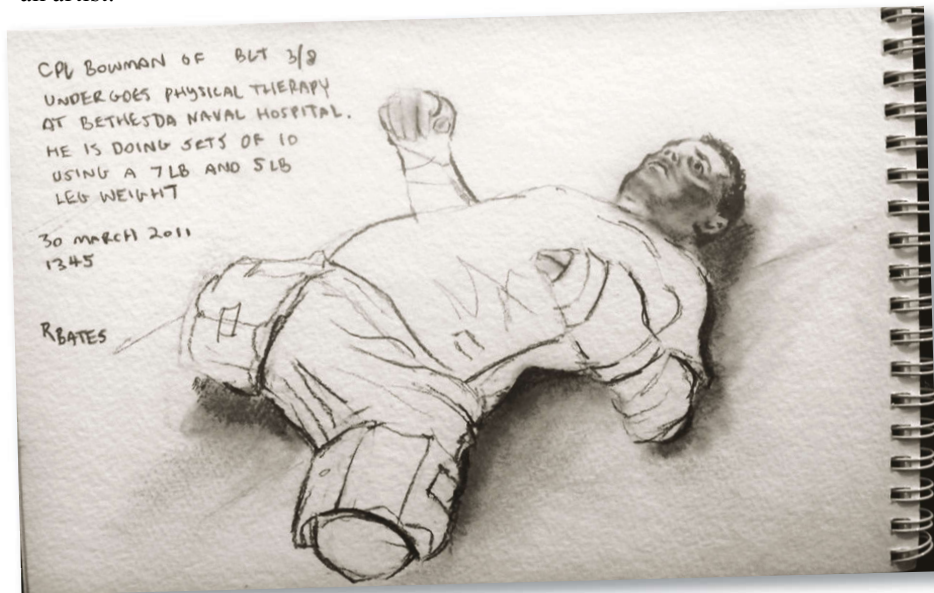
Bates, who left the Corps as a lance corporal, claims that when he looks back at his own history, he sees how easily he could have been in the shoes of someone like the wounded Cpl Matt Bowman, so for him recognizing Marines and telling their stories takes center stage.

"[Part of what I'm doing] is compensating for what I've done wrong and I want to make right. I'm also just a very sympathetic person and I appreciate humanity, and [art] is just something I really love to do. A lot of things lack substance today. I think that telling the stories of the wounded, or combat art, preserves that history that needs to be told years down the road," Bates said.

"When you look at the divine path and fate, it's crazy how it works. ... Being an [artist and] part of the Joe Bonham Project has completed my Marine Corps career."

Bates will continue to use the medium of art to tell the Marine Corps story and will be sponsored by WUNC North Carolina Public Radio to do freelance journalistic work during his Afghanistan embed for "The Story," a syndicated radio show broadcasted nationally by American Public Media.

Editor's note: For more information on Robert Bates and his works, visit <http://rb-portraits.com/>.



"He's ... on his back and he's doing physical therapy ... he was doing calisthenics getting ready for prosthetics and ... it's not a big piece, but it's very powerful," said Bates.

Like the map he started with early in his Marine Corps career, Bates' artistic style still holds its journalistic elements—with freehand or print captions that point to wounds, bandages or prosthetic technology, or a sketch of progressive or sets of scenes that add an element of study to the piece—highlighting points of the technology that a wounded warrior may have to rely on daily.

Bates' career as an artist has continued to reach new heights. This past January, he completed his tour in the Corps. The very

This Joe Bonham Project sketch of Cpl Matt Bowman was completed during Bates' first visit to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Md. Using a graphite pencil on 6-by-10-inch watercolor paper, Bates captured Bowman doing exercises with leg weights during physical therapy. Bowman now is medically retired and resides in Lafayette, Ind.

for the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History.

Taking on numerous volunteer art projects, such as providing portraits to the family members of wounded Marines or of those killed in action, Bates was most recently recognized by the Distance Education and Training Council (DETC) as



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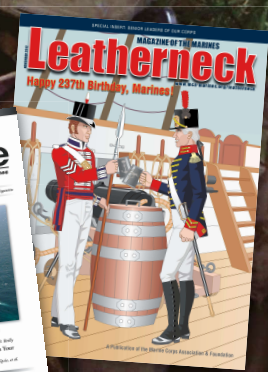


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In the Highest Tradition

Edited by R. R. Keene and Tina Pearce

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 Elliott Rd., Quantico, VA 22134. The following awards were announced in September:



Silver Star

Cpl David M. Gerardi, 3d Reconnaissance Battalion, Third Marine Division



Bronze Star With Combat "V"

Sgt Bjorn D. Cantrell, 1st Bn, Sixth Marine Regiment, 2dMarDiv
SSgt Walter R. Cardenas,

3/5, 1stMarDiv

GySgt Alex N. Conrad, 1st Marine Special Operations Bn (MSOB), U.S. Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command (MARSOC)

SSgt Ramon E. Cossio, 1/5, 1stMarDiv

Maj Lance D. Day, 1/5, 1stMarDiv

Capt Brian J. Donlon, 3/8, 2dMarDiv

SSgt Nathan S. Gordon, 2d MSOB, MARSOC

Capt John E. Greenwood II, 1st MSOB, MARSOC

Sgt Thaddeus R. Herber, 1st Light

Armored Recon Bn, 1stMarDiv

Sgt Michael P. Hodge, 1/5, 1stMarDiv

CWO-3 Keith A. Marine, 1/5, 1stMarDiv

CWO-2 Jesse M. Schertz, 3/8, 2dMarDiv

GySgt Kyle J. Schriber, First Marine Logistics Group (Forward)

Capt Jason L. Smith, 2d MSOB, MARSOC

GySgt Joshua A. Welsh, 2d MSOB, MARSOC



Air Medal

Capt Joseph A. Andrejack, Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 266, Marine Aircraft

Group 26, Second Marine Aircraft Wing

Maj Benjamin J. Debardeleben,

VMM-266, MAG-26, 2d MAW

Sgt Michael J. Demars, VMM-266, MAG-26, 2d MAW

Sgt Jeremy A. Gilbertson, VMM-266, MAG-26, 2d MAW

Capt John E. Grunke, VMM-266, MAG-26, 2d MAW

Sgt Daniel O. Howington, VMM-266, MAG-26, 2d MAW

Capt Erik B. Kolle, VMM-266, MAG-26, 2d MAW

Capt Rebecca R. Massey, VMM-266, MAG-26, 2d MAW

Capt Travis M. Morris, VMM-266, MAG-26, 2d MAW

SSgt David M. Potter, VMM-266, MAG-26, 2d MAW

Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal With Combat "V"

HM2 Joseph J. Adamski, 2d MSOB, MARSOC

SSgt Brandon C. Alexander, 1st MSOB, MARSOC

1stLt Jeffrey M. Broyan, 1/8, 2dMarDiv

Sgt Raymon N. Ellis, 2/5, 1stMarDiv

Sgt Richard W. Elsie III, 2/5, 1stMarDiv

GySgt Matthew A. Fulling, 2d MSOB, MARSOC

SSgt Scott A. Hill, 1/7, 1stMarDiv

SSgt Brandon R. Langill, 2d MSOB, MARSOC

1stLt Andrew R. Manois, 1/7, 1stMarDiv

GySgt Nathaniel S. Maurer, 2d MSOB, MARSOC

1stLt David R. Murray, 6th Marines, 2dMarDiv

Sgt Matthew S. Nelson, 2/5, 1stMarDiv

HM1 Blake M. Reynolds, 2d MSOB, MARSOC

SSgt Daniel P. Sullivan, 1st MSOB, MARSOC

SSgt Andrew K. Thompson, 1st MSOB, MARSOC

GySgt Erik J. Toney, 2d MSOB, MARSOC

Maj Gordon L. Topper, 1st MSOB, MARSOC

Sgt Dane R. Van Meter, 1st MSOB, MARSOC

GySgt Earl J. Wakonabo, 1st MSOB, MARSOC

HM1 Andrew O. Warner, 1st MSOB, MARSOC

HM1 Justin A. Wilson, 1st MSOB, MARSOC

Sgt Wade D. Wilson, 2/5, 1stMarDiv

SSgt John F. Winnick II, 2d MSOB, MARSOC

Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal With Combat "V"

Sgt Joshua D. Boarman, 2d MSOB, MARSOC

Cpl Patrick J. Booth, 2/5, 1stMarDiv

LCpl Cristian A. Cabrera, 2/5, 1stMarDiv

LCpl Michael E. Clingan, 1/8, 2dMarDiv

Sgt Johnathan M. Cook, 1/7, 1stMarDiv

LCpl Alexander P. Cordova Jr., 2/5, 1stMarDiv

Sgt Nicholas B. Crites, 2/5, 1stMarDiv

LCpl Justin C. Crosson, 2/5, 1stMarDiv

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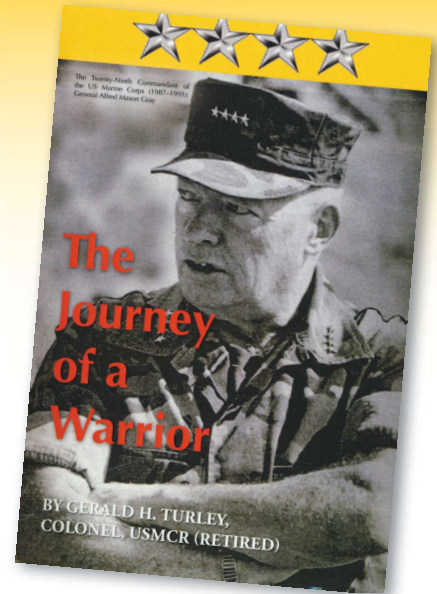


