

JULY 2013

MAGAZINE OF THE MARINES

Leatherneck

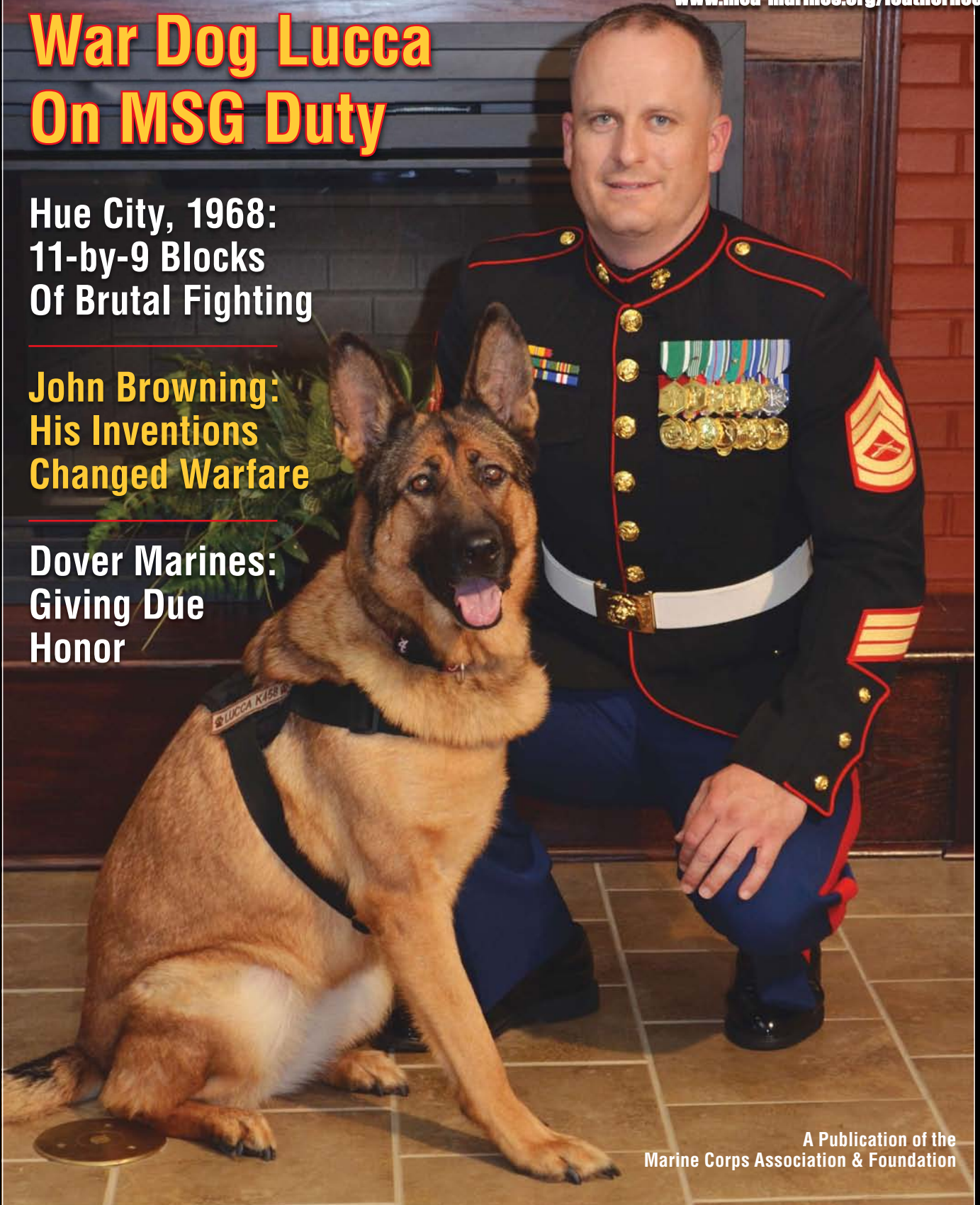
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War Dog Lucca On MSG Duty

Hue City, 1968:
11-by-9 Blocks
Of Brutal Fighting

John Browning:
His Inventions
Changed Warfare

Dover Marines:
Giving Due
Honor



A Publication of the
Marine Corps Association & Foundation



Welcome to *Leatherneck Magazine's* **Digital Edition** **July 2013**

We hope you are enjoying our digital edition with its added content, 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 year, 2013, the Marine Corps Association marks its centennial of service to Marines and Marine families. Throughout the year we will be republishing articles of enduring value from our archives. Bear in mind that all *Leatherneck* issues back through 1921 are online and searchable. If you want to find a previously published article, go to www.leatherneckmagazine.com to access the archives.

We thank you for your continuing support.

Semper Fidelis,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Walt Ford". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Col Walt Ford, USMC (Ret)
Editor



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MARINE RESERVE



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COVER: GySgt Chris Willingham, with Marine Corps Embassy Security Group, MCB Quantico, Va., and Lucca, his combat-wounded Marine military working dog, drop by the Marine Corps Association & Foundation for a visit. See their story beginning on page 32. Photo by Ron Lunn. 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.



From left: Morgan Polk, Herbert "Fritz" Werner, PFC William Polk, Ben Polk—Marines all.

Letter of the Month

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

On May 10, 2013, Private First Class William B. Polk II graduated from Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego as a third-generation Marine. Among the family and friends attending graduation were his father, Major Morgan M. Polk, USMC (Ret); grandfather, Sergeant William "Ben" Polk, USMC-1948; and Maj Herbert "Fritz" Werner, USMC (Ret)—all of whom were MCRD San Diego graduates. Because of his family legacy, PFC Polk, who was recruited in Tampa, Fla., was given the opportunity to become a Marine at MCRD San Diego.

Morgan Polk graduated from MCRD San Diego in 1982 and became an intelligence specialist, and then an intelligence officer under the Marine Enlisted Commissioning Education Program. He retired in 2002 and continues service as a special consultant at U.S. Special Operations Com-

mand, MacDill Air Force Base, Tampa.

In 1948, Ben Polk finished recruit training in San Diego and served an administrative tour on the depot. He then was designated a military policeman and assigned to Adak, Alaska. After leaving the Corps, the senior Polk served more than a decade in the Illinois General Assembly. On retirement, he became a political science professor at Edison College in Fort Myers, Fla. He currently volunteers with numerous community service organizations when he is not assaulting the beaches from his Corvette convertible in St. Petersburg.

Also enlisting in 1948, Fritz Werner met Ben Polk in receiving barracks, and they have been like family ever since. Fritz fondly recalls his emancipation from Boys Town in Omaha, Neb., to find a new home in the Marine Corps. Werner served in Korea and Vietnam, earning Silver and Bronze Stars, as well as three Purple Hearts. During his 37 years in the Corps, he was stationed at both recruit depots and was the longest-sitting director of Drill Instructor School in San Diego. Werner also had a full career in the California correctional system and as a professional boxing referee and judge.

The Polks hope to continue the family

legacy and wish PFC Polk the best as he attends Infantry Training Battalion, School of Infantry-West and the Basic Reconnaissance Course.

Maj Morgan M. Polk, USMC (Ret)
MacDill AFB, Fla.

You Can See Lots of Places From the Air, But None Match Iwo Jima

I've been fortunate enough to have seen many of the most amazing sights on earth from the air. But none of those things have ever made me cry, until today.

We left Tokyo this morning in a 767 freighter aircraft carrying a full load of cargo to Sydney, Australia.

Heading almost due south for about an hour and a half, sitting in the cockpit next to an old Navy pilot, Duane, I had a feeling come over me like there was something special going on. It struck me like a lightning bolt, and I knew exactly what it was.

Since Duane was doing the plotting chart for this trip, he always knew exactly where we were, so I asked him: "Where is Iwo Jima?"

He looked at his chart, looked up at the instrument panel, then back to his chart, and said, "It should be right there on our right."

And there it was; the whole thing was laid out right there through the first officer's sliding window. Mount Suribachi stood up on the end of the island, just like it has for countless years, but now it is at peace.

That nasty little rock in the middle of nowhere had been drenched with the blood of thousands and thousands of my brothers. Too many had fought, too many had bled, and too many had died.

They fought valiantly, and they did not die in vain. They gave their lives in a struggle that was just, and along with every other Marine who ever wore the eagle, globe and anchor, we thank them, and we honor them.

I had to walk back to the galley, where I could be alone. I stood at attention, saluted and sang my song. Our song! And the tears flowed.

Frank Godfrey
USMC, 1973-77
Surprise, Ariz.

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Answering the Perennial Question: What Is a Lance Corporal?

When did they come out with the rate of lance corporal?

We have about six members in our Marine Corps League detachment who say that it came out right after World War II, and another half dozen who say it didn't come up until the 1970s.

Don Gannon

Union Colony Marines, MCL Det. #1093

Greeley, Colo.

• We have a standard answer in the frequently asked questions section of our website, www.leatherneckmagazine.com, but here is a bit more detailed scoop.

The grade, which falls between private first class and corporal, has been around since the 1830s when the Corps also had lance-sergeants. In our archives, there is a December 1946 article which notes that an order from Colonel Commandant Archibald Henderson on March 23, 1836, directed that "the new rank of lance corporal [would be] indicated by the worsted diagonal stripe on each sleeve below the elbow."

The same article indicates that in "1912 it [the lance corporal grade insignia] was changed to one bar on the right sleeve three and one-half inches long." The article continues with information on the end of the lance corporal grade: "The insignia for lance corporal was changed in 1929, when [a] lance corporal was ordered to wear the same chevron as full corporal, but on the right sleeve only." Thus, 1929 marked the end of the grade of lance corporal until it was reinstituted, along with the grades of master gunnery sergeant and gunnery sergeant in 1958.

In looking at the "Handbook for Marine NCOs" by Col Robert D. Heintz, USMC (Ret), the 1979 edition, we find that the term "lance corporal" results from a marriage of the French word lancepesade and corporal. Lancepesade means "broken lance." Therefore, the term lance corporal can be translated as "an old soldier who has broken many a lance in combat."—Sound Off Ed.

But Why Are San Diego Grads Promoted to Lance Corporal and Parris Island Grads to PFC?

I have but one question. I have noticed that recruits receiving the "Chesty" Puller Award graduating from Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C., are promoted to private first class, whereas those graduating from MCRD San Diego are promoted to the grade of lance corporal. What's up with that?

Ronald Phillips

Scotch Plains, N.J.

• I went to the duty expert at Marine Corps Recruiting Command, my old friend Master Gunnery Sergeant Mike Styka, USMC (Ret), Acting Head, Enlisted Recruiting Operations, Quantico, Va. He explained from the beginning:

Each platoon honor graduate competes for the "Chesty" Puller Award for leadership at a company-level board whose members select the recipient. The winner receives a Chesty statue provided by the Marine Corps Association & Foundation. If the new Marine enlisted as a contract (guaranteed) private first class at the time of shipping to the recruit depot, there can be an opportunity, as the Chesty Puller awardee, for the board to recommend (based on many factors) promotion, and the commanding officer of Recruit Training Regiment (RTR) to authorize promotion to lance corporal.

If a person enlists as a private (E-1), he or she will be meritoriously promoted to only PFC (E-2.) Promotion to lance corporal is not automatic even for those who shipped as PFC, and it is not unique to one recruit depot.—Sound Off Ed.

More Memories of SgtMaj Umlauf

I was in the Security Platoon, Headquarters Company, Headquarters Battalion, Second Marine Division circa 1961 or 1962. The Security Plt was responsible for cleaning the staff noncommissioned officers' quarters where Sergeant Major William Umlauf resided [May "Sound Off"].

Rumor had it that the sergeant major did not own any civilian clothes, and there was an effort by our fellow Marines to find out. No civilian clothes were ever found in or near his quarters. Adding to the rumor was witnessing the sergeant major in starched utilities with starched cover and spit-shined boots washing his black Lincoln Continental behind Mess Hall 325 almost every evening.

Fast-forward to the Marine House, Paris, in 1965 when SgtMaj Umlauf visited with a few other Marines who were on liberty during a Mediterranean cruise [deployment]. He and I shared a few memories of his car-washing at the mess hall and our attempts to find his civilian clothes. With a smile on his face, he expressed mild irritation that, in order to be authorized to travel to Paris, he had to purchase civilian clothes.

He looked quite dapper in his tailored suit and still maintained his impressive handlebar mustache. It was a pleasure seeing him again and sharing those memories.

Capt Ralph L. Wheaton, USMC (Ret)

1960-85

Paw Paw, W.Va.