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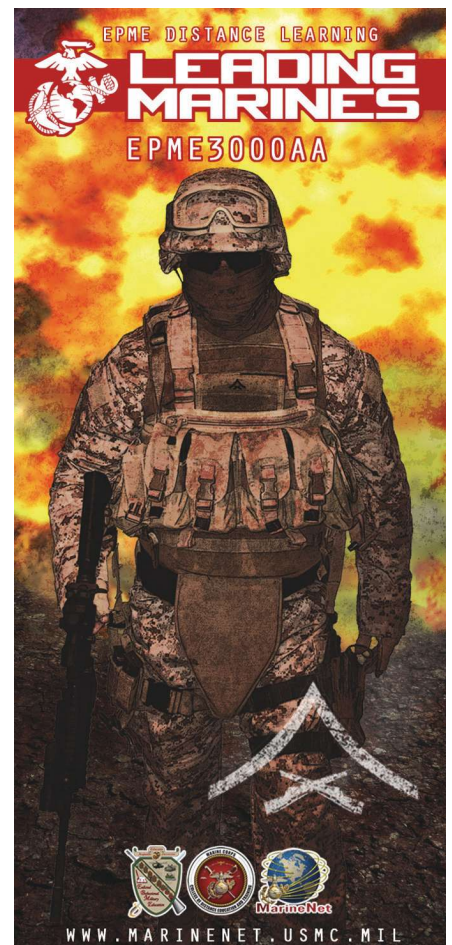
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Sgt Joshua A. Gray, 1/8, 2dMarDiv
Cpl Henry W. Gray Jr., 6th Marines, 2dMarDiv
LCpl Ethan D. Gremmels, 2/5, 1stMarDiv
LCpl Dustin L. Hair, 1/8, 2dMarDiv
Cpl Quentin B. Hebert, 2/5, 1stMarDiv
Cpl James C. Hensley, 1/7, 1stMarDiv
Sgt Jordan R. Hintz, 1/7, 1stMarDiv
Sgt Robert A. Hoover, 1/8, 2dMarDiv
Cpl Jordan D. Johnson, 1/8, 2dMarDiv
LCpl Neil J. Kelly, 1/8, 2dMarDiv
Cpl Joseph M. Lombardo, 6th Marines, 2dMarDiv
Cpl Brian A. Lupo, 1/8, 2dMarDiv
Sgt Brandon L. Matson, 1/8, 2dMarDiv
LCpl Michael T. O'Grady, 1st Combat Engineer Bn, 1stMarDiv
Cpl Samuel E. Osborne, 2/5, 1stMarDiv
Cpl Jason L. Quinton, 2/5, 1stMarDiv

Sgt Patrick J. Rodgers, 1st MLG (Fwd)
LCpl Eric Rodriguez, 1/7, 1stMarDiv
Cpl Garrett B. Smith, 2/5, 1stMarDiv
Sgt Michael L. Smith, 1st MLG (Fwd)
LCpl Johncameron J. Smolke III, 1/8, 2dMarDiv
HM3 Chase B. Speed, 1/8, 2dMarDiv
Sgt Levi A. Steele, 1/8, 2dMarDiv
LCpl Clint A. Taylor, 1/8, 2dMarDiv
Sgt Michael A. Taylor, 1/8, 2dMarDiv
Cpl Darryl R. Veal, 1/8, 2dMarDiv
Cpl Cory M. Vickery, 1/8, 2dMarDiv
Sgt Cody R. Waldroup, 1/7, 1stMarDiv
LCpl Nicolas A. Winters, 2/5, 1stMarDiv
Cpl Christopher A. Wootton, 2/5, 1stMarDiv
Sgt Zachary T. Worthen, 1/8, 2dMarDiv
LCpl Travis J. Young, 1/8, 2dMarDiv
Cpl Eric L. Zimmerman, 1st CEB, 1stMarDiv

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CORPS ALBUM

Edited by Nancy Lee White Hoffman



SUBMITTED BY MAJ. JACQUES B. LORAINÉ, USMC (RET), 1948-69

“Mustang” Lt Jack B. Loraine, shortly after his commissioning in July 1918. A weapons instructor, Loraine was sent to Quantico, Va., to prepare himself and others for World War I. One of his students was Lewis B. “Chesty” Puller.



SUBMITTED BY MARINE VETERAN JOHN J. V. COOK

Recalling his uncertainty at the moment this photo was taken, Marine veteran John J. V. Cook captioned it: “Haircut time in Korea, ‘Charlie’ Company, 1st Battalion, First Marine Regiment, June 1951. John Cook, victim, Frank Romano, barber?? and Ricardo Rodriques, background.”



SUBMITTED BY MARINE VETERAN JIM HYLAND

Looking south in the Arizona Territory, this photo shows a pontoon bridge built by 1st Bridge Co, 7th Engineers, First Marine Division across the Thu Bon River, Republic of Vietnam, after a short round from a 155 howitzer battery dropped in the middle of the bridge in September 1967. Former Bridge Co Marine Jim Hyland said that even though it happened “during the rainy season and the river was pretty swift, we did get it repaired.”

PHOTOS FROM THE BOTTOM OF THE FOOTLOCKER



SUBMITTED BY FORMER SGT WILLIAM T. MCGONIGLE



SUBMITTED BY MARINE VETERAN PETER GRANDELL

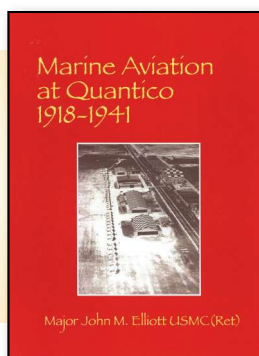
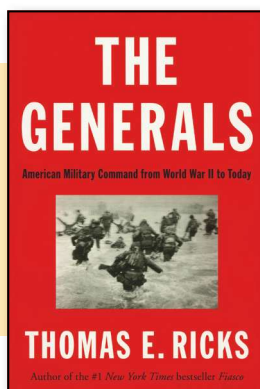
Above: The Marine Detachment, USS *Newport News* (CA-148) in Genoa, Italy, March 1954. According to former Sgt William T. McGonigle, USMC, 1952-56, the heavy cruiser was the flagship of the 6th Fleet at the time. She served as the flagship for the 6th Fleet a number of times during her earlier years of service.

Left: In 1945, on the island of Saipan, these leathernecks of Marine Transport Squadron 353, Fourth Marine Aircraft Wing “spent a few joyful moments” with young locals. Technical Sergeant Peter Grandell, wearing the pith helmet, is kneeling behind a blind boy.

Editor’s note: Have a favorite Marine Corps photograph? Send it, along with a date, unit or any other available identification, to: Corps Album Editor, Leatherneck Magazine, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134. Send electronic copies to: leatherneck@mca-marines.org. Photos must not be copyrighted or have run in any other publication. Selection will be at the discretion of the “Corps Album” editor.

Books Reviewed

Unless otherwise noted, these books may be ordered from The Marine Shop. Subscribers may use members' prices. Include \$5.99 for shipping. Virginia residents add 5 percent sales tax; North Carolina residents add 6.75 percent. Prices may change. Make check or money order payable to: MCA, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134, call toll-free: (888) 237-7683, or shop online at www.marineshop.net.



THE GENERALS: American Military Command From World War II to Today. By Thomas E. Ricks. Published by The Penguin Press. 576 pages. Stock #1594204047. \$29.66 MCA Members. \$32.95 Regular Price.

As good as it is, Thomas E. Ricks' latest book, "The Generals: American Military Command from World War II to Today," falls short of expectations. The title clearly defines the period, and the "Prologue" demonstrates a U.S. Army-centric publication; however, knowing of Ricks' reputation, one expects a broader appreciation of noteworthy military commanders.

As a Marine veteran, there "may" be bias on my part, but how on earth can a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, pre-eminent military historian and respected author like Ricks write a book about generals and not include a single profile of a World War II-era Marine Corps general officer? Ricks, except for a short chapter on General Douglas MacArthur, virtually ignores the war in the Pacific. He wrote nothing about the generals who commanded the six Marine divisions during World War II who led the bloody island-hopping campaigns of Guadalcanal, Tarawa, Saipan, Tinian, Peleliu, Iwo Jima and Okinawa, under some of the worst battlefield conditions.

In "The Generals," Ricks gives U.S. Army generals Tommy Franks and Ricardo Sanchez the harsh criticism so justly deserved, but does not mention WW II Army Lieutenant General Courtney Hodges or the more recent Marine Gen Peter Pace.

While the commanding general of the U.S. First Army, LTG Hodges was responsible for the months-long Battle of the Hürtgen Forest in 1944. It was one of the most costly and controversial battles of the war. Historians have questioned the necessity of the battle that caused the First Army to suffer more than 30,000 casualties in killed, wounded, missing in action, combat exhaustion, and to various disease and nonbattle injuries. And yet, the indecisiveness and overall poor leadership displayed by LTG Hodges and his subordinate division commanders during this tragic debacle is never mentioned in "The Generals."

During his two-year stint as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen Pace served alongside Donald Rumsfeld, the Secretary of Defense, as Rumsfeld micromanaged the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Ricks missed an opportunity to explore this recent military leadership example and perhaps highlight more of the facts relative to top-level military decisions in the ongoing global war on terrorism.

Ricks does present an excellent portrayal of little-known Marine Corps Major General Oliver Prince Smith, better known by his initials, "O.P." MajGen Smith commanded the First Marine Division in its Chosin Reservoir breakout operation during the Korean War. Thanks to MajGen Smith's tactical expertise and prior planning, the U.S. X Corps was saved from total destruction at the hands of Chinese troops. The 1stMarDiv was assigned to

the U.S. X Corps, which was under the command of U.S. Army LTG Edward Almond, a MacArthur protégé. LTG Almond was an obsessive micromanager, who second-guessed MajGen Smith's every move.

In truth, MajGen Smith, unsupported by senior Marine general officers, was not only waging war against the North Koreans and the Chinese, but also against the incompetent leadership of the U.S. X Corps.

Moving to leadership in the Vietnam War, Ricks describes in some detail, "the collapse of generalship in the 1960s," again focusing mainly on U.S. Army leaders, but also describing some positive key actions by then-Marine Major Charles Cooper and the innovations of Marine LtGen Victor "Brute" Krulak.

Ricks continues by dissecting the infamous cover-up of the My Lai massacre by the 23rd "Americal" Division commander, Major General Samuel Koster. Ricks takes readers inside the subsequent investigation that was conducted by Army LTG William Peers. And Ricks doesn't mince his words when writing about the Army's failure to prosecute and properly punish everyone involved in this sad saga in American military history.

Assessing today, Ricks notes that promotion policies have arguably "institutionalized mediocrity." Too often, leaders are not held accountable, at times blaming shortcomings and failures on politicians. All in all, in "The Generals," Ricks provides readers with a refreshing, fact-based, no-holds-barred assessment of some of America's most well-known and popular generals, but also brings to light some of America's least-known general officers.

If military history books wore stars, "The Generals" would rate three.

Thomas J. Lucier

Editor's note: Thomas J. Lucier is a former lance corporal, who was assigned to I/3/7 from December 1970 to October 1971.

Leatherneck Book Browser

“Mustang Wife: Military Family.” Beth Hayes Price has produced the perfect guide for the new military wife. Easy to read, filled with Marine life experiences and “how to” suggestions, this is one for the military bride and, in fact, the groom too.

Price is a Michigan native who married a Marine sergeant whom she met while pursuing her master’s degree in teaching at Marshall University in West Virginia. The dashing young Marine swept her off her feet, as Marines are wont to do, and took her away to a life of travel and infrequent travail.

The first date, a military wedding (complete with the traditional swift sword stroke to the bride’s bottom while passing through the sword arch), childbirth, military medicine, the DOD education system, frequent moves with new schools, church families, lengthy separations, including the stress during combat deployments—all those things that make a marriage and family stronger—are covered, sometimes with humor, sometimes with sorrow.

During her time as a military wife, her sergeant was promoted and later commissioned as an officer to retire as a captain—thus the origin of the book’s title, “Mustang Wife.” The word “Mustang” is used by the United States Sea Services when referring to enlisted men and women who earn officer commissions. One of the most respected of all Marine Commandants, General Alfred M. Gray, 29th Commandant of the Marine Corps, himself a Mustang, said, “There is no honor greater than to be called ‘Mustang.’ ” Beth Price can rightfully and proudly proclaim she helped tame a mustang.

An informative, easy-to-read narrative and personal insights make this book a great holiday gift.

Published by CreateSpace Independent Publishing, “Mustang Wife: Military Family” by Beth Hayes Price, ISBN: 978-1-47742-920-4, is 336 pages with photos. It is available in softcover from Amazon.com for \$14.95 and is offered in a digital format by Amazon Digital Services (Amazon.com) for download to your Kindle for \$2.99.

“The Quantico Marines.” Retired Navy Captain Denis Flood began his military career as a Marine “grunt,” an 0311 infantryman. Trained at Parris Island, S.C., he joined the Corps in June 1966 and, like all leathernecks in those Vietnam War days, shoved off to war. Assigned to Company M, 3d Battalion, Fifth Marine Regiment, he was wounded during Operation Union, awarded a Silver Star and then wounded again in Operation Essex in October 1967.

Before the Corps, Flood was a high school track champion, and after recovering from his war wounds, he fought his way onto the Corps’ world-class track and field team. With this background, he has produced a somewhat autobiographical, extremely well-written and enthralling novel, “The Quantico Marines.” Flood centers his novel around a mythical Marine with talents similar to his own and sets the scenes at Quantico, Va., with the Corps’ superb track and field team trying to win a National Championship at the height of the Vietnam War.

Flood skillfully employs a gripping narrative to spin a tale that weaves all the major facets of a wartime novel set in a garrison environment. Overbearing officers and noncommissioned officers, inspections and daily training demands carry the reader through to high points that include spy craft, treason, murder and marital mischief. Overall, a very entertaining and quick read; one that will leave you looking for a follow-on, which will most definitely be coming down the pike.

With this first novel, the author declares, “Every cent I make on this book will go to the Wounded Warriors. I don’t keep a penny. I just want to tell a story about days gone by.”

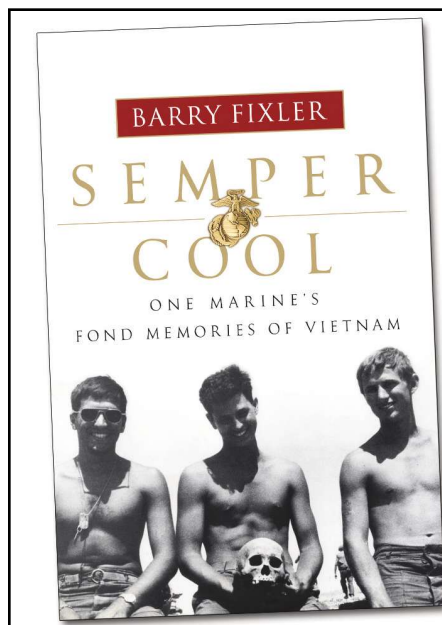
Written by Denis Flood and published by CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, Amazon.com lists it in softcover for \$15.99 and also has it available in a Kindle edition for \$9.99. The ISBN is 978-1-46818-654-3, and the book is 224 pages.

Learn more about Flood and his books at his website: www.denisflood.com.

MARINE AVIATION AT QUANTICO, 1918–1941. By Maj John M. Elliott, USMC (Ret). Published by Outskirts Press. 258 pages. Stock #1432778277. \$33.26 MCA Members. \$36.95 Regular Price.

This superb book is the culmination of a 50-year project by one of the pre-eminent aviation historians in America. Major John M. “Jack” Elliott’s sources are impeccable, as he probably has some of the few remaining copies of Marine Corps muster rolls, aircraft history cards and official U.S. Navy Bureau of Aeronautics files in one collection. Also, he literally has thousands of photographs of early aircraft and Marine aviation personalities. If you have a question about early Marine aviation, he has the answer. This publication is particularly well-timed to coincide with this year’s centennial of Marine Corps aviation.

[continued on page 60]



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Leatherneck Line

Edited by Clare A. Guerrero



First Lady of the Marine Corps Bonnie Amos, center, and authors Holly Sherer, left, and Shannon Maxwell present some of the books from the new "First Lady of the Marine Corps Recommended Reading List" after a book signing at the Marine Corps Main Exchange, Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., Oct. 21.

Corps' First Lady Develops Reading List

As the wife of General James F. Amos, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Bonnie Amos has experienced hardships common to just about every military spouse—deployments, temporary single motherhood and more moves than the average American will ever see. She's also picked up a thing or two about successfully handling these challenges along the way.

Now, she's promoting a new reading list, dubbed the "First Lady of the Marine Corps Recommended Reading List." Launched on Oct. 15, the list is geared toward helping military families cope with those same stresses. The Marine Corps is the first military branch to offer a resource list of this nature, and the project was achieved through collaboration between several military spouses, including Mrs. Amos, Mrs. Phyllis Stewart, Mrs. Holly Scherer, the Marine Corps Exchange and the Marine Corps Association & Foundation.

In an effort to provide centralized information from an official source of advice, the first lady's reading list compiles materials that have been vetted as credible sources for helpful advice for military families.

"I think that the new list is terrific; it gives our USMC spouses a one-stop shop for finding books that are relevant to being a USMC spouse and family," said Kathleen Smith, the spouse of the commanding general of the Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif., Brigadier General George W. Smith Jr. "The most effective Marine is one whose family is well taken care of. This includes providing knowledge and skill building on family and spouse resiliency and coping mechanisms. The Corps is well served by any program that accomplishes this fact.