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Utilities “ashore”? Nevah happen, Joe! SgtMaj Umlauf and I served at Great Lakes Naval Training Center in the 1950s. I was a mere technical sergeant. I used to tease the sergeant major about his wearing utilities and hosing down his Chrysler, which I jokingly called a Jeep. He lived in the barracks as his wife ran a small hotel in Chicago.

Never did any of us wear utilities ashore.

The sergeant major was always in uniform. Out at Ted’s Bar and Grill, he would refrain from sitting on a stool so that he wouldn’t break the crease in his trousers. The only time I saw him out of uniform was during a softball game. I was amazed to learn that he had been on the “Great White Fleet” showing our muscle back in the ’20s or ’30s. He was one heck of an example of leadership.

His room in the barracks had the locker doors open with pressed skivvies, shined mess kit and sailcloth linings. The metal “dresser” knobs were polished. He washed his underwear daily. I admit my room, next door, was not at all like that. A great memory of a great Marine.

1stLt Bob McEwen, USMC (Ret)
Indian Shores, Fla.

In the May “Sound Off,” Marine Bill Bernstrom shared his story about SgtMaj

William “Willie” Umlauf, Marine Barracks Colts Neck, N.J. After I returned from overseas in early 1965, I was assigned to Marine Barracks, and I had the pleasure of serving with the sergeant major. He was one well-respected Marine and was a legend in the Corps. He had a great rapport with the troops, and there were many nights that he would have a discussion about Marine Corps history with us in his quarters on the lower deck of the barracks.

The sergeant major also had one set of his old uniforms from his entire Marine Corps career, which were neatly pressed. This was his personal Marine Corps museum.

SgtMaj Umlauf sported a gray handlebar mustache, and as the story goes, he also had an open invitation to the Commandant’s house at Christmas. He always drove around in a shiny Chrysler Imperial with a Marine Corps plaque mounted on the grille, and his car interior was scarlet and gold.

I do not know how many years SgtMaj Umlauf served in the Corps. Some say 40 years, others say 50 years, and there are some who say 55 years; no matter, he was one hell of a Marine. It also has been said that at the Staff NCO Club at MCRD San Diego there is a plaque mounted on the bar

bearing his name. I have never been at that club to see it, and no one is allowed to sit where he made his place. This might be a sea story, but he deserves it if it’s true.

GySgt William F. “Bill” Pakinkis, USMC (Ret)
1962-84

Tombstone, Ariz.

Sugar Loaf Hill Anything but Sweet

Thank you for the outstanding story in the May issue about the battle for Sugar Loaf Hill by Major Allan C. Bevilacqua. The author brought to light many interesting details about the area, then and now—this “bump in the ground,” and the enemy dug in their coral boulders “with almost undetectable firing ports.”

The photos are compelling. Imagine reaching the top of the hill and then being unable to hold—then finally breaching the Shuri Line and raising the American flag. What heroism; what tragic losses of life; what a victory!

Colonel Martin J. “Stormy” Sexton, the commanding officer of Battalion Landing Team 3/3 at Camp Schwab, Okinawa, 1961-62, was commanding officer of Company K, 3/4, part of the new Sixth Marine Division on Okinawa, for 92 days. He wrote to me in 1995, saying, “Sugar Loaf was the site of the most brutal combat I witnessed in my entire career” (Sexton served for 29 years and in three wars).

In another letter, “Stormy” said, “I’m having an enlargement made of an X-ray that clearly defines enemy metal in my body from 1945.” Marines of 3/3 still honor our legendary leader. On the 52nd anniversary of our service together with “Stormy” at Camp Schwab, we will have our 26th consecutive annual reunion (Oct. 21-25) in Wilmington, N.C.

H. A. Phillips
Wilmington, N.C.

Vince Dooley and His Grammar School Buddies

I enjoyed the Vince Dooley article by CWO-4 Randy Gaddo, USMC (Ret) in the April issue. Although he would not remember me, Vince; his younger brother Billy; my older brother and I all went to grammar school at Cathedral in Mobile, Ala., where we were taught by the Sisters of Charity. This was a very small school and, as it was a girls’ orphanage, the girls always outnumbered the boys.

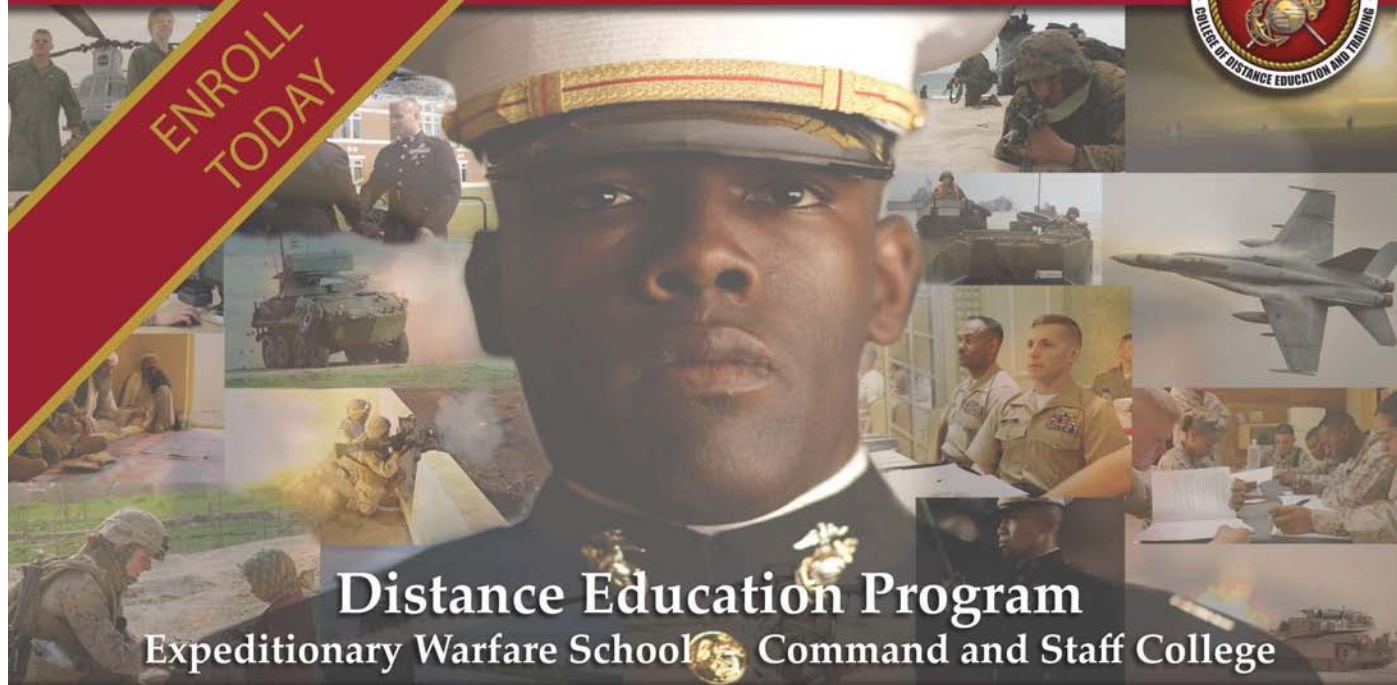
We had to separate at recess and lunch periods. The boys went across the street to the boys’ yard, originally a bishop’s home. The Cathedral was so small that the older kids would sometimes play games with the younger kids. I was then in the third or fourth grade, and Vince was probably in the seventh or eighth.

This was around 1942 or 1943 when

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the great Harry Gilmer was Alabama football's star attraction. Old-timers will remember how he perfected the run, jump and pass. Vince used to imitate him and he had it down to perfection. It's amazing how you remember these things. I can still picture him in the boys' yard performing that play.

I never knew he was in the Corps all these past years!

Gabe Brady
USMC, 1954-57
Ko Olina, Hawaii

Another Possibility in the Case of Missing Amelia Earhart

I am a researcher looking into the claims of a USMC veteran of the Saipan 1944 campaign concerning the fate of Amelia Earhart and Fred Noonan.

As your publication has noted in the past, several Marines have reported turning over documents to Navy intelligence officers or have made sworn statements claiming to see the remnants of Earhart's Lockheed Electra 10E in a lightly damaged hangar on Aslito airfield on Saipan in June 1944.

The attached photograph was found during a search of the National Naval Aviation Museum's (Pensacola, Fla.) online image archive.



COURTESY OF DAVID PAWLOWSKI

A National Naval Aviation Museum picture of an armed guard with what could be aviator Amelia Earhart's Lockheed Electra 10E covered by a tarp.

It shows an established outer perimeter with an armed guard and an inner perimeter of Naval Shore Patrol standing watch over a tarp-covered twin-engine aircraft.

This is the same hangar that was reported to be the location of Earhart's plane.

I would very much like to hear if anyone recognizes the guard standing watch at the front or has any information relative to the mystery aircraft.

David Pawlowski
Midland, Mich.

• *We usually relegate letters such as this to our "Reader Assistance" section, but the Amelia Earhart mystery remains of interest to many of our readers. The people of Saipan still speak of a Western man and woman held by the Japanese who eventually led the pair into a cane field where they were executed. The stories persist. Perhaps one of our readers may hold a solid clue.—Sound Off Ed.*

Saluting the Flag in Your Civvies: "Let There Be No Confusion"

Could you clarify the latest regulations on Marines saluting when not in uniform, or what constitutes a uniform. The May issue [page 47] contains a picture of World War II veterans all wearing an assortment of caps and dressed in civilian clothes. Should they remove their caps and place them over their hearts during the Pledge of Allegiance?

MSgt H. A. "Art" Cramer, USMC (Ret)
Pasadena, Md.



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• A little bit of recent history will help here. The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of 2008 authorized veterans and active-duty military not in uniform the option of rendering the military hand salute for honoring the raising, lowering or passing of the flag. This is just an option and not directive. Removing the cover and placing the hand over the heart remains an option.

Since NDAA 2008 did not address the option for honors during the playing of the national anthem, Congress moved to address this in NDAA 2009. In that authorization, active-duty military in civilian clothes and veterans were authorized to render honors during the playing of the national anthem with a hand salute or continue the traditional way with the hand over the heart.

The Commandant issued ALMAR 052/08 wherein he eliminated any confusion on what Marines would do—he directed that Marines continue to render honors in accordance with the Flag Code. That is, if in civilian clothes and wearing a cover, remove the cover and place the hand over the heart, with the cover up near the left shoulder. If uncovered, just place the hand over the heart. This scoop has been passed in previous issues of *Leatherneck*.

In NDAA 2013, which was signed by

the President in January 2013, Congress authorized “members of the Armed Forces not in uniform and veterans to render a military salute during the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.” Again, this authorized the hand salute; it did not direct it, so you have an option to continue the traditional way of honoring the Pledge of Allegiance.—*Sound Off Ed.*

A 60th Anniversary Salute to the Start of the Korean War

• And, our friend Robert Hein has sent us another of his from-the-heart illustrations. This is his salute to the 60th

anniversary of the start of the Korean War and the coverage provided by *Leatherneck* magazine. Thank you, sir!—*Sound Off Ed.*

“Yut” Had a Different Meaning To POWs in Korea

In reference to the letter in the May “Sound Off,” “yut” was the word, or at least that’s the way it sounded, for a molasses candy that was one of the few sweets the Koreans in the war had in their meager diet, at least up north.

While in a Chinese Prisoner of War camp, five of us were quartered in a large hut in which a young boy was part of the owner’s family. One day, while catching some sunlight on the porch, I was playing my harmonica when the youngster motioned that he wanted it.

It just so happened that mama-san had been cooking some yut for several hours, and the aroma had been drifting across the compound, driving us nuts with hunger. I told the boy in sign language that he could have the harmonica for five pieces of the candy. He had to wait until nightfall to make his raid, but early the next morning he showed up with five of the delicious patties. I gave him the instrument and he handed over the candy, which we hungrily devoured.

In a few hours, there was a screaming



in the compound when mama-san found she was missing the goodies. She accused us, but our guard knew we hadn't left our room. In the meantime, the kid was blowing like mad on his new toy, and for some reason, she never tied the theft to the kid. We paid for it, though—the kid had no musical talent whatsoever, and we had to listen to it until we moved off a week later.

MGySgt Len Maffioli, USMC (Ret)
Ex-POW, Korea
Murrieta, Calif.