"It's absolutely fabulous that the Corps has recognized this and is doing its best to meet the need here," Mrs. Smith said.

"There has been a lot of careful consideration in choosing the books represented here."

The list includes books for adults and children. Many of the books were written by military spouses. The list formalizes the Marine tradition of spouses helping spouses by sharing their experiences and lessons learned.

Families soon will be able to find these books at all Marine Corps exchanges and base libraries within their own specialized section, indicated by the reading list's logo. Mrs. Smith also said the plan is to constantly evolve the list's selection, "so it will always be fresh."

"It's always a joy to read, especially when it's on topics that are near and dear to your heart. Just think how fun it would be to start some book club discussions on some of these topics. Knowledge really is power."

The official list of books is available on the Marine Corps Association & Foundation's website at www.marineshop.net/browse.cfm/flotmc/2,1358.html.

Sgt Heather Golden

PAO, MCAGCC Twentynine Palms, Calif.

Marine Corps Veterans Association Provides Grants for Funeral Honors

Many of our veterans, including our "Greatest Generation," are ending life's journey, having served America honorably and faithfully during times of great peril. Their sacrifices gave us the freedoms we enjoy today. It is for this reason that the Marine Corps Veterans Association wants to make sure each of these military men and women is provided with a memorial service that has the dignity and reverence so richly deserved.

The MCVA has established the Veterans Funeral Honors Assistance Program to help finance the honor guard details of chartered veterans organizations. This program will assist chartered veterans' groups in efforts to provide dignified memorial services for veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces.

Between now and Dec. 31, 2012, the MCVA will endeavor to make 100 grants of up to \$1,000 each to chartered veterans organizations in order to assist them in purchasing honor guard uniforms and accessories, as well as paying other expenses

incurred in order to provide memorial services with a full measure of dignity and reverence. The funds may be used for all veterans' services, regardless of when the person served. These grants are limited to chartered veterans groups based in the following states: Arizona, California, Florida, Nevada, New York, North Carolina and Texas.

In order to apply for a grant, MCVA needs a letter outlining the name and contact information regarding your post, detachment, or chapter, along with the names of the organization's principal officers, a current description of your organization, and a specific statement on how you intend to use the funds. This letter should be mailed to: Marine Corps Veterans Association, 2245 Park Towne Cir., Sacramento, CA 95825.

Marine Corps Veterans Association

Christmas Spirit Foundation Brings Trees to the Troops

Marine families at Marine Corps Bases Camp Pendleton, Calif., and Camp Lejeune, N.C., and others, will be receiving live, donated Christmas trees, thanks to Trees for Troops, a branch of the Christmas Spirit Foundation, a 501(c) (3) nonprofit.

Since the program's inception in 2005, more than 103,000 live Christmas trees have been provided to troops and military families in the United States and overseas. The program is kept alive due to tree or cash donations by growers and the public, as well as the efforts of numerous volunteers. FedEx, the program's corporate sponsor, provides shipping services for the trees to more than 60 military bases, while logging more than 352,011 miles.

Amy Mills, the assistant director for the Christmas Spirit Foundation, said that the organization works with more than 800 growers and is even able to deliver trees to



COURTESY OF TREES FOR TROOPS

Sergeants Jessica and Jonathan Felix and their two children receive the 100,000th live Christmas tree donated by the Christmas Spirit Foundation's program Trees for Troops at MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif., on Dec. 9, 2011.

military personnel in Spain and Kuwait.

The Marines on the installations also work with the program, using military cargo trucks to load and deliver the trees to the giveaway site, as well as providing the manpower needed to assist families in choosing and loading trees.

In 2012, Trees for Troops was honored at the White House as one of 20 finalists nationwide in the Joining Forces Community Challenge, an initiative started by first lady Mrs. Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden to recognize organizations that provide services that support military families.

Both MCB Camp Pendleton and MCB Camp Lejeune have participated in the program for several years and plan to participate again this year.

Other installations that have confirmed

participation this year include Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow, Calif., Marine Corps Air Stations Miramar, Calif., New River and Cherry Point, N.C., and the Marine Reserve unit at Stewart Air National Guard Base, Newburgh, N.Y.

Other tentative base participants include Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif., Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego and MCAS Yuma, Ariz.

For more information on Trees for Troops, their distribution schedule or how to obtain a tree, contact your base Marine Corps Community Services office, or visit www.treesfortroops.org.

Leatherneck



CPL DAVID FEVNI

SEMPER FIDELIS STAR—Aaron Cochran, a high school football offensive lineman from Atwater, Calif., talks to L.A. Galaxy fans prior to being recognized, Sept. 22, on the field as the first student-athlete selected to play in the 2013 Semper Fidelis All-American Bowl at the Home Depot Center in Carson, Calif. The Semper Fidelis All-American Bowl, which will be broadcast nationwide on the NFL Network, is scheduled to be played Jan. 4, 2013, at the Home Depot Center, located on the campus of California State University, Dominguez Hills.

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 Casualties, Sept. 1-30, 2012

The following were listed as having died while supporting combat operations:

Sergeant Bradley W. Atwell, 27, of Kokomo, Ind., with Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 13, Marine Aircraft Group 13, Third Marine Aircraft Wing, I Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward), Sept. 15, Helmand province, Afghanistan.

Lieutenant Colonel Christopher K. Raible, 40, of North

Huntingdon, Pa., with Marine Attack Squadron 211, MAG-13, 3d MAW, I MEF (Fwd), Sept. 15, in Helmand province.

Lance Corporal Alec R. Terwiske, 21, of Dubois, Ind., with Inspector/Instructor Staff, 4th Tank Battalion, Fourth Marine Division, Marine Forces Reserve, Fort Knox, Ky., forward deployed with 1st Combat Engineer Bn, 1stMarDiv, I MEF, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., Sept. 3, Helmand province.

Remains of Mission WW II Bomber Crew Recovered on Vanuatu

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office announced that the remains of seven Marines missing in action from World War II have been identified and buried with full honors.

First Lieutenant Laverne A. Lallathin of Raymond, Wash.; **Second Lieutenant Dwight D. Ekstam** of Moline, Ill.; **2dLt Walter B. Vincent Jr.** of Tulsa, Okla.; **Technical Sergeant James A. Sisney** of Redwood City, Calif.; **Corporal Wayne R. Erickson** of Minneapolis; **Cpl John D. Yeager** of Pittsburgh; and **Private First Class John A. Donovan** of Plymouth, Mich., were buried as a group, in a single casket representing the crew, on Oct. 4, in Arlington National Cemetery. Six of the Marines were identified and buried previously this year. First Lt Lallathin, also individually identified, was interred individually at Arlington on the same day as the group interment.

On April 22, 1944, the Marines were aboard a PBJ-1 aircraft (naval version of the B-25 Mitchell bomber) that failed to return from a night training mission over the island of Espiritu Santo, in what is known today as Vanuatu. None of the seven crew members were recovered at that time, and in 1945 they were officially presumed deceased.

In 1994, a group of private citizens notified the United States that aircraft

wreckage had been found on the island of Espiritu Santo. Human remains were recovered from the site at that time and turned over to the Department of Defense.

In 1999, a Joint Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Accounting Command (JPAC) survey team traveled to the location. The crash site was located at an elevation of 2,600 feet in extremely rugged terrain, and the team determined that specialized mountain training would be necessary to safely complete a recovery mission. From 2000 to 2011, multiple JPAC recovery teams excavated the site and recovered human remains, aircraft parts and military equipment.

To identify the remains, scientists from JPAC and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory evaluated circumstantial evidence and mitochondrial DNA, which matched that of the Marines' family members.

Today, more than 73,000 Americans remain unaccounted for from World War II.

Korean War KIA Marine Identified

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office announced that the remains of a Marine, missing in action from the Korean War, have been identified and returned to his family for burial with full honors.

Private First Class Richard S. Gzik, of Toledo, Ohio, was buried Sept. 28 at Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, D.C. On Dec. 2, 1950, PFC Gzik

and the other Marines of Battery M, 11th Marine Regiment, First Marine Division came under attack on the west side of the Chosin Reservoir in North Korea. PFC Gzik was killed in action, and his remains were buried alongside the road leading to Hagaru-ri. Later that month, the withdrawal of United Nations forces made it impossible to recover his remains.

In 1954, U.N. and Communist forces exchanged the remains of war dead in what came to be called "Operation Glory." All remains recovered in Operation Glory were turned over to the Army Central Identification Unit for analysis. Those which were unable to be identified, given the technology of that time, were interred as unknowns at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (Punchbowl) in Hawaii.

In 2012, analysts from the Joint Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Accounting Command re-examined the case records and determined that advances in technology could likely aid in the confirmation of the unknown remains as PFC Gzik. Once the remains were exhumed, scientists from JPAC used circumstantial evidence and forensic identification tools, including dental records and radiographs, to validate PFC Gzik's identification.

Using modern technology, identifications continue to be made from remains that were previously buried as unknown. Today, 7,947 Americans remain unaccounted for from the Korean War.