I read with interest your explanation of the fairly new Marine term, "yut." My own personal experience with this term goes back to maybe 15 years ago when I purchased a videotape of the USMC Armor School when it was based at Fort Knox, Ky. I was watching as a tank school instructor was going over the layout of the driver's compartment. As he pointed out a feature, he'd say the name and then he'd say, "YUT?" The student would say, "YUT" in reply. The instructor would point out another feature and say the name, finishing the sentence with "YUT?" And the student would reply "YUT."

For the life of me, being an old Vietnam Marine tank commander, I had no clue what they were saying. Later, I was able to visit Ft. Knox during a tankers reunion, and I found out that YUT means "You Understand That?" It was how the tank school instructor finished each and every sentence of his instruction by asking the student to reply that he did in fact understand.

Former Sgt John Wear
New Hope, Pa.

Boot Camp Challenge and His Challenge Coin

I recently attended my oldest son's graduation from Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C. While there, I purchased a "challenge" coin to carry in my pocket as a constant reminder of my own enlistment in the Corps. I graduated in 1993 from the Island.

However, after losing focus on my reasons for enlisting, I left active duty to return to the civilian world in 1997. There were a few coins that I wanted, but most had painted portions on them that would become worn and scratched from being in my pocket and being handled. After ruling those coins out, I chose a plain bronze coin. The center of the coin features a snarling bulldog with the motto "Semper Fidelis" stamped below. "ONCE A MARINE, ALWAYS A MARINE" is stamped around the border on the back of the coin.

Every Marine knows that, just because

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one may choose to leave the Marine Corps, it doesn't mean he just "flips a switch" and stops being a Marine. The title Marine is earned, and it stays with you forever. This coin and its phrase will serve as a constant reminder of who I am and what I endured in the summer of 1993.

This will aid me as I continue down the road that is my life. I tend to get discouraged and downtrodden easily—side effects of my pessimistic nature. It is at these times that I can reach into my pocket, remove my coin and instantly reflect on my past accomplishments. That Marine Corps pride will rush through my veins again, reawakening the warrior that always will reside in me.

I have found myself placing my hand in my pocket. As I do this, my fingers brush against the coin and I instantly recognize what it is. Then the memories come flooding back, no matter where I am.

I have carried my boot camp memories around with me for nearly 20 years with memories from the rest of my service years not far behind. I will forever be proud of becoming a Marine. I will cherish these memories for the rest of my life. I take comfort in the fact that my coin will serve as a trigger that will unleash these memories at any given time, giving me the mo-

[continued on page 66]

ORIGINAL ISSUE



**AND STILL THE FINEST
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The MCA&F and the Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps C4 Division co-hosted the 10th Annual C4 Awards Dinner on April 18 in Arlington, Va. Gen John M. Paxton Jr., Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps, fourth from left, was the guest speaker. That night, the LtCol Kevin M. Shea Memorial Unit Award was presented to Marine Wing Communications Squadron 28, Second Marine Aircraft Wing.

By Roxanne Baker

The rigors of United States Marine Corps training are not for the faint of heart. It takes commitment, discipline and hard work to excel among Marines. So, the few who do set the standard in such a competitive situation should be recognized. The Marine Corps Association & Foundation honors those leaders through its Marine Excellence Awards Program. Each year MCA&F presents awards to nearly 11,000 deserving Marines and provides about 97 percent of all awards distributed in the Corps outside the Marine Corps awards system.

As seen in this gallery of photos from

the past few months, MCA&F awards span grade, school and military occupational specialty. With each cycle of graduating recruits and officers, the highest-ranked Marine is named honor grad. Annual awards dinners offer platforms to recognize the year's top leathernecks in front of family, friends, sponsors and other Marines.

Many of the awards are named in memory of exemplary Marines who stand out in Marine Corps history. It is through these namesake awards that stories of their heroic action in combat live on and raise the bar for the next generation.

The Marine Corps Association & Foundation rewards excellence in the Corps,

but Marines don't strive in their field for the sake of the award. They put forth their best every day because they're Marines. And when MCA&F recognizes those efforts, those awards motivate others to meet new challenges.

For more information about the Marine Corps Association & Foundation's Marine Excellence Awards Program, visit www.mca-marines.org.

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.





CPL RODION ZABOLOTNY

PFC Shania N. Hargis, center, holds her "Chesty" Puller Recruit Company Honor Graduate Award upon graduation with "Oscar" Co, 4th Recruit Training Battalion, Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C., as she is congratulated by her family and Col Robert Jones, Commanding Officer, Recruit Training Regiment, left, and Sgt Anne Laha, her recruiter from 12th Marine Corps District, right, on April 5.



USMC

Sgt David Holloway, left, and LCpl Raymond Thomastamayo proudly display their MCA&F-provided certificates for NCO of the Quarter and Marine of the Quarter, 2nd Quarter, for Combat Logistics Co 28, Combat Logistics Regiment 2. They are stationed at Camp Dwyer, Afghanistan.



LCPL HAYDEN K. HOWARD-BROWNE

LCpl Maurice Edmonds was honored with the MCA&F-sponsored "Chesty" Puller Recruit Company Honor Graduate Award on May 10 at the "Delta" Co, 1st RTB, MCRD San Diego recruit graduation. To the left of Edmonds is his senior drill instructor, Sgt Joshua McGee, and his recruiter, SSgt Lorenzo Hernandez, is on the right.



SGT JEFFERSON EDOLASE

SgtMaj Frank Pulley, USMC (Ret), the MCA&F's West Coast representative, presents Sgt Cristina N. Porras, MCRD San Diego/WRR Public Affairs Office, with an MCA&F Certificate of Achievement, April 12, for her exceptional article "More Than an Artifact: Corps' History Comes to Life Aboard MCRD San Diego," published in the April 2013 *Leatherneck*.



RON LUNN

The MCA&F presented 1stLt Brendon Mills with the 1stLt Baldomero Lopez Honor Graduate Award during The Basic School's "Fox" Co graduation March 27 at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va. From the left are MajGen Edward Usher, USMC (Ret), MCA&F president and CEO; Col Todd S. Desgrosseilliers, CO, TBS; 1stLt Mills; and Col Jack Kelly, USMC (Ret), co-presenter and holder of two Silver Star medals.

A Breed Called Grunt



CPL W. P. BARGER

Getting to the objective can be nerve-racking for the “grunt”: Sgt Ron Hillard accepts that as he peers out the porthole of a CH-46 helicopter while he and his Marines prepare to be inserted into action in early May 1970.

By MSgt Tom Bartlett

There’s a special breed of Marine.

I’m not referring to “good” Marines or “tough” Marines or aviation-types. Those aren’t “breeds.” Whether they’re “good” or “tough” depends on their personalities and training.

Chances are, if they’re “good” Marines, they were “good” kids. If they’re “tough” Marines, chances are they were tough on high-school athletic fields, playing to win regardless of the score, the odds or the size of the opposing team.

But there *is* a breed of Marines in this Corps of ours. They’re a special offspring ... a hybrid. Their genes are no different than others who share the same history, traditions and uniform, but they *are* different.

The breed is “grunt.”

What other manner of man thrives on mud, finds nutrients in C-rations, or can eke out an existence in jungle heat, tropical swamp or leech-infested streams?

What other breed of *Homo sapiens* can survive the mountain vines, rocks and crevices of the ‘Nam, then nourish his body

with five days of luxury and relaxation in another land and another climate? Then, he returns to the mountain vines, rocks and crevices of the ‘Nam, *smiling!*

What other breed finds a comic relief in a typhoon rain, soaked to the second layer of skin, content to wring out his socks, replace them on wrinkled feet, and then insert both sock and foot into a boot full of rain or paddy water?

What other breed originates its own language, mixed with the common and accepted, and yet spiced with terms and expressions adaptable to the rigors, inconveniences and fears of the breed’s location and situation?

What other breed risks his own hide and possessions for the protection, betterment and freedom of another?

Who else leaves for war, kissing wife and parents farewell, and then donates part of his meager salary to educate, dress and feed a child in the land in which he fights and risks pain, bodily harm or death?

Who else, indeed? The *grunt!*

They’ve been laughed at and criticized. They’ve been slighted, wronged and insulted. (Admittedly, not all of this is unjustified. Just the sight of a grunt at times is cause for a laugh, for his uniform seldom fits properly in the field, and he’s dirty, unshaven and tired.)

Ignorant?

Negative!

Most have partial high school, and many hold diplomas or equivalency certificates. There’s the 10 percent who have a collection of college credits and preferred the life of a grunt rather than accepting a commission.

The grunt shrugs off what he considers “minor responsibilities” as counting tent pegs, and yet goes out of his way to help another grunt fulfill *his* obligations!

Smart? That’s a matter of opinion; if you can be “smart” while living in the mud and crud, continually pulling and humping loads or daily facing death ...? If you stake your entire future on a piece of metal, a good sight picture and the knowledge and dependability of other members of your own kind. ...

Tough? He has to be tough merely to survive the existence he meets or creates.

Strong? Enough to carry more than his share of the load, regardless of whether it’s a base plate, additional box of ammo, a field radio or a wounded buddy.



CPL J. E. MCCLORY



CPL J. STEVENS

Above: Always the uncertainty—anything at any time waits for the grunt as these Marines of Co E, 2/7 understand as they rush across rice paddies under heavy machine-gun fire on Operation Arizona, 25 miles southeast of Da Nang, in 1967.

Left: Grunts learn to catch and save water any way possible, and these leathernecks of Co H, 2/3 improvise by catching water with their ponchos during a driving rainstorm while on Operation Prairie IV in May 1967.

Hard? If he wasn't, he soon will be. Crawling jungle trails, sweating in temperatures up to 130 and continually on the move will turn flab to muscle and muscle to steel.

Religious? Generally, he's not overly so, but he realizes that someone, somewhere *has* to be watching over him, otherwise he'd have never made it as far as he has

under the conditions in which he exists.

When he's under fire, he calls for more ammo. Outnumbered, he calls for Marine air or arty. Hit, he shouts for a corpsman.

But when he's scared (he's often scared but won't admit it), he whispers for God.

The grunt is something special. Other Marines are hard, educated and capable, trained and schooled in the ways of

combat, but the grunt has an extra sense. Perhaps that's what sets him apart from others.

He *feels*, and he does it without touching. Chances are, he can't explain it, himself. He *feels* the enemy is present; he *feels* something is wrong. He *knows*.

It happens on patrol, when the point man freezes and signals the remainder of the unit to halt. Someone'll ask, "What's the matter?"

"I'm not sure."

"See something?"

"Nope."

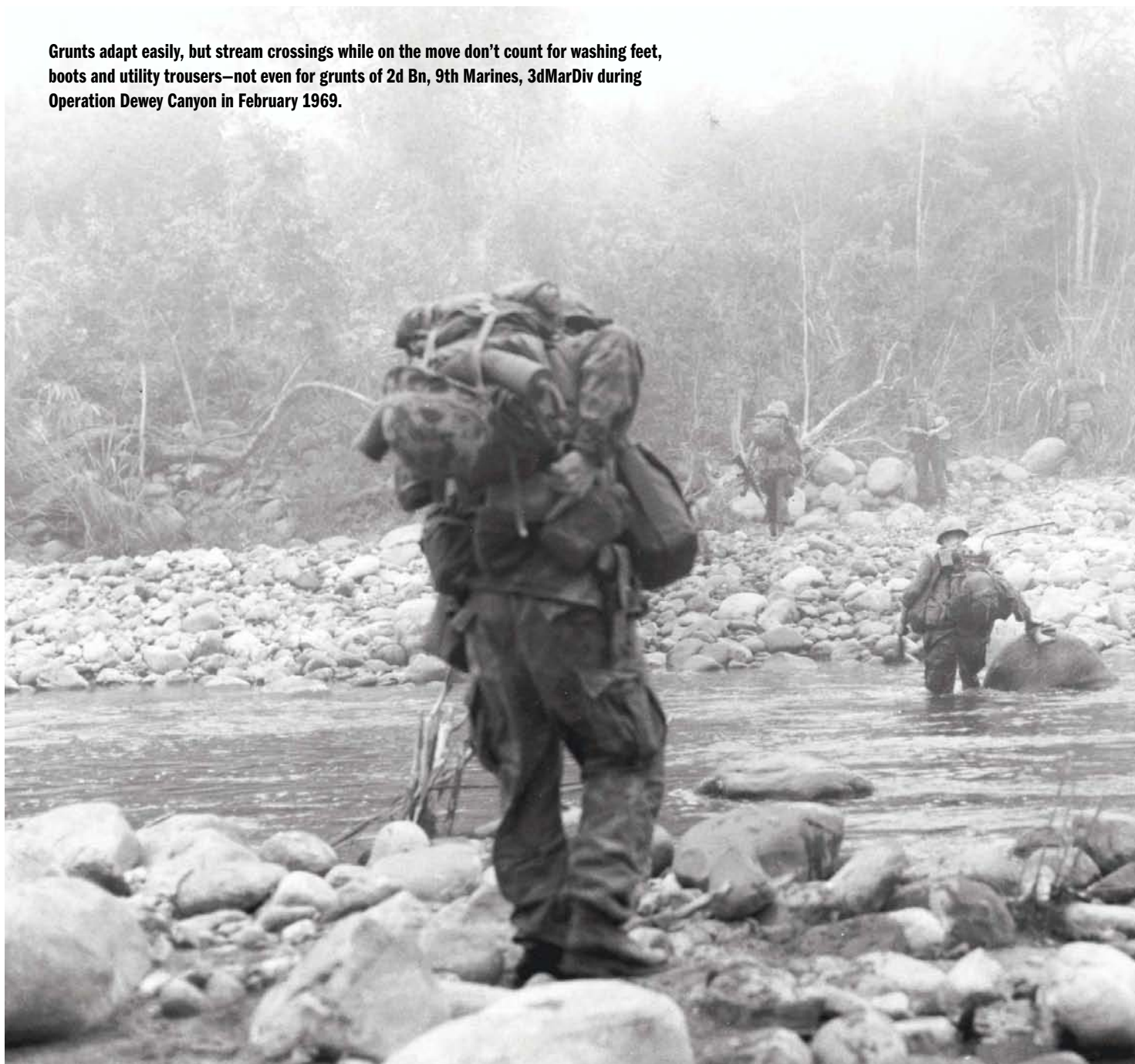
"Hear something?"