Keith A. Smith

Lieutenant General Keith A. Smith of Vienna, Va.—a decorated fighter/attack pilot, who was one of the plankholders with the first Marine Corps F-4B Phantom fighter/attack jets, was with the first Phantom squadron to see combat over Vietnam and retired as Deputy Chief of Staff for Aviation, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, Washington, D.C.—died Sept. 6. He was 83.

LtGen Smith was born in Cheney, Wash. He enlisted in the Marine Corps Reserve in 1952 and was promoted to sergeant prior to being commissioned in the Marine Corps Reserve later that year.

In January 1953, he reported for flight training at Naval Air Station Pensacola, Fla., and was designated a naval aviator in 1954. He eventually was transferred to Marine Night Fighter Squadron 513 in Korea. In 1955, the squadron was re-deployed to NAS Atsugi, Japan, and he served as squadron operations officer.

He then transferred to 1st Air/Naval Gunfire Liaison Company, Camp Smith, Hawaii, in 1956, as air liaison officer. He returned to civilian life in 1957 and participated with Reserve squadron VMF-216, Naval Air Reserve Facility Spokane, Wash., flying F9F Panthers and F-6 Skyraiders and with VMF-541, NAS Seattle, flying the AD-4 Skyraider.

In 1962, he was reassigned as officer in charge of the cadre designated to man the first East Coast Marine F-4B Phantom II squadron. The cadre picked up the colors of Marine Fighter/Attack Squadron 531.

In 1965, as a member of the first Marine F-4B squadron to see action in Vietnam, he flew 156 combat missions. For his service, he was awarded five Flight/Strike Air Medals and one single mission Air Medal. The squadron was awarded the Navy Unit Commendation for its performance in South Vietnam.

He returned to Vietnam for duty with the First Marine Aircraft Wing, and in August 1969, he assumed command of VMFA-542 and participated in 389 combat missions. In February 1970, he brought that squadron home from Vietnam.

He was advanced to brigadier general in 1976 and served as Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Aviation.

During 1977, BGen Smith was transferred to the 1st MAW on Okinawa, Japan, to serve as Assistant Wing Commander and Commanding General, 9th Marine Amphibious Brigade for the Team Spirit Exercise in Korea. On June 16, 1978, he became Commander, Marine Corps Air Bases, Eastern Area and CG, MCAS Cherry Point, N.C. He was advanced to major general in 1979. In 1980, he was CG, 2d

MAW, MCAS Cherry Point.

Following his promotion to lieutenant general in 1984, he became Deputy Chief of Staff for Aviation, HQMC, Washington.

LtGen Smith's personal decorations include the Legion of Merit with combat "V," the Distinguished Flying Cross, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal with two gold stars and Numeral 26, and the Navy Commendation Medal.

He and his wife, the former Shirley Lee, are the parents of nine children. One, Vincent, a Marine captain, was killed during the bombing of the Marine Barracks in Beirut, Lebanon, on Oct. 23, 1983.

Tom Segel

Master Gunnery Sergeant Thomas D. Segel, USMC (Ret)—a twice-wounded Korean War veteran, Marine Corps combat correspondent, freelance writer and veteran of 26 years' service—died Sept. 30 in Harlingen, Texas. He was 81.

Segel was born in Tacoma, Wash., combat wounded in the Korean War and served in media-related positions in the United States and Asia. He was director of operations for Armed Forces Radio and Television in Okinawa, commander of Tuy Hoa Television and Radio in Vietnam, director of operations for the Armed Forces Vietnam Network and main station manager for the Far East Network in Tokyo.

He retired and moved to the Rio Grande Valley in 1974 to work as director of information for the Marine Military Academy. He served as the executive director of the Pan American University Alumni Association. His final position was Director, Division of Information, Rio Grande State Center, Texas. After retirement, he continued as a contract media consultant for the state of Texas.

He held undergraduate degrees in government and English, along with a master's degree in institutional advancement. He is nationally published in both print and online media. His "Men in Space," published by Paladin Press, was selected for both the national high school and junior high library lists.

He held the Department of Defense Thomas Jefferson Award for journalistic excellence, was named Military Writer of the Year, and was past national president of the U.S. Marine Corps Combat Correspondents Association. He was involved in civic and charitable endeavors, including the Board of Loaves and Fishes, board of the Salvation Army, public information director of North Harlingen Rotary, and member and elder of Treasure Hills Presbyterian Church.

He was a friend and advisor to this editor and to *Leatherneck* magazine.

Arthur Ochs "Punch" Sulzberger

Captain Arthur O. Sulzberger—who served during World War II and briefly in Korea, was a generous supporter of the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation for 32 years, and became the publisher of the *New York Times*, which defied President Richard M. Nixon by publishing a classified Department of Defense history of the U.S. involvement in Vietnam—died Sept. 29, in Southampton, N.Y. He was 86.

"Punch," as everyone knew him, championed the First Amendment when he published what became known as the "Pentagon Papers" in 1971, defying the President's men who were pressuring him to kill the story.

During his 30 years as publisher, *The New York Times* won 31 Pulitzer Prizes. Weekday circulation climbed from 714,000 when Sulzberger became publisher in 1963 to 1.1 million when he stepped down as publisher in 1992. Over the same period, annual revenue of the *Times'* corporate parent rose from \$100 million to \$1.7 billion.

It was his editorial independence that made him a publisher of high repute. Against his lawyers' advice, he printed the "Pentagon Papers" leaked by RAND Corporation military analyst and former Marine First Lieutenant Daniel Ellsberg, saying in interviews, the *Times* wouldn't allow the U.S. government to cover up its mistakes under the guise of national security.

His son Arthur Ochs Sulzberger Jr. said his father spent his entire professional career with the *Times* Company, beginning in 1951, except for one year when he was a reporter for the *Milwaukee Journal*. After serving in the Corps, he was a reporter on the *Times'* city staff and a foreign correspondent in the Paris, Rome and London bureaus.

PFC Lorenzo A. Cimirro, 87, in Patenburgh, N.J. He enlisted in December 1942 and served with the 4thMarDiv as a radio dispatcher after his training in Bainbridge, Md. He fought in the Pacific on the islands of Roi-Namur, Saipan, Tinian and Iwo Jima.

He was discharged in 1945 and went to work with the Bendix Corp. on an assembly line producing jet fighter parts.

Cimirro also was a truck driver at Rheingold Breweries in Orange, N.J., and in 1972, he became a New Jersey State Highway patrolman. He retired as a lieutenant and opened his own business selling Sabrett hot dogs from a truck parked in front of the Flemington Shop Rite.

David W. Faulkner, 64, of Monument Beach, Mass. He was a Marine Corps

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veteran, an accomplished musician, an avid sailor and a respected professional in the field of fundraising and development.

He was a consummate professional; well-regarded by his colleagues, many of whom he mentored throughout his career. He also had a strong belief in the philanthropy and missions of the various institutions that he represented.

He was a lifetime member of both the MCL and the MCA&F.

LtCol Gordon V. Hodde, 91, in Sun City, Ariz. He was commissioned in 1943 and retired in 1967. He was a decorated Marine pilot and a combat veteran. His awards include the Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal, Purple Heart and Good Conduct Medal.

Maj Harold "Hal" Jensen Jr., 82, in Flagstaff, Ariz. He enlisted in 1948 and served for 26 years. He was a Korean War and a Vietnam War veteran. He retired from active duty and moved to Tuba City, Ariz., to be the senior military instructor for the Marine Corps Junior ROTC program at Tuba City High School from 1974 to 1978.

He subsequently moved to Flagstaff where he was a charter and life member of MCL Det. #912, San Francisco Peaks. He was instrumental in establishing the Marine Corps League charities program and recognized for raising community

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awareness of the need for cooperation among all people through the Flagstaff community Toys for Tots, the wounded Marine and the Flagstaff youth programs.

MGySgt Leonard F. Myers, 89, of Astor, Fla. He enlisted in 1943 and trained at MCRD Parris Island, S.C. He served with 1st Bn, 6th Marines, 2dMarDiv at Tinian, was medically evacuated to USNH Oakland, Calif., and was awarded the Purple Heart.

He served two tours as a forward observer in a 4.2-inch mortar company in the Korean War. He arrived in Vietnam in 1966 to serve as the Operations Chief, G-3, 1stMarDiv. His awards include the Bronze Star with combat "V."

Sgt John J. Phelan, 81, of New York. He enlisted in 1951 and trained at Parris Island, S.C. He later saw combat in the Korean War.

After the war, he took a job at the New York Stock Exchange. Completing his college education at night, he rose through the executive ranks and, in 1984, was named CEO of the NYSE, where he served until 1991. He is credited with saving the exchange during the huge sell-offs in the 1980s.

Richard B. "Richie" Powers, 88, in Yucaipa, Calif. He served in the Pacific theater from 1943 to 1946 and saw action

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at Guam, Okinawa and the Marshall Islands. At war's end, he was deployed to China where he remained until 1946.

In civilian life, he served as a New York City police officer for 28 years during which time he was a proud member of Emergency Services Truck 1 in Manhattan where a meritorious plaque honors his courage.