"Not really."

They'll check it out, and odds are the enemy has an ambush set or a booby trap nearby. How do *you* explain it?

I've implied that a grunt is something

Grunts adapt easily, but stream crossings while on the move don't count for washing feet, boots and utility trousers—not even for grunts of 2d Bn, 9th Marines, 3dMarDiv during Operation Dewey Canyon in February 1969.



like an animal, but this isn't true. On a Marine Corps base, he's neat, clean and sharp. The average grunt today knows more about the Marine Corps as a lance corporal than many senior Marines once knew about their Corps—after many years of serving it!

He knows how close a Phantom [F-4 jet] can get before you feel the heat and blast of its ordnance. He knows how far a blooper (M79 grenade launcher) can hurl a round; he knows the firing rate of the M60 or how to get a chopper or arty on the "horn."

In his tropics, greens or dress blues, he's a proud, straight, physically fit Marine. Brass and shoes shine brilliantly, and the rows of ribbons on his chest tell a partial

story of where he's been and what he's done.

Too bad you couldn't have seen him in the 'Nam. It's unfortunate that the ribbons can't tell it like it was. Sure, they say he was in the 'Nam, but they don't say "Khe Sanh; Mutter's Ridge; Que Son; Arizona Territory; Prairie; Con Thien" or a hundred other places or operations.

You should have seen him there! The seat was ripped out of his trousers. The skin showed through the knee in one leg of his uniform. The back of his jacket clung to his back, stuck to his skin by his own salty sweat. The flak jacket hung limp and heavy, and his helmet tugged at his hair or banged the bridge of his nose as he ran or dove for cover.

Sometimes he'd raise his forearm to wipe sweat off his forehead, and he'd catch a foul odor. Then he'd realize that the smell was originating from his own body, and he'd try to remember his last hot shower, or try to count the days until his next.

He'd pry open a can of rations and try to remember his last steak or hamburger.

He'd play a game, wiggling his toes and feeling one sticking to another through the wet and sweat of his socks and boots.

He'd scratch his chin, feeling the start of a beard, wondering if he should start growing a mustache, and if so, what style?

The heat rash would bring him back to reality. ...

Older than his years, often wiser than



PFC W. J. CARROLL

his peers, this dirty, tired hunk of humanity has weathered a variety of climates and sacrificed a hundred years on the fields of battle. Don't feel sorry for him (if you can help it).

He's a grunt; that special breed of Marine, and chances are, he wouldn't have it any other way. ...

Editor's note: To commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Marine Corps Association's founding by then-LtCol John A. Lejeune and a group of officers at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, on 25 April 1913, we will be reprinting significant articles from the Leatherneck archives in each 2013 issue. For us, it's an honor to republish this Vietnam War-era article



SGT RAY WOLF

Above: There are times when the breed called "grunt" demonstrates a measure of domesticity, but those moments are rare, indeed, and his efforts are crude.

Below: "To sleep ... to dream." It's rumored that a grunt, like Cpl J. R. Hansen, A/1/5, in this September 1967 photo taken just north of Da Nang, can fall into an alert, but deep sleep during the shortest of breaks in action.



SGT K. K. MCINTOSH

about the Marine infantryman ... the pride of the Corps.

MSgt Thomas P. "Tom" Bartlett, longtime managing editor of Leatherneck, Magazine of the Marines, known as "Mr. Leatherneck," served on the staff for more than 25 years after his retirement as a master sergeant from the Marine Corps in 1971.

He first served with Leatherneck in 1964 when the Corps still authorized active-duty Marines on the staff. As a combat

correspondent for the magazine and later as press chief for III Marine Amphibious Force in Da Nang, he served four tours of duty in Vietnam. He authored more than 1,400 articles and poems for our Leatherneck readers' enjoyment.

If you want to read more from our archives, they are digitized and searchable online via our website: www.mca-marines.org/leatherneck.



In Every Clime and Place

Edited by
R. R. Keene



■ HELMAND PROVINCE, AFGHANISTAN In Time of Transition, Marines Support Afghan Advisors

The mission in Helmand province, Afghanistan, has forced a change from conventional Marine units to smaller units who advise Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). These advisors are formed into Security Forces Assistance Advisor Teams (SFAAT) much smaller than a Marine company. Without the standard setup of a battalion, these Marine teams require a different type of support.

Marines serving with the ANSF liaison cell with Regimental Combat Team 7 provide support to the more than 20 teams within the RCT's area of operations. The Marines in the cell are responsible for the initial training each SFAAT receives when arriving in Afghanistan, as well as follow-on training throughout the team's deployment, said Gunnery Sergeant Matthew Lockwood, the cell chief.

The training includes live-fire exercises involving movement-to-contact drills and shooting under stress. The advising mission creates a need for more advanced training because the 20- to 30-man teams often operate independently.

After an assessment of the training package, Marines added an insider threat training program to help prevent "green on blue" attacks against U.S. advisors, said

Lockwood. The insider threat training teaches the team members how to better recognize potential threats and dangerous scenarios.

To establish relationships and build rapport, the Marines also visit the SFAATs to ensure they are well-equipped and to gain a better understanding of the individual

Afghan force being advised.

"Unless you're on the ground, you don't really know much about what is actually going on," said First Lieutenant Jeremy Prout, a liaison officer with the ANSF cell. "We get out there and see what's working and what's not."

The Marines operate as administrative



SGT NED JOHNSON

First Lt Brent Bonnema with the Afghan National Civil Order Police Kandak 1 Advisor Team, Regimental Combat Team 7 demonstrates firing the pistol while conducting small-arms live-fire training April 25. The Marine advisor team is supported by RCT-7's ANSF liaison cell.

Marines with 2/8 retrograde gear and equipment as part of the demilitarization process at FOB Payne, May 11. The battalion is helping in the demilitarization and closing of FOBs within its area of operation.



LCPL MEL JOHNSON

and logistic liaisons between the teams and the RCT, providing team-specific gear, equipment and even food. At one point, the cell sent more than 50 care packages to the Marines to provide them with snacks and other amenities not available at the smaller bases.

Along with being liaisons, the Marines in the cell also are the ANSF subject-matter experts for the RCT, said Prout. This includes briefing the RCT commanding officer on the effectiveness of Afghan forces in each district.

While the idea of advising Afghan forces is not new, the liaison cell is. Regimental Combat Team 6, which was replaced by RCT-7, operated a one-man liaison cell, while RCT-7 operates a six-man cell.

“The one Marine did a great job, but we have been able to provide more support [through the work of more Marines],” Prout said.

As the advising mission continues, the ANSF liaison cell Marines will continue to assist the teams.

“We’ve been able to create a great connection with the teams,” Lockwood said. “Whenever we have visited them, they are always very thankful for what we’ve been able to do together.”

Sgt Ned Johnson
Combat Correspondent, II MEF (Fwd)

■ HELMAND PROVINCE, AFGHANISTAN Marines Close FOB Payne, Move to Camp Dwyer

Leathernecks with 2d Battalion, Eighth Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 7 have closed another base: Forward Operating Base Payne in southwestern Afghanistan.

For most coalition forces throughout Afghanistan, counterinsurgency operations are minimal, and assisting and advising Afghan National Security Forces has increased. The change in mission requires fewer support assets, which has allowed personnel there to close more than 190 bases since early 2012.

“Currently, we are in the process of demilitarizing this position,” said Captain Joseph M. Clarke IV, Commanding Officer, Weapons Company. Capt Clarke also said they are preparing to move their equipment and personnel north to Camp Dwyer.

All that remains of FOB Payne are remnants of buildings and a protective outer berm. The Marines, paired with Army engineers, finished the job started by their predecessors, 3d Bn, 9th Marines.

“We came in a little late, but three-nine Marines [3d Battalion, 9th Marines] did a lot of work prior to us arriving here [in April]—we’re just trying to close it out for them,” said First Sergeant Christopher N. Cary, Wpns Co first sergeant.

The closing of FOB Payne not only has significance for the Marines, but also for the security of Afghanistan.

“The demilitarization of this FOB is not only good, but it’s important because it shows that the Afghans in the area no longer need our help,” said Clarke. “Usually we’re the ones who bring the information to the Afghan people; now it’s the other way around.”

The Marines have experienced instances where the Afghans have stepped up.

“Just the other day they saw an illumination [round in the sky], and we had several Afghan leaders contact us to check in on the unit, making sure that we weren’t in [enemy] contact. ... It shows just how much they’ve progressed and that they’re a capable force.”

While the battalion’s deployment still is in its beginning stages, Clarke said Payne’s successful closure is a good start. “We’re going to continue going one step at a time, focusing on staying safe and responsibly getting our gear and equipment back to Camp Dwyer.”

As the final vehicles leave and the dust settles, tire tracks will be the only tangible evidence left of the Marine presence at the FOB.

LCpl Mel Johnson
Combat Correspondent, II MEF (Fwd)



CAPT BYRON MCGARRY, USF

First Lt Nathaniel Waka, Armed Forces of Liberia, left, discusses his platoon's performance with 1stLt Robert Rivera, an engineer mentor, middle, and Maj Gregory Starace, AFL Armed Forces Training Command mentor, during an IED recognition course taught in Exercise Onward Liberty at Edward Binyah Kesselly Military Barracks, Monrovia, Liberia, May 3.

■ WEST AFRICA

Marine Forces Africa Train Liberian Soldiers in IED Recognition

Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) soldiers slated to deploy to Mali completed an improvised explosive device recognition course provided by Marines during Exercise Onward Liberty, May 3, at Edward Binyah Kesselly Military Barracks, Monrovia.

The IED-recognition course is built on various scenarios in which squads gain additional IED experience in preparation for their upcoming deployment.

Onward Liberty is a U.S. Marine Corps Forces Africa-led exercise made up of

joint U.S. military mentors who advise the AFL in becoming operationally capable, respectful of civilian authority and the rule of law, and effectively contribute to the overall security environment in Liberia.

The Marines continue to mentor AFL leaders and training staff at all levels to ensure the deploying platoon is properly trained and equipped to succeed in partner-nation operations in Mali and to represent Liberia as a legitimate, capable and professional force for good.

Marine First Lieutenant Robert Rivera, an AFL engineer mentor who oversaw the planning and execution of the IED lane

course, said: "The purpose of this course was to identify strengths and improvement areas for the platoon and to build on their prior training ahead of their deployment. They've received basic IED training ... and this training built on that."

Rivera added: "I'm confident that they'll be able to build on that and work on their improvement areas to continue to gain overall proficiency."

AFL First Lieutenant Nathaniel Waka, a platoon commander, said that the combination of lane training and IED recognition posed a new challenge for his soldiers. "We've had training on each previously, but these scenarios were new," he said. "The course was invaluable for helping the troops think on their feet and react in dynamic situations. With each new course and phase of training, our soldiers continue to improve and grow in confidence and proficiency."