Sgt Stanley F. Sadowski, 91, of Boca

Raton, Fla. He served with the 3dMarDiv from 1942 to 1945 during WW II. He saw combat at Guadalcanal, Bougainville, Guam and Iwo Jima. He was awarded the Purple Heart for wounds sustained in Guam.

After the war, he worked as foreman for Long Island Lighting Company in Glen Head, N.Y. He also served as a volunteer firefighter for the Glenwood Fire



Department for many years. In 1978, he retired to Boca Raton and performed volunteer work at Boca Raton Regional Hospital.

Michael C. Sansone, 86, of Dallas. He was a member of the VMF-214 "Black Sheep" squadron of WW II and also served with the squadron aboard USS *Franklin* (CV-13) on March 19, 1945, when she was hit by two armor-piercing bombs from a lone Japanese plane 50 miles from the Japanese main island. Heroic efforts by her crew saved the ship.

Sgt Harry Shapiro, 88, in Grenada Hills, Calif. He served from 1942 to 1946 on Okinawa with the 3d MAW. After the war, he formed his own aircraft parts business and retired after 50 years.

Cpl David Slater, 91, of New York. He enlisted in early 1942 and took part in four Pacific campaigns with the 9th Defense Battalion, serving as wireman, field telephone operator, radio operator, high speed radio operator and rifleman.

Discharged in 1946, he went on to New York University under the GI Bill and earned two degrees in electrical engineering. From 1951 until 1958, he worked as a member of NYU's Engineering Research Division, where he and several other researchers, known as the "balloonatics," took part in designing, testing and launch-

ing instrument packages in high-altitude weather balloons from locations in the American Midwest and Southwest.

In 1956, he took on a part-time position at NYU, teaching electrical engineering at the institution's University Heights campus in the Bronx. In 1968, he was appointed Secretary of the Department of Defense's Advisory Group on Electron Devices (AGED), an appointment he held for 24 years. Shortly after taking that post, in 1969, he founded Palisades Institute for Research Services, leading the firm as chairman and CEO until his retirement in 1992. Between 1993 and 1999, he served as a trustee of New York University.

Jim Smrekar, 79, in Jacksonville, Texas. He was a veteran of the Korean War who also served in Japan and the Far East.

He returned home and graduated from college and held executive positions in petroleum, real estate, construction and manufacturing. He and his wife, Jo Ethelyn, built a working cattle ranch near the Neches River.

David Walbrun of Neenah, Wis. He served from 1958 to 1960 as a chaplain's assistant. He later coached Little League baseball and was a troop leader with Boy Scouts of America.

Sgt Edward H. Wannewetsch. In the October issue, we erroneously listed Sgt

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Ted V. "Ed" Wannewetsch, 84, of Rochester, N.Y. Ted is Sgt Ed Wannewetsch's brother and is still alive.

Sgt Edward H. Wannewetsch, 84, of Rochester, N.Y., who served from 1946 to 1950, was a member of the MarDet, USS *North Carolina* (BB-55) and later was a China Marine. A photograph of him on patrol in Tsingtao appeared on the cover of *Life* magazine.

GySgt Kenneth B. "Keg" Wheeler, 91, of Zirconia, N.C. When he was born, he weighed 12 pounds and the maternity ward nurse called him "Keg." A gifted athlete, he played football for Central High School and was selected for the 1941 Shrine Bowl of the Carolinas all-star game. He volunteered after Pearl Harbor, completed bombardier training, and served in combat with a long-range photographic reconnaissance squadron, VMD-254, in Espiritu Santo in the New Hebrides and Emirau in the Bismarck Archipelago. He also was a veteran of the Korean War.

For many years, he was director of physical education for the schoolchildren of Henderson County, N.C., head counselor of Camp Arrowhead for Boys, a wilderness instructor with Outward Bound, and a living example of fitness and health. In 1945, he played football one year at Wake Forest, studied veterinary science at South Georgia College and transferred to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill for undergraduate and master's degrees in physical education.

He returned to active duty as a Marine gunnery sergeant during the Korean War and trained Marines for combat at MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C. He taught physical education and coached various sports at Auburn University in Auburn, Ala., and Clinch Valley College in Wise, Va., for 14 years. While in his 40s, he won the caber tossing competition three times at the annual Grandfather Mountain Highlands Game.

In 1965, he became director of physical education training for the elementary school students of Henderson County. He created landmark, inexpensive elementary physical education and outdoor-education programs that became state and national models.

He adapted P.E. for the handicapped and, later, he was invited by the leading educational publisher, Prentice Hall, to compile his teaching methods and activities in a textbook for elementary school teachers. Published in 1991 with co-author Otto Spilker, "Physical Education Curriculum Activities Kit for Grades K-6" described and illustrated more than 500 fitness, dance and sports activities. The book was widely used throughout the state and beyond.

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In 2003, he was inducted into the Henderson County Education Foundation Hall of Fame.

Edwin P. Wilson, 84, in Seattle. He served in the Marine Corps and joined the CIA the day after his discharge in 1955.

He was considered a shadowy former CIA operative and arms dealer and served more than two decades in prison before a federal judge overturned his conviction for selling explosives to Libya. He worked for the CIA from 1955 to 1971, and for Navy intelligence until 1976.

He was tried four times on charges relating to dealings with Libya and other alleged transgressions. Finally in Texas,

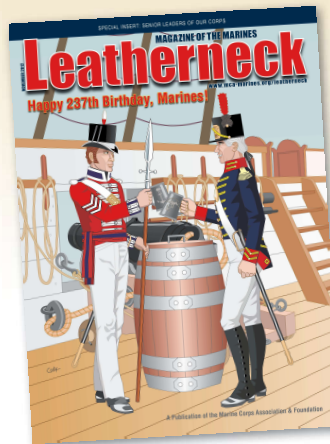
he was charged with illegally exporting 20 tons of explosives to Libyan President Muammar Muhammad Abu Minyar al-Gaddafi. He was convicted in 1983 and sentenced to 17 years. He used the Freedom of Information Act to obtain documents showing that prosecutors had used false testimony.

In 2003, "a federal judge in Houston ruled that faults in a key piece of evidence probably prevented an acquittal in the Texas case." Author David Corn, who wrote of the episode, said, "They framed a guilty man. I think [Wilson] is a terrible fellow who got what he deserved, but they did frame him."

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BOOKS REVIEWED [continued from page 51]

The Marine Corps acquired the land at Quantico, Va., in 1917 as a training base. The first aeronautical activity began in 1918 with the establishment of a Balloon Company for the Heavy Artillery Force. The company later grew to include three seaplanes and two balloons and, in 1919, was re-designated the Marine Aeronautic Section. Maj Alfred A. Cunningham, the father of Marine aviation, recommended a site near the Potomac River for a Marine flying field that would accommodate the seaplanes and landplanes returning from World War I duties.

The closing of many military bases following the war freed up much building material, and Quantico took full advantage of this “free stuff,” something that would become standard USMC practice over the years.

Reporting in June 1919, the first true squadron to arrive was Squadron C. Many members had served with the Day Wing, Northern Bombing Group in France and the First Marine Aeronautic Company in the Azores during the war. With willing hands, free stuff and a do-it-yourself attitude, the Marines began constructing two airfields, a task they learned in France.

To keep costs down, most of the work was done with borrowed Marines and tools. This could be considered the beginning of the current expeditionary airfield program. An example of true austerity was that no funds were available to build an office for the commander. So, one was constructed from aircraft crates and roofed with flattened gas cans.

During this time, Marine aviators were heavily involved in national air races, numerous airshows and demonstrations and lots of bombing practice. It is a little-known fact that they took part in Army Brigadier General Billy Mitchell’s “Bombing of the Battleships” incident that eventually led to his court-martial.

Around Quantico they flew fire patrols over nearby counties for the Forest Service. On some of these patrols, illegal moonshine operations were spotted, and it was not unusual for the aircraft to be fired on. Sometimes it was reported, and sometimes the pilot would note the location and go back when off duty to make a “special purchase.”

The first thing the Marine had to do was convince the still operator that he wasn’t a Federal Revenue agent or he might get shot ... it was the Prohibition era, so risk was part of the cost.

Between the World Wars, the only avi-

ators flying actual combat missions were Marines—specifically, between 1927 and 1932 in Nicaragua supporting the Marine brigade's operations against bandits and insurgents. In those six years, Marine aviators flew more than 40,000 hours. The first time deployed troops were transported in combat was there, in 1927. What took 10 days on foot, Marine air accomplished in a little more than an hour. Nicaragua proved the value of Marine air. However, the first officially defined mission for Marine aviation wasn't put in writing until January 1939. When not deployed, those squadrons called Quantico home.

Many of the Marines written about in this book were members of the First Marine Aviation Force, which was the first American military aviation force to see combat in WW I. They flew alongside the Royal Air Force and made up the Day Wing of the Northern Bombing Group in France. Because General John J. Pershing and the U.S. Army didn't want Marines in Europe, they were not part of the American Expeditionary Force, and the veterans were denied membership in the American Legion. In true Marine fashion, they formed their own organization known as the First Marine Aviation Force Veterans Association.