Capt Bryon McGarry, USAF
Marine Corps Forces Africa

■ ISRAEL

Marines, Sailors Use Off-Duty Time To Keep It Clean

Leathernecks assigned to the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit and sailors assigned to the amphibious assault ship USS *Kearsarge* (LHD-3) volunteered their time May 16 to participate in a community relations event to aid the Guardians of the Bay foundation in Eilat, Israel.

"This is a scouting-like organization here in Eilat," said U.S. Navy Commander Sean Maxwell, naval attaché in Israel. "Kids, ages 13 to 16, get together once a week and go diving for a cleanup of the



First Lt Ryan Steenberge, 26th MEU, cuts a steel pipe (above left) when Marines of the MEU and sailors assigned to amphibious assault ship USS *Kearsarge* (LHD-3) volunteer their off-duty time in Israel to help the Guardians of the Bay foundation in Eilat, May 16. (Photos by Cpl Kyle N. Runnels)



Republic of Korea Marines demonstrate martial-arts techniques for U.S. Marines, May 1, at the ROK 1st Marine Division base near Pohang. The ROK Marines hosted the U.S. Marines for a day of sports, food and demonstrations of traditions following two days of landing support training.

bay. They gather everything from plastic cups to cigarette butts. This is actually a really great place to be helping because this organization supports the key to the identity of Eilat. They pride themselves in keeping a pristine environment.”

The Marines and sailors accomplished multiple tasks to help increase the overall presentation of the organization’s headquarters building.

“We started by helping with some interior cosmetic work, patching and painting walls,” said First Lieutenant Ryan Steenberge, assistant fire support officer for the 26th MEU. “While one group helped with that, the rest of us went outside to the courtyard and cleaned up a bunch of scrap metal, trash and glass that had been thrown around the area, to help make it safer so the organization’s volunteers could meet more regularly. On top of that, we also helped with some landscaping, trimming trees and cleaning up the foliage.”

After working in the confined quarters on ship, many people had plans for their well-deserved free time while in Eilat. The 10 volunteers had their eyes set on different goals. They wanted to make an impression on the city that was so welcoming to the troops.

“I like going to foreign countries and I wanted to give back to them,” said Steenberge. “I really wanted to interact with the locals of the city. I feel like that is why we go out and why our military is loved as much as it is around the world. We take the time and opportunities to help the countries we visit, and I wanted to be part of that.”

Before leaving, the volunteers were surprised by offerings of home-cooked food from the members of the Guardians of the Bay as well as an unexpected visit from Meir Yitzhak Halevi, the mayor of Eilat.

“On the seashores of this gulf are four countries: Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Israel and Egypt,” said Halevi. “There is no reason why these countries don’t operate with peace, and peace starts with people. With what you did here today, this can be the beginning of that peace.”

Cpl Kyle N. Runnels
Combat Correspondent, 26th MEU

■ PORT OF POHANG, KOREA ROK, U.S. Marines Exchange Offloading Techniques During Training

The Landing Force Support Party with the III Marine Expeditionary Force detachment at Combined Joint Logistics Exercise Over the Shore 2013 successfully

completed the offload of a maritime prepositioning force (MPF) ship April 28 in the Port of Pohang, Republic of Korea.

Immediately following the mission, the U.S. Marines joined their Republic of Korea (ROK) Marine counterparts for bilateral training. The Landing Support Company, 1st Support Battalion, ROK 1st Marine Division hosted the U.S. Marines for two days of training and knowledge-sharing, April 28 and 30, at the ROK 1st Marine Division base near Pohang.

The Landing Force Support Party was deployed to South Korea to participate in a bilateral and joint maritime prepositioning force exercise. The MPF exercise demonstrated and improved the ROK and U.S. ability to get needed supplies and equipment ashore.

The ROK Marine Corps and Navy conducted the biennial exercise April 19-28 with III Marine Expeditionary Force, U.S. Navy Expeditionary Strike Group 3, Army forces with U.S. Forces Korea and U.S. Coast Guard Port Unit 313.

“The ROK Marines have a landing support battalion, and they wanted to do some integrated training to cover landing support techniques and procedures,” said Captain Robert M. Holt, the officer in charge of the LFSP.



CPL ADAM B. MILLER

Above and below: LCpl Jesse A. Kessler, an infantryman with 3/6, loads and fires the M32 semiautomatic grenade launcher during weapons familiarization and fire-and-maneuver exercises on Range 2 at Camp Hansen, Okinawa, Japan, April 29. The battalion is assigned to 4th Marines, 3dMarDiv, III MEF under the Unit Deployment Program.



PFC KASEY PEACOCK

The ROK and U.S. Marines discussed capabilities that included air delivery and helicopter support team missions. The Marines also participated in military-skills training such as heavy-equipment operation and mine clearance.

“We would like to follow in the U.S. Marines’ footsteps,” said ROK Marine Capt Hoang Ji Young, the company commander of LS Co. “They have a good reputation, and we would like to one day have the same reputation. That is why it is important for us to work and interact together.”

“They do some things differently than we do,” said Holt, “and it is good for the Marines to see another perspective of how to accomplish the mission.”

Cpl Mark W. Stroud

PAO, Marine Corps Installations Pacific

■ CENTRAL TRAINING AREA, OKINAWA **Infantrymen Sharpen Skills** **During Live-Fire Training**

Leathernecks with 3d Battalion, Sixth Marine Regiment—which currently is assigned to Third Marine Division, III

Marine Expeditionary Force, under the Unit Deployment Program (UDP)—held weapons systems familiarization and fire-and-maneuver exercises April 29 at Range 2 on Camp Hansen, Okinawa, Japan.

Marines fired the M203 grenade launcher, M32 semiautomatic grenade launcher, AT-4 light antiarmor weapon and the MK153 shoulder-fired multipurpose assault weapon.

The training was conducted to prepare the battalion for its upcoming final field training exercise while assigned to the UDP and future operations, according to Staff Sergeant Owen I. Wood, a platoon sergeant with the battalion. “We train in order to maintain our skills and remain proficient. A lot of the things we did today provided great training for our Marines. The different battle drills we conducted provided a more realistic aspect than just standing online and shooting on a range,” said SSgt Wood.

Following the weapons systems familiarization training, Marines conducted fire-and-maneuver rehearsals. “For the battle drills, we focused on making them as realistic as possible,” said First Lieutenant Zachary W. Devlin-Foltz, a platoon commander. “We practiced gaining fire superiority, selecting positions for fire teams, coordinating small-arms suppression prior to movement, engaging enemies according to target precedence, and adjusting placement and rate of fire.”

The battalion engaged in several training evolutions while on Okinawa to sharpen the Marines’ warfighting skills. Training days like this are routine for infantry battalions, but the training also assisted in preparation for the battalion’s final exercise in June.

“The opportunities we have had to train on Okinawa were even better than we originally thought,” said SSgt Wood. “The different climate and terrain adds a more realistic element to the training we do. We look forward to taking advantage of all other opportunities we have while under the UDP.”

After the Marines finished the maneuver exercises, they employed all the weapons in an isolated battle drill.

“The training we conducted today was important because, in the infantry, we can always use the experience,” said Lance Corporal Naim K. Olverson, a rifleman. “In the near future a lot of our guys are leaving, getting promoted and taking on new responsibilities. This requires junior Marines to step up and take the lead. Training like this gives us the experience and confidence to do that.”

PFC Kasey Peacock

PAO, Marine Corps Installations Pacific



CPL DANIEL WULZ

MARINE CORPS MARTIAL ARTS IN FRANCE—Leathernecks of the Fifth Marine Regiment participated in a training exhibition with the French 21st Marine Infantry Regiment in Frejus, France, May 23.

■ DA NANG, VIETNAM

Corpsmen, Marines Conduct Medical Exchange in Vietnam

Marines and sailors of III Marine Expeditionary Force participated in Naval Exchange Activity 2013, April 22-24, in Da Nang, Vietnam.

During the activity, medical professionals with III MEF and the Vietnam People's Navy engaged in subject-matter expert exchanges, including medical procedures and logistics support to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations, based on real-world case studies.

"We build relationships with our counterparts throughout the Asia-Pacific region, so that in the event an HA/DR [humanitarian assistance and disaster relief] situation occurs, which requires us to work together, we can provide assistance more rapidly and effectively," said U.S. Navy Lieutenant Boyce R. Gier, medical planner

with the III MEF Surgeon's Office. "Having these relationships helps both sides respond right away."

Since 2010, the NEA has provided opportunities for U.S. and Vietnam naval professionals to share practices and exchange maritime skills, such as community service projects, firefighting and damage control, diving and salvage, and medical procedures.

The discussions and interactions provided valuable experiences and opportunities for medical professionals to exchange medical practices, according to Vietnam People's Navy LT Nguyen Quoc An, a medical officer with the unit. "We work well together. If I have the chance to do this again next year, I will look forward to it."

The exchange builds familiarity with Vietnamese counterparts through interaction and side-by-side approaches to

noncombatant events and procedures, according to Lieutenant Colonel Stephen J. Himelspace, 3d Marine Expeditionary Brigade, III MEF. "This helps us get to know each other, establish similarities and differences between the U.S. and Vietnamese military forces and build a relationship."

These types of exchanges enhance cooperation based on mutual trust, understanding, and shared interests, and also contribute to the stability of the Asia-Pacific region as a whole, according to LT Gier.

"It builds a base for us to work as bilateral partners in the future," said Gier. "The more we interact throughout the entire region, the more peaceful it will be."

PFC Mike Granahan

Combat Correspondent, III MEF



John Moses Browning's Impact On the U.S. Marine Corps



John Moses Browning, left, shows his original M1918 BAR to Frank Burton of Winchester Repeating Arms Company.

Story by 1stLt Kyle Watts · Photos courtesy of the author

As a part of my Marines' weekly requirements, we devote a piece of every Thursday afternoon to "Tech Training." This period of instruction typically consists of one class covering a general Marine Corps subject and one class focusing on a specific area of their military occupational specialty. In order to break up the monotony of listening to each other speak about customs and courtesies, drinking and driving, and job safety, one Thursday a month I teach Marine Corps history.

For my first Tech Training, I focused on the famed firearms designer John Moses Browning. Everyone in the class had heard his name. One even recognized his picture. No one really understood, however, why he is significant and, more importantly, why he is relevant to Marine Corps history. The class focused on some of the earliest Browning designs that were adopted by the U.S. military and how the introduction of those firearms into combat changed the way we fight.

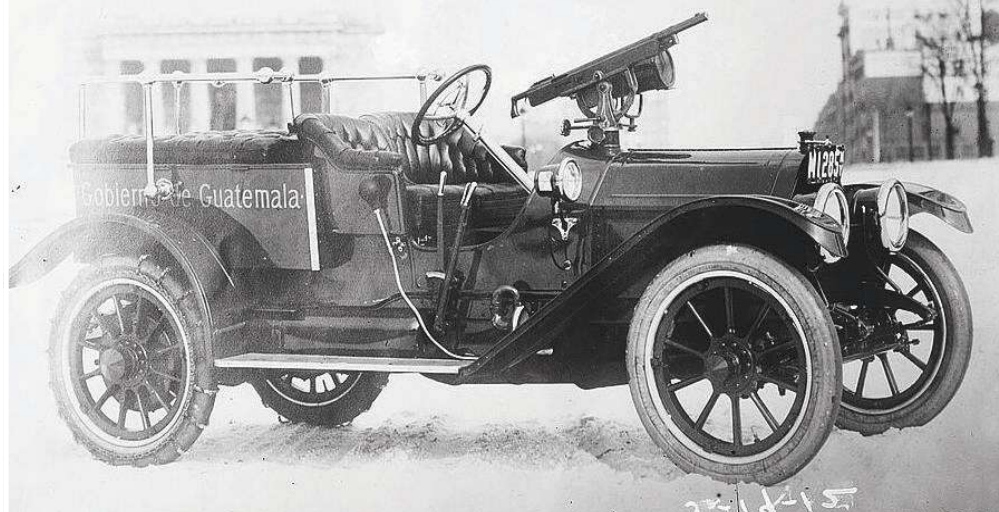
Marine commanders immediately realized the machine gun was instrumental to their success and invaluable during an attack.

By the time the military began adopting his guns in 1895, John Browning already was a nationally recognized figure. His first-ever patented rifle design gained him national attention when it was purchased by Winchester Repeating Arms Company and produced as its famous Model 1885 single shot. During the next 17 years, Winchester purchased

40 more patents from Browning. Some of those designs became their most popular models. Other patents were purchased simply to keep Winchester's competitors from obtaining the designs.

It was during that period in the early 1890s that John Browning had an astonishing revelation while firing one of his rifles. He realized that, when fired, a rifle expends a tremendous amount of energy in gas pressure out the muzzle. With a spark of inspiration, Browning returned to his shop and drafted plans for a firearm that could harness that wasted energy and use it to automatically reload the weapon. With

Browning's 1895 "potato digger" was widely marketed and employed by the military and law enforcement. In this photograph it's vehicle-mounted.



that radical new idea, Browning shifted his focus away from sporting rifles and expanded his future designs into a whole new category of weapon: the machine gun.

Marines preparing to fight in the Spanish-American War in 1898 still considered rapid-fire weapons as new inventions. At the time, they were just beginning to receive their first standard-issue bolt-action rifles to replace the obsolete single-shot breech loaders. A recoil-operated machine-gun design emerged from Europe in 1884, but the Gatling gun remained the pre-eminent rapid-fire weapon in the United States.

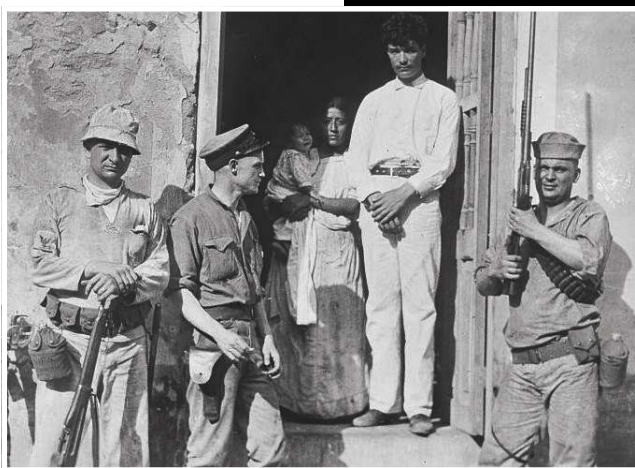
Its firepower offered a distinct advantage in battle, but size and weight limited the weapon to defensive use. The hand-crank operation also meant the weapon could fire only as fast as the operator could cycle the lever.

When Browning presented his prototype weapon to Colt Manufacturing Company, it quickly was put into production and adopted by the U.S. military as the Model 1895 Colt-Browning machine gun. It was the first gas-operated machine gun in the world, the first machine gun to be adopted by the United States and the first put to use in combat by the U.S. Marines.

The Model 1895 had numerous improvements over the Gatling gun it replaced. Its light weight and small size made it portable and suitable for offensive use. More importantly, the operator consistently could maintain a higher rate of fire simply by pulling the trigger.

The Marines quickly took advantage of those improvements and carried four Colt-Browning machine guns into battle at the invasion of Guantanamo Bay in 1898. For the first time, a machine gun was used in direct support of an

Another Browning weapon used effectively by the military and law enforcement was the M1897 Trench Gun, a shotgun (right) that went to combat in WW I. It had a 20-inch barrel and bayonet lug and was compatible with the same bayonet used by the M1903 Springfield rifle.



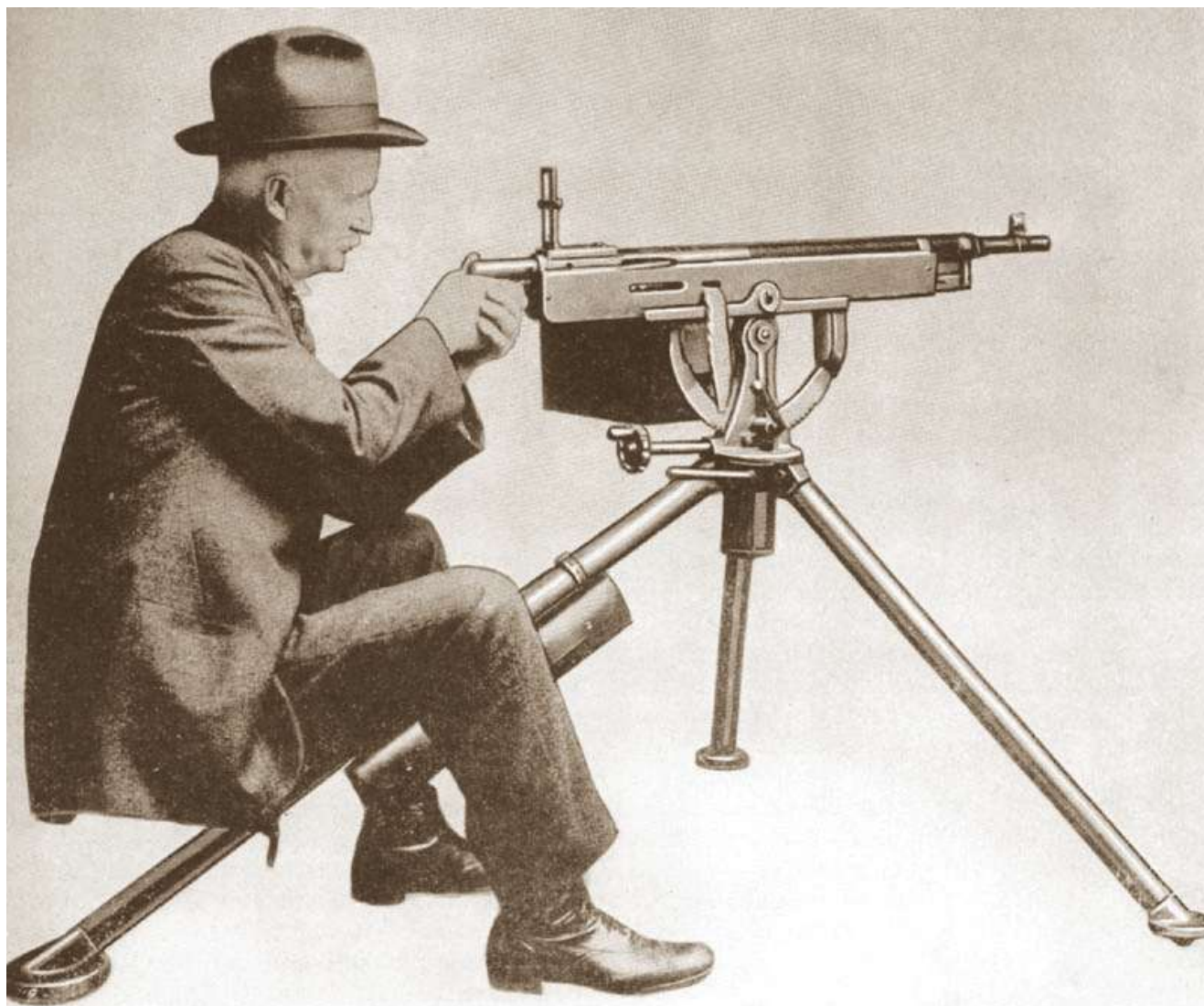
An American sailor is equipped with a longer-barreled M1897 shotgun during the Spanish-American War.

infantry assault. Marine commanders immediately realized the machine gun was instrumental to their success and invaluable during an attack.

From that point forward, Marines started rethinking their tactics. Concepts of maneuver warfare, suppressive fire and different methods of assault all began to center around the stunning amount

of firepower offered by the machine gun. After the Marines proved its worth as an offensive weapon, other military branches began experimenting with different applications for the new gun. Unfortunately for that particular machine gun, it would see limited success and become obsolete by World War I. Fortunately for John Browning, however, the weapon launched a storied relationship, in which the military would return to him again and again for more of his brilliant designs.

The next Browning design adopted by the military evolved from an entirely different class of firearms. In 1897, Winchester began producing a pump-action shotgun based off



John Browning aims in with his M1895 Colt-Browning machine gun, which operated like a lever-action rifle, with a swinging arm that worked back and forth under the end of the barrel. When fired too close to the ground, the arm was known to dig into the dirt, thereby earning the gun its nickname, the “potato digger.”

another patent purchased from Browning. It was a breakthrough design: the first reliable and properly working pump action on the market. The gun's superb quality spoke for itself, with more than 1,000,000 made in the 60 years of production between 1897 and 1957.

The military found the weapon appealing for several reasons. Being a pump action, infantrymen easily and quickly could work the slide to reload without removing it from their shoulder and losing sight picture on the target. Additionally, the gun could be “slam fired,” meaning as long as they held down the trigger, it fired as fast as they could work the slide.

The Model 1897 first gained widespread military recognition during the Philippine-American War in 1899, distinguishing itself as one of the few individual weapons that could knock down a charging Moro tribesman with a single shot. Soldiers and Marines revered it for its intense concentration of firepower in close quarters. Prior to entering WWI, U.S. Army high command observed the brutal trench

warfare for three years. Before sending troops to the fight, Army General John J. Pershing ordered that the Model 1897 be equipped with a bayonet and be distributed widely.

Armed with their newly issued “trench guns,” soldiers and Marines arriving on the front lines devastated the German army. In fact, the weapons were so devastating that Germany protested in order to have shotguns outlawed in combat. The complaint cited the law of war, arguing that the Americans’ shotgun was designed not to kill, but to inflict excessive damage on its victims. Naturally, the Americans rejected this protest, and, in turn, the Germans threatened to execute any American personnel

captured carrying a shotgun.

Servicemen carried Browning’s Model 1897 through WW II and into Korea. Its successors received extensive usage in Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan today. Although the gun has changed, its mission and place in the infantry has not, founded upon the experience of soldiers and Marines fighting in close quarters with their original American trench gun.

When brought to bear in combat near the end of WW I, the BAR proved itself sound, but the tactics for its employment did not.

While the M1897 offered the individual infantryman a significant increase in firepower, military commanders wanted more. Machine guns of the day, like the Colt-Browning and those that followed, were considered medium and heavy machine guns. They could be moved throughout the battlefield, but required a fixed, tripod-mounted position to be fired effectively. More importantly, the gun needed a crew of at least two or three men to operate efficiently. With that in mind, military leaders sought a new machine gun. They needed a fully automatic weapon that could be carried, loaded and fired by a single man on the move. Previous attempts ended in failure or proved unreliable in combat.

It wasn't until 1917, when Browning presented his newest design to the military, that they found exactly what they needed.

The Browning Automatic Rifle, or BAR, filled a gap that no firearm before it could fill. The Army adopted it as the Model 1918 BAR soon after it appeared. The Army intended for the new weapon to be used with a developing tactic called "walking fire," where the operator carried the gun slung over his shoulder, continuously firing from the hip in order to suppress the enemy as the rest of the troops advanced. When brought to bear in combat near the end of WW I, the BAR proved itself sound, but the tactics for its employment did not. The Army quickly learned that "walking fire" was not as effective as they hoped and soon began teaching accurate firing techniques from the prone.

Regardless of how it was employed, the BAR became the light machine gun the U.S. military only recently had thought possible. For the first time, one man could carry a reliable, fully automatic rifle into combat.

As with the Colt-Browning machine gun, tactics changed to center around the BAR. Between the World Wars, Marines fighting in Haiti and Nicaragua implemented new patrol formations with BARs on either end, capitalizing on the

weapon's power to break contact in an ambush.

Even with all its advantages, the BAR possessed one major flaw. The gun accepted only a 20-round magazine which could be expended in seconds. To overcome that, Marines issued two BARs per squad, one keeping the rate of fire while the other reloaded.

By the end of WW II, the average Marine rifle squad was organized the same way we operate today, three teams with one BAR per team. Browning's light machine gun remained in service until the Vietnam War. With it, a brand-new category of machine gun emerged as an invaluable asset that remains the centerpiece of the infantry today.

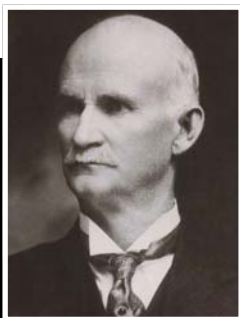
The Model 1895 Colt-Browning machine gun, Model 1897 trench gun and Browning Automatic Rifle were just the beginning and only a fraction of the legacy John Browning left the U.S. military and other fighting forces throughout the world. During WW II, all the light, medium and heavy machine guns used by the military were almost exclusively Browning designs. Some of his designs, including the M2 heavy machine gun and the Model 1911 automatic pistol, continue as standard issue today, almost 100 years after their original adoption.