The author knew many of these men, heard their stories, and later verified them through his collected sources.

In 1971, with the passing of many FMAFVA members, they asked the Commandant of the Marine Corps to find a way to continue their history. His response was the transfer of their traditions and records into what became the Marine Corps Aviation Association, incorporated in 1972. One of its members, noted in this book, is still with us and is the oldest naval aviator and world's oldest living fighter ace, BGen Frederick R. Payne, USMC (Ret).

Each year, 1918-1941, has its own chapter, beginning with the type and number of aircraft assigned. The book not only includes a very interesting history of the early days of Marine air with many rare photos, but many interesting tidbits not generally known outside of a small circle of history buffs. This book is a must-have for any serious aviation history collection. I highly recommend it.

CWO-4 James R. Casey, USMC (Ret)

Editor's note: Jim "Crash" Casey retired after 32 years of active service, all in Marine aviation, with the majority in Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting and Expeditionary Airfields. He currently is the deputy executive director of the Marine Corps Aviation Association.



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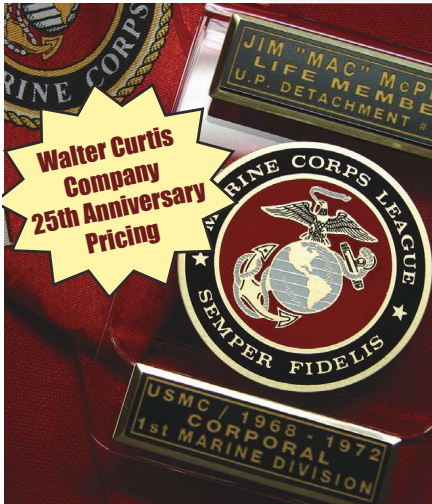
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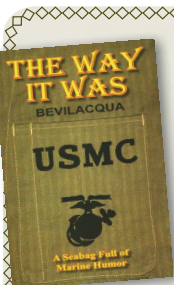


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SOUND OFF

[continued from page 9]

but because the article was published in *Leatherneck*, I am convinced the story is truthful.

Colonel Ortiz's career is the kind that gives birth to legends. He was one remarkable Marine. Many, many thanks for that interesting story.

Robert Ortega
Fresno, Calif.



COURTESY OF DON NISIUS

Don Nisius displays his own brand of Marine tattoo.

Tattoos: Think Before You Ink

I had a flashback to boot camp and Parris Island, S.C., in the 1950s after reading your October "Sound Off" answer to the tattoo issue. Staff Sergeant Jesse Locke, who was one of our drill instructors, told me, "If the Marine Corps wanted you to have a tattoo, they would have issued you one!" The same goes for a wife.

Don Masztak
Luna Pier, Mich.

Back in 1966, just out of boot camp, four of us Marines went to San Diego for liberty with the intent of getting tattoos. Due to a cast on my arm, the tattoo artist refused, but said once the cast was removed, he would be able to give me one. However, once my cast was removed, it was off to Camp Pendleton, Calif., for more training and then to Vietnam. Consequently, I never got my tattoo.

About eight years ago, after mowing the lawn, I decided to relax in a lawn chair with a brassy Marine Corps emblem resting on my stomach. Some 2½ hours later, I looked like a ripe tomato with this white emblem outlined on my stomach. Over the winter, when my tan fades, my emblem becomes less vivid. So I refresh it every year. It is definitely a conversation piece

when I show it off. The beauty of it all is that it would cost just as much to remove it as it would to have it tattooed on.

To the Marines: Think before you ink.
Former Sgt Don Nisius
Madison, Wis.

Honor Flight Network Honors WW II Vets With Free Trips To Washington, D.C.

"Honor Flight Network is a nonprofit organization created solely to honor America's veterans for all their sacrifices. We transport our heroes to Washington, D.C.[.] to visit and reflect at their memorials. Top priority is given to the senior veterans—World War II survivors, along with those other veterans who may be terminally ill." This statement comes directly from www.honorflight.org.

My husband, Bob Musick, served in the U.S. Marine Corps during WW II. When I heard about the Honor Flight Network program, I contacted them to see if he was eligible to participate. We were told that he was qualified and that we would be contacted when the next trip was scheduled. In June of this year, we were contacted by Jim McLaughlin, the HFN liaison in our area. He asked if Bob could be ready to go on July 6th; there was no hesitation, we were going. The next day we received our applications via email.

The veterans are required to travel with a companion to assist with any special needs, thus, I was allowed to accompany my husband on this special occasion. All of the veterans' expenses are paid; however, companions pay a fee of \$400, which is a donation. As soon as our email application was received, our round-trip tickets from Las Vegas to Baltimore were mailed to us.

On the morning of July 6th, we boarded a Southwest Airlines flight to Baltimore to begin our amazing adventure. When we arrived, we were greeted by members of the Honor Flight organization. As we entered the lobby of the airport, Bob was regaled with applause and cheers from the passengers in the airport. What a marvelous, memorable moment it was!

We then proceeded to the chartered bus where other veterans and their companions were waiting. The bus took us to our accommodations at the Hilton hotel, and we met with the other 19 veterans and their companions. What a stellar group of veterans representing all branches of the military. When someone commented that Bob was the only Marine in the group, Bob smiled and said, "It only takes one."

The next morning in the lobby, we were met by motorcycle riders who would be our escort through the Washington, D.C., traffic. Many were also veterans. It was truly inspiring to be a part of this

incredible tribute to the men and women who have given so much to our country.

The first stop was the World War II Memorial. This memorial celebrates a generation of Americans who emerged from the Great Depression to fight and win the most devastating war in history. As you look across toward the Lincoln Memorial, 4,000 gold stars adorn the Freedom Wall commemorating the 400,000 Americans who gave their lives in the war; each star represents 100 American lives lost. A replica of the WW II Victory Medal decorates the pavilion floors.

We returned to the bus and headed to the Lincoln, Vietnam and Korean memorials. The website of the National Park Service has excellent pictures and explanations of these treasures.

We also saw the Vietnam Veterans Women's Memorial, which honors the women of the U.S. Armed Forces who took part in the war. We then arrived at the United States Navy Memorial; Arlington National Cemetery and the Tomb of the Unknowns; the Women in Military Service for America Memorial; and the U.S. Marine Corps War Memorial, often called the Iwo Jima Monument. The last monument visit of the day was the U.S. Air Force Memorial.

We spent the evening getting ready to depart the next morning for home. We all had our own reflections of the past three days. It was an honor and privilege to meet each of the veterans and their companions and share WW II experiences. We are sure the monuments will hold a much deeper meaning to all of us in the future.

Bob and Stanna Musick
Boulder City, Nev.

• *The Honor Flight Network is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Visit their website: www.honorflight.org/ or contact them at Honor Flight Inc., 300 E. Auburn Ave., Springfield, OH 45505-4703, or phone the main office at (937) 521-2400. General information can be obtained by emailing info@honorflight.org.—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. 13-18, 2013, Washington, D.C. Contact GySgt Don H. Gee, USMC (Ret), P.O. Box 254, Chalfont, PA 18914, (215) 822-9094, gygee@aol.com, www.caltrap.com.

• **11th Engineer Bn (RVN, 1966-69) and Vietnam Veterans of America**, Aug. 13-17, 2013, Jacksonville, Fla. Contact Gene Spanos, (847) 770-9049, genethe marine@gmail.com.

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• **H/2/7 (RVN)**, June 20-23, 2013, San Antonio. Contact Rudy Ramon, (210) 861-9950, h272013@att.net.

• **I/3/7**, April 24-27, 2013, Myrtle Beach, S.C. Contact Dennis Deibert, 6007 Catherine St., Harrisburg, PA 17112, (717) 652-1695.

• **U.S. Navy Site One Holy Loch, Scotland Assn.**, Aug. 27-Sept. 4, 2013, Dunoon, Glasgow and Edinburgh, Scotland. Contact Roland Kitridge, (508) 877-2960, rk01701@yahoo.com, www.holyloch.org.

• **MSG Paris** is planning a reunion. Contact Roland C. Beisenstein, 53 Castle Rock Dr., Mill Valley, CA 94941, (415) 388-4941.

• **4th USMC/METOC/Weather Service**, June 2-6, 2013, Las Vegas. Contact Lee Halverson, (925) 837-7493, lhzmateer@aol.com, or Don Innis, (321) 724-6600, dinnis@cfl.rr.com.

• **Scout Sniper Plt, 3d Marines (RVN)**, Feb. 8-10, 2013, Las Vegas. Contact Jim O'Neill, (928) 684-2309, taraniall@gmail.com.

• **Plt 296, Parris Island, 1965**, is planning a reunion for 2014. Contact SgtMaj James Butler, USMC (Ret), (910) 340-7074, jbutler29@ec.rr.com.

• **Plt 1089, Parris Island, 1986**, is planning a reunion. Contact Mark Smith, P.O. Box 828, Columbus, MS 39703, (662) 549-

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7712, msmith@cpi-group.com.

• **Plt 2085, Parris Island, 1966**, is planning a reunion. Contact Bill Simmons, jst1putt@aol.com, mkb Boyle@myfairpoint.net.