John Browning never wore a uniform, fought in any battles or won any medals for valor. Even so, his name is incredibly relevant to the history of our Corps. His firearms won our wars and shaped our military more than anyone could have imagined. Thousands of Marines gone before us have taken lives and staked their own on firearms designed by this unimposing and, for the Marines of this generation, largely unnoticed man.

Editor's note: First Lt Watts is currently an active-duty communications officer. He is stationed at Camp Pendleton, Calif., serving with Marine Aircraft Group 39, Third Marine Aircraft Wing.



Coincidentally, one of the first people to use the BAR was the designer's son, Val Browning, while he was serving with the Army in France during WW I.



Born in 1855, John Browning (inset), the son of a blacksmith, began his career in firearms design at age 10 when he crafted his first rifle from scrap parts in his father's shop. His weapons designs continued to be incorporated in military weapons, like this 1918A2 BAR (below), adopted by the U.S. military in 1938, long after his death in 1926.



Leatherneck Laffs



"No, Perkins, I do not have a 'happy app'!"

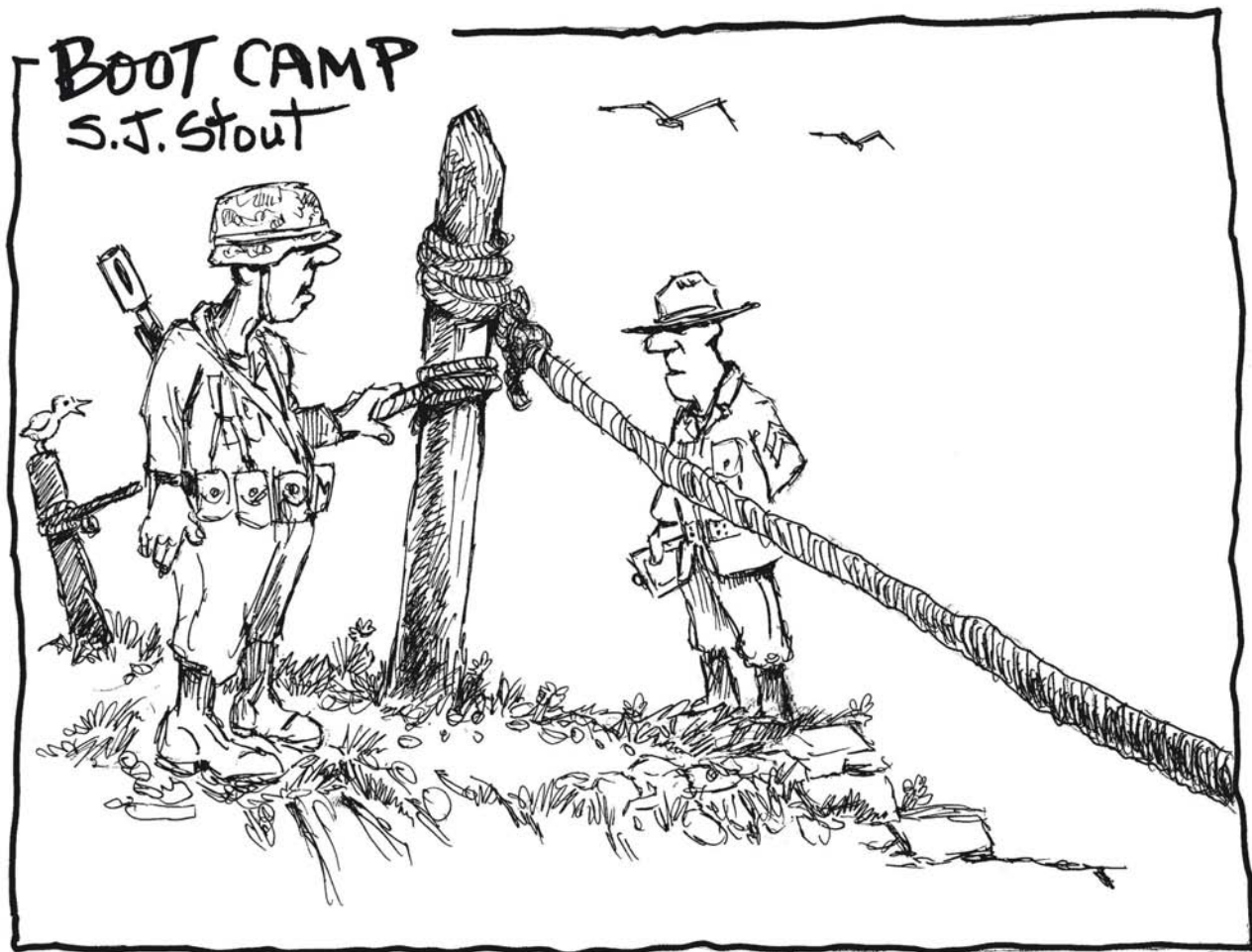


"There isn't even a word for what I'm witnessing right now."

"I don't know what they are talkin' about. This land nav stuff is a piece of cake. I used a ruler and figured out all my points are only about two Gougelmann inches apart."



sempertoons.com



"Can I request a stunt person—like in the movies?"



"Recruit, there are three things to remember about close order drill:
location, location, location."



"If you screech 'incoming' one more time,
you're gonna be parrot soup."



The Marine Corps Service Liaison Team stands in front of the memorial wall of the Charles C. Carson Center for Mortuary Affairs, Dover AFB, Del., April 2, 2013. From left: SSgt John Clements, Kevin Smith and Cpl Landon Beaty. The specialized team coordinates the details associated with the return of fallen Marines.

Dover Air Force Base

Marine Corps Liaisons Committed to Care of Fallen

Story by MSgt Veronica Aceveda, USAFR • Photos by David Tucker

When a Marine is killed and bound for Dover Air Force Base, Del., a specialized three-person team is standing by to provide the same care and assistance as a civilian funeral home.

The Marine Corps Service Liaison Team, working inside the Charles C. Carson Center for Mortuary Affairs, is made up of two enlisted members and one civilian. They are responsible for coordinating the logistics associated with the return of fallen Marines.

The New Guy

Staff Sergeant John Clements was an engineer platoon commander in Folsom, Pa., before his assignment at Dover. An 11-

year Marine reservist, he had just finished his master's degree in homeland security when he branched out for a different mission.

"I have a huge sense of purpose here," said Clements. "I was in a routine at home, but now I have a renewed sense of pride and purpose. It reinvigorated me from a Marine Corps perspective."

So far, Clements has assisted with the return of nine fallen Marines, including those recently killed in a training accident in Nevada.

He said he had an especially heavy heart for one Marine's family, who brought the fallen's preschool-age child to Dover.

"It hit me twofold," said the 30-year-old Clements, who also has a preschool-age

child. "I could relate as a father and as a child."

Clements was only 6 years old when his father died.

"I wanted to reach out and hug the kid, whom I could tell hadn't fully comprehended what had happened," he said, "but all I could do was stand back, observe and try my best to separate my own emotions when assisting the family."

Service liaisons fulfill an array of duties, ranging from reviewing administrative forms with the families to coordinating transportation and lodging accommodations for military escorts.

"The job itself is not difficult, but there are a lot of long hours spent ensuring every step in the process is carried out with pre-

Right: Kevin Smith, head of the Marine Corps Service Liaison Team, Air Force Mortuary Affairs Operations, Dover AFB, Del., served alongside Marines many times during his Navy career and takes great pride in continuing to serve Marines and their families.

cision and with the utmost dignity, honor and respect,” said Clements, who has deployed three times to Iraq and personally has known four Marines who were killed in action.

While their deaths occurred years ago, Clements said working at Dover has given him a sense of comfort, having observed the amount of effort and level of care given to the fallen and their families.

The Seasoned Liaison

One family in particular stands out for Corporal Landon Beaty, who has served as a liaison for more than 15 months.

The 26-year-old Florida native said that until his deathbed he will remember fallen Marine Cpl Keaton Coffey and his family.

About a month after the dignified transfer, Coffey’s father invited Beaty to California to attend the military memorial service. During that weekend, Beaty spent time with Coffey’s family and fiancée.

“Over dinner, his dad said, ‘The reason why we wanted you to come here is because you remind us a lot of our son,’ ” said Beaty, as a wave of emotion carried through his speech. “I remember those words as if he just said them to me. To know that someone thinks so highly of me to compare me to the son they’ve just lost is an incredible honor. I am very grateful.”

Coffey is one of 55 fallen Marines for whom Beaty has made arrangements, including preparing the uniforms and dressing the fallen.



“There are a lot of long hours spent ensuring every step in the process is carried out with precision and with the utmost dignity, honor and respect.”

—SSgt John Clements

“We take care of our own,” said Beaty, who previously was assigned to the 4th Assault Amphibian Battalion, Fourth Marine Division in Tampa, Fla., where he was an amphibious assault vehicle crewman, which is still his primary specialty. “It’s part of the Marine Corps ethos: Marines

taking care of Marines.”

Even if the family chooses to have their loved one dressed in a suit or their favorite football jersey, the Marine Corps service liaisons still prepare a uniform and provide it to the family.

Working in this capacity is a dream come true, said Beaty.

“When I found out I was selected for this position out of a pool of over 700, I was blown away,” he said. “I’ve known about Dover’s port mortuary mission since I was a teenager.”

Beaty, the son of a Baptist preacher, began working in a funeral home when he was 14 years old. He said he can trace his calling to serve in that field as far back as he can remember.

“I am doing exactly what I was born to do,” he said. “I want to be the Marine



Taking exacting care, SSgt John Clements (above left) removes “Irish” pennants, or loose threads, from Marine blue dress trousers as Cpl Landon Beaty ensures the proper placement and spacing of ribbons and badges on the blue dress blouse of a fallen Marine.

According to Kevin Smith, there is nothing the family asks for that is considered a burden. “This is someone’s loved one, and they have just received the worst of news.”



Above: Kevin Smith tells fellow Marine Corps Service Liaison Team member Cpl Beaty about the 1983 Beirut, Lebanon, bombing listed on the memorial wall inside the Charles C. Carson Center for Mortuary Affairs at Dover AFB. The wall commemorates 65 mass fatality incidents handled by the Port Mortuary over the past 45 years. Smith was on board USS *New Jersey* (BB-62), supporting operations in Lebanon when terrorists destroyed the Marine barracks, killing 241 American Marines, soldiers and sailors.

Below: SSgt Clements, foreground, and Cpl Beaty devote as many as three hours to the meticulous preparation of a fallen Marine’s dress uniform.



liaison who serves here the longest. I love my job and what I do for the Marine Corps.”

The Boss

Kevin Smith, the Department of Defense civilian who leads the liaison team for the Marine Corps, has a U.S. Navy background, but his 24-year active-duty career encompassed several assignments supporting Marine Corps missions.

The retired chief petty officer worked in meteorology, but before he closed in on retirement in 2006, he veered toward the funeral industry. His family has had ties to that industry in Pennsylvania for 25 years.

He is a licensed funeral director who worked as an Air Force Mortuary Affairs Operations embalmer at Dover before becoming the liaison team’s boss two months ago.

“I missed the camaraderie of being in the service,” said Smith regarding his reasons for wanting to work here, “and Dover is considered the pinnacle for every funeral director.”

When possible, Smith meets with the fallen member’s family to explain the mortuary disposition options and choices of caskets and urns.

If the family does not travel to Dover AFB, the liaisons still provide support and assistance through an appointed Casualty Affairs Call Officer.

“The hardest thing to discuss with the family is the subject of the trauma associated with the fallen member’s cause of death,” said Smith. “It’s a very sensitive subject, and it takes an emotional toll on the family.”

During those conversations, Smith said there is nothing the family asks for that is considered a burden.

“This is someone’s loved one, and they have just received the worst of news,” he added.

“We do everything we can to honor that family’s request.”

Whether it’s trying to arrange the fallen member’s return home at a specific time or delivering a requested personal effect, the three members of the Marine Corps liaison team agreed that their job is a labor of love and that they feel privileged to be part of such an important mission.

Editor’s note: MSgt Aceveda is a U.S. Air Force reservist assigned to the 512th Airlift Wing, Dover AFB, Del., and performing her annual active-duty tour with Air Force Mortuary Affairs Operations. David Tucker is a civilian who works for the 436th Airlift Wing Public Affairs Office, Dover AFB.



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Lucca

Wounded Marine War Dog Warms Hearts



GySgt Chris Willingham, currently assigned to Marine Corps Embassy Security Group, MCB Quantico, Va., and Lucca, a combat-wounded Marine military working dog, formed a bond during five years of working together. Now the gunny and his family have adopted Lucca.