• **VMAT-102 A-4M Skyhawks (and related squadrons from MCAS Yuma, Ariz.)**, March 9, 2013, Las Vegas. Contact GiGi Ahlstrom, (513) 544-1016, LTK165@hotmail.com.

Ships and Others

• **USS Bremerton (CA-130/SSN-698)**, Sept. 8-12, 2013, St. Louis. Contact James Jensen, (406) 837-4474, jmbluff@centurytel.net, or R. F. Polanowski, (585) 365-2316, rpolanowski@stny.rr.com.

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• USS *Houston* (CA-30/CL-81) Assn., Aug. 20-24, 2013, Chicago. Contact Donna Rogers, 3949 Little John Dr., York, PA 17408, (717) 792-9113, dlr7110@yahoo.com.

• USS *Portsmouth* (CL-102), April 25-29, 2013, Herndon, Va. Contact Walt Hohner, 448 Hillside Ave., Piscataway, NJ 08854, (732) 463-1745, wphohner@aol.com.

• USS *Renville* (APA-227), April 3-7, 2013, Portland, Ore. Contact Lynda Rumpel, 187 Lakeshore Dr., Mooresville, NC 28117, (704) 906-7622, lyndahd01@aol.com, ussrenvilleapa227.com.

• East Coast Seabees, Feb. 22-24, 2013, Hampton, Va. Contact Bruce MacDougall, (804) 921-4753, seabeamac40@verizon.net.

Reader Assistance

Readers are cautioned to be wary of sending money without confirming authenticity and availability of products offered.

Wanted:

• Former Cpl Bruce A. Rund Jr., 3216 Keating Ct., Manchester, MD 21102, mjd_30213@comcast.net, wants a **recruit graduation book for Plt 387, Parris Island, 1962.** SSgt F. X. McHALE was the senior drill instructor.

• Former LCpl Richard Jenkins, 1369 Justin Ave., Glendale, CA 91201, (818) 246-4723, brn2fis@sbcglobal.net, wants a **recruit graduation book for Plt 152, San Diego, 1959.**

• Former Capt Ralph Holiman, 510 N.W. Shamrock Ave., #214, Lee's Summit, MO 64081, (816) 600-5416, wants a **recruit graduation book for Plt 141, San Diego, 1945.**

• Marine veteran Michael Grohol, (570) 687-7206, grohol39@aol.com, wants a **recruit graduation book for Plt 65, Parris Island, 1957.**

• Marine veteran Ira C. Houck Jr., 105 Trenton Cir., McMurray, PA 15243, (412) 471-1173, wants a **recruit graduation book for Plt 238, Parris Island, 1946.**

• Marine veteran Bill Pilgrim, (620) 521-1492, pilgrim1955@sbcglobal.net, wants a **recruit graduation photo of Plt 114, Parris Island, 1973.** SSgt FIELDS was the senior drill instructor and SSgt WENE and Sgt QUINN were the DIs.

• Former Cpl Jack Bell, (606) 348-0407, drakebody@hotmail.com, wants a **recruit graduation book for Plt 2090, San Diego, 1969.**

• Marine veteran Joseph Michael Babb, (210) 548-5335, jmichaelbabb@yahoo.com, wants a **recruit graduation book for Plt 2088, San Diego, 1972.**

• Marine veteran Greg Sims, (732) 991-1965, marine.1967@yahoo.com, wants a **recruit graduation book for Plt 1068, Parris Island, 1968, and Plt 2112, Parris Island, 1990.**

• Marine veteran Manuel Salmon, 53 Park Rd., Carmel, NY 10512, manuelsalmon@yahoo.com, wants a **recruit graduation book for Plt 305, Parris Island, 1953.** Sgt GEORGE was the drill instructor.

• Marine veteran Autumn Day Tufts, 115 Island Dr., Elyria, OH 44035, (440) 610-1954, autumn@spayneuterservice.org, wants a **WW II-era rosary carried by a European Theater of Operations or Pacific Theater of Operations male or female servicemember.**

Lost and Found:

• Lew Glenn, (704) 716-5258, lewglenn90@gmail.com, has a **Marine Corps ring** that was found in the Manistee River near Traverse City, Mich. The sterling silver ring has a red stone embossed with the eagle, globe and anchor and engraved with an inscription.

• Bill Kretzschmar, (919) 859-4579, willykilo@gmail.com, has a **Marine Corps boot camp Platoon 2021 ring** that was found in the USO facility at the Raleigh-Durham International Airport.



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, *Leatherneck* Magazine, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134.

• Dianne Beck, 5329 Schumacher Ln., Houston, TX 77056, (713) 824-4005, diannebeck99@yahoo.com, to hear from anyone who served with her father, **Cpl Robert Lawrence BECK**, who served with **MAG-52, 1943-45**.

• Maj C. D. Williams, USMC (Ret), 912 Stamp Creek Rd., Salem, SC 29676, (864) 944-5961, to hear from or about **LtCol Robert J. MARTIN, USMC (Ret)**, who, as a captain, was the **CO, Co H, 2d Bn,**

3d Marines, 1965.

• Marine veteran Gary George Vath, (724) 962-5388, ggath@gmail.com, to hear from former **tank driver Ronald NORTHROP and platoon leader GySgt TESH, who witnessed an incident on April 24, 1954, on Onslow Beach, N.C.,** where Vath sustained an injury.

• Marine veteran Burnis Theodore Gardner, 124 Coon Hunters Rd., Brandon, MS 39042, (601) 825-3339, to hear from

anyone who served with him in **Co L, 3d Bn, 4th Marines, 6thMarDiv, 1945-46.**

• Eloise Peacock, 311 Ella Ln., Dripping Springs, TX 78620, (512) 858-1623, to hear from or about **W. A. WALDON, originally from Wickett, Texas,** who was a member of **Plt 71, San Diego, 1950,** and served with **H&S Bn, Camp Pendleton, Calif., 1953.**



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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.

Chosin Reservoir Remembered

I met a man today;
We greeted in the ordinary way.
A plainspoken sort,
Of friendly manner and comport.

We spoke of years gone by,
And of the unexpected how and why.
Our common bond was the Corps,
Seems we needed little more.

I mentioned boot camp, common to us,
And arriving at "P.I." on the bus.
He shook his head, his eyes glanced low,
And he softly offered, "I did not go."

Sometimes words get in the way,
And I did not grasp what he had to say.
We stood in silence for a while,
Then he spoke without a smile.

"I was sent on a Korean trip;
We had to train on board the ship.
Our forces were in deep trouble,
And we were needed on the double."

Like most, he was young and a bit gung-ho,
And did not know what he did not know.
He trusted men who fought in World War II,
To train him, and teach him what to do.

"At the Chosin Reservoir we found,
The enemy had circled all around.
We had to fight our way to Hagaru;
It was the only thing that we could do."

"I remember pretty damn well,
We fought our way back from hell.
At night we fought a foe we could not see,
At daybreak moved on, leaving nothing for the enemy."

"Even in that bone-chilling cold,
Our line was strong and did not fold.
We marched out of the trap to find,
How our numbers had declined."

The horrors are there, burned in his mind,
Things he can never leave behind.
Friends became casualties every day,
But there was no time to think that way.

Chosin, Hagaru, Koto-ri and Hungnam Port,
A costly battle had been fought.
"I learned what I had to do,
But, I did not get to train, like you."

I thought, this man is a hero,
But does anyone know?
Even friends of his are not aware,
Of what he did and saw out there.

I met a Marine today.
He had something extraordinary to say.
A man who fought at Hagaru,
Now his story lives through me and you!

Marine veteran Michael Spataro
(Dedicated to Howard Taylor
First Marine Division, Korea, 1950)

Korean Christmas, 1950

It was cold, so cold at that mason site,
As we gathered to sing carols,
On Christmas Eve night.
Far from home, family and friends,
Still, the warmth we shared knew no ends.
Snow flurries added to the Spirit of Christmas,
While some people even wondered,
If the folks back home still missed us.
Korea! Korea! Where the hell is that?
I can't even find it on my old world map.
But here we are at Truman's request
All bundled up for a long winter's quest.
Then I heard Joe O'Brien say, "Hey! Where's me hat?"
And in an instant I knew where I was at.
You see, Joe was a classmate of mine at O'Dea,
A high school in Seattle, so far away.
We hadn't seen each other in years,
So we talked of old times over Asahi beers.
We sang carols of course,
And cursed Dean Acheson and Harry.
But time was short, so not to worry.
We had good hot chow, warm clothes,
And lots of Suntory!
Then Christmas Eve faded along with our dreams,
Of being home early;
Just another one of MacArthur's schemes.

Marine veteran Boyce Clark



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December 2012

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By J.J. Montanaro, CFP® and Scott Halliwell, CFP® from USAA



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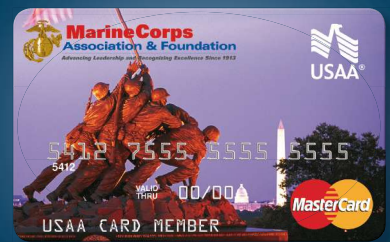


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