RON LUNN

By David J. McGuire

When our Embassy Marine Security Guard Detachments receive a new member, it usually goes unnoticed. That script was rewritten in Helsinki on July 7, 2012, when an arriving Marine received a hero's welcome at the Helsinki-Vantaa airport. Ambassador Bruce J. Oreck, Gunnery Sergeant Christopher E. Willingham, embassy staff, representatives from American Airlines, local police and journalists from every major media outlet in Finland were on hand to welcome the newest member of the embassy's team.

The Marine, named Lucca, had put her life in danger to save others and, in retirement, would not stand guard for a single day at Embassy Helsinki. GySgt Willingham, the MSG Det commander in Helsinki, knew firsthand how much Lucca had sacrificed to protect others and how far she had traveled to reach that post.

Lucca joined the United States Marine Corps on April 23, 2006, when she was only 2 years old. She is a specialized search dog trained to search roadways, open areas, buildings and vehicles for explosives, weapons and ammunition. Willingham became a Marine in 1999 and was Lucca's first handler.

The two formed a special bond as they worked together for nearly five years. In that time, they spent 20 months overseas, including two combat deployments to Iraq, during which Lucca saved the lives of Willingham and the members of his patrol on several occasions by locating hidden explosive devices that would have gone otherwise undetected.

Once, Willingham carried Lucca back to base camp after a long day on patrol because "she deserved it." They were a team, and Lucca quickly became part of Willingham's family.

When Willingham left to take command of the MSG Detachment in Embassy Helsinki, he left Lucca with a hand-picked successor, Corporal Juan M. Rodriguez. Willingham checked in regularly on his old platoon, sending care packages filled with dog biscuits, toys and treats from the embassy staff.

On March 23, 2012, Cpl Rodriguez and Lucca were on patrol in Afghanistan. Walking ahead of the unit, as Lucca always did, she suddenly alerted the unit to an explosive device. While sweeping for secondary devices, Lucca was hit when another exploded. As soon as the blast occurred, Lucca tried to run back toward Rodriguez, who met her halfway and immediately applied a tourniquet and began first aid, which saved her life. Lucca suf-



CPL JENNIFER PIRANTE

Lucca, an 8-year-old Belgian Malinois military working dog, sits in front of a Marine Corps flag at MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif. Combat wounds in Afghanistan led to the amputation of her left front leg and retirement from military service on July 2, 2012.



SRA ERIC HARRIS, USAF

On one of two deployments together to Iraq, then-SSgt Chris Willingham, assigned to 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, U.S. Army, and Lucca provide security during cordon-and-knock operations in Afak, Iraq, Nov. 30, 2008.

Top right: Cpl Juan M. Rodriguez, Lucca's handler with 1st Law Enforcement Battalion, I Marine Expeditionary Force, escorted Lucca to Helsinki, Finland, to join the Willingham family just days after her medical retirement.

Center right: After the heat of MCB Camp Pendleton and the extreme weather conditions in Iraq and Afghanistan, Lucca discovered she loved the snow in Helsinki.

Bottom right: Often seen around the U.S. Embassy grounds, the good-natured Lucca quickly became a favorite of staff and visitors.



Lucca now takes care of her Willingham family in Stafford, Va. From left: Claire, GySgt Chris Willingham, Michael and Jill.





CPL JENNIFER PRANTE



COURTESY OF U.S. EMBASSY HELSINKI



COURTESY OF U.S. EMBASSY HELSINKI

ferred burns on her torso, and her front left leg had to be amputated.

Because of Lucca's heroic sacrifice, no other Marine was injured during the patrol.

Willingham already had begun plans to adopt Lucca after her retirement, and after the attack he was more eager than ever to make her a permanent part of his family. While Lucca recovered at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., Willingham finalized the adoption paperwork.

Helsinki Foreign Commercial Services Officer Nicholas Kuchova worked with American Airlines, which put forth extraordinary effort to ensure Lucca traveled to Finland in comfort. When she changed planes at Chicago's O'Hare Airport, a military color guard escorted her through the airport, and she was honored in a ceremony prior to departure at the special place chosen for her plane's departure—Gate K9. American Airlines flew Lucca first class to begin the next part of her life in Helsinki.

Willingham and Lucca worked together to raise awareness of the incredible role military working dogs perform on a regular basis and also to raise the spirits of men, women and families impacted by combat deployments. The tradition of dogs serving vital roles in the military has been ongoing since World War II, but has gone largely unrecognized.

To illuminate the contributions and sacrifices of those animals, the John Burnam Monument Foundation is building a monument to military working dogs at Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, where many military working dogs are trained.

Since last fall, Lucca's charisma and remarkable story has brought attention to the monument's worthy cause. She appeared as the guest of honor at the Dallas Sky Ball with more than 1,000 attendees and donors who gathered to honor wounded veterans. She then took a leading role on a float in the Rose Bowl Parade, combined with numerous media appearances including nationally broadcast "Fox and Friends" and "Inside Edition."

Her high-profile and lively appearances have given Lucca many friends and further increased understanding of the important contributions of working dogs to military operations worldwide. Lucca has her own Facebook page, which attracted more than 1,000 "Followers" in the first 24 hours after it was created and now has more than 2,800 followers.

Lucca's story resonated strongly in Finland, and she continued to offer comfort to Finnish veterans and families, who have served alongside U.S. troops in Afghanistan. With Finnish President Sauli Niinisto, Lucca visited wounded veterans in a military hospital in Helsinki. She visited school groups in Finland to highlight the work she had done and tell her story (through GySgt Willingham). She also enjoyed her retirement, frolicking in the Helsinki snow with Willingham's two young children—her adopted siblings.

In March 2013, Willingham's tour in Helsinki came to an end. The Willingham family, now with Lucca as a member, moved to Quantico, Va., where Willingham had been hand-picked by the Marine Corps for a teaching position at the Marine Corps Embassy Security Group. An evening newspaper covered her departure, showing Lucca doing what she loved best: romping in the snow.

When Lucca left, her farewell Facebook posting reached the largest audience of any embassy posting, and friends shared it more than 50 times. Americans at the embassy, as well as Finns, were sad to see Lucca (and the Willinghams) go. Many marked her departure with a heart symbol mark used on Facebook, in response to a story U.S. Embassy Helsinki staff posted about Lucca's departure from Finland. It is an appropriate symbol for a dog who has saved, inspired and touched so many.

Author's note: This article was formulated from contributions by many members of the State Department team at the U.S. Embassy in Helsinki. We are honored to serve alongside the men and women from all branches of the U.S. Armed Forces and appreciate the great sacrifices they make to protect the citizens of the United States.

We are especially grateful for the commitment of all those serving in Embassy Marine Detachments around the world. Thank you for your service and camaraderie.

Editor's note: David McGuire, a career diplomat with the U.S. Department of State, currently is serving as Public Affairs Officer at the U.S. Embassy in Helsinki. His previous overseas assignments include Managua, Nicaragua; Madrid, Spain; and Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina.



Leatherneck—On the Web

To see more photos of Lucca and her Marine family and to view a short video of Lucca, visit this link:
www.mca-marines.org/leatherneck/lucca

The Terrible Carnage of Hue



ALEXANDER KANDIC

A Marine M67A2 flame tank, number F-32, of Headquarters and Service Co, 3d Tank Bn, commanded by Cpl Charles West, spews flame at a Communist position during the heavy fighting in the streets of Hue during the 1968 Tet Offensive.

By R. R. Keene

This is the conclusion of a two-part article. See Part I, "Golf Company at Hue," in the June 2013 Leatherneck.

"The stink—you had to load up so many wounded, the blood would dry on your hands. In two or three days you would smell like death itself."—A Marine at Hue, as quoted in "U.S. Marines in Vietnam: The Defining Year, 1968"

There are several great hotels in Hue. With tour groups going to Vietnam, Military Historical Tours always has booked into the Huong Giang Hotel Resort and Spa, formerly the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) bachelor officers' quarters and site of the U.S. Navy's landing craft, utility (LCU) ramp during the Vietnam War.

The Huong Giang sits on the south bank of the River of Perfume. Today,

guests can sit on the veranda in the luxury for which Southeast Asia is famous, drinking aperitifs, smoking cigars and admiring the sunset behind the Citadel as the view of Trang Tien Bridge becomes bathed in changing lights, and candle-lit paper lanterns float on the water, guiding dragon-headed restaurant barges carrying diners up river.

For returning veterans of the Vietnam War, there comes a subtle realization that there is no longer that gnawing feeling of fear that accompanied them in their combat tour. Hue and Vietnam are beautiful.

But, in 1968, carnage is the word for what happened at Hue.

Company G, 2d Battalion, Fifth Marine Regiment, after reaching the Citadel and under heavy fire, went back across the river to the Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV) compound. This is the further account of "Golf" Co, 2d Bn and its sister companies of 5th Marines and the street-to-street,

11-blocks-wide and eight-to-nine-blocks-deep fighting that followed the combat described in Part I of this article.

There was fighting everywhere. They had never fought house to house or building to building. According to Captain Charles L. "Chuck" Meadows, the commanding officer of Golf Co, "We were out of our element." But, then too, so were the *Bo Doi*—regulars of the North Vietnamese infantry.

Enter Lieutenant Colonel Ernest C. "Ernie" Cheatham Jr., Commanding Officer, 2/5, up from the Troi River south of Phu Bai where Communist forces had hit Marine and South Vietnamese units the night of 30-31 Jan. 1968. Cheatham was a big man: a former defensive tackle with the Pittsburgh Steelers and the Baltimore Colts in the mid-1950s, who gave up football to be a Marine. The Corps was his vocation, and he was known to be tactically smart and innovative, but he had never fought in a city.

For the Battle of Hue, he scrounged for field manuals and came up with two: “Combat in Built-Up Areas” and “Attack on a Fortified Position.” They weren’t much, but the books provided three basic rules for conducting combat in a built-up area: isolate the battlefield, seize footholds and conduct systematic clearing operations. Cheatham reshaped that advice, according to author Eric Hammel in his book “Fire in the Streets,” to “gas the enemy, blow things up and then clear out the ruins.”

He ordered up the battalion’s 106 mm recoilless rifles, every CS tear gas grenade and gas masks, composition C-4 plastique explosives, every M79 grenade and hand grenade, even obsolescent rifle grenades. Cheatham also broke out 3.5-inch rocket launchers to supplement his M72 Light Anti-Armor Weapons. He was going to need it all.

Back in the MACV compound, G/2/5 corpsman “Doc” Bruce Grant Jr. was assigned to assist with the wounded from the fighting across the river. There were many: Marines, U.S. and ARVN soldiers and civilians. Marines were hot-wiring vehicles and using them for medical evacuation. They needed all the help they could get.

Doc Grant remembers seeing a Vietnamese man wearing an ARVN uniform and the red beret of the airborne battalion. He claimed to be a doctor. Grant asked him his name, and he replied, “First Lieutenant Doan Van Ba.”

“Ba?” said Grant. “Doesn’t *ba* mean woman?”

Ba smiled and waded into the wounded, helping triage.

At 0700, 1 Feb., elements of Golf Co with two M48 Marine tanks set off toward the jail and provincial building six blocks down Le Loi Street. Word had been passed to relieve a small pocket of South Vietnamese holding out in the Thua Thien provincial prison and to liberate the nearby province administration complex.

“We didn’t get one block ... before we started getting sniper fire,” said an M79 grenadier in “U.S. Marines in Vietnam: The Defining Year, 1968.”

“We got a tank ... got a block, turned right and received 57 mm recoilless which put out our tank.” The Marines went back to the MACV compound.

That night the North Vietnamese dropped the Bach Ho Railroad Bridge into the River of Perfume, but south of Hue, the bridge on Highway 1 that crossed the Phu Cam Canal still was unscathed and the American forces were streaming troops and supplies across. Two French



USMC

Above: Leathernecks of 5th Marines muscled a 300-pound 106 mm recoilless rifle up to the second floor of the University of Hue to get a better firing position on the treasury building just down the street. Once the weapon was sighted in, they hooked up a 20-foot string lanyard and backed out of the classroom and down the hall. The back blast collapsed the classroom and tore out the walls—the treasury building withstood the round.

Below: On 6 Feb., Golf Co stormed the provincial prison, fighting its way in to take on the added problem of sorting Communist soldiers and sympathizers from criminals and political prisoners. The process started by lining everyone up against the walls.



CPL WILLIAM PETERSON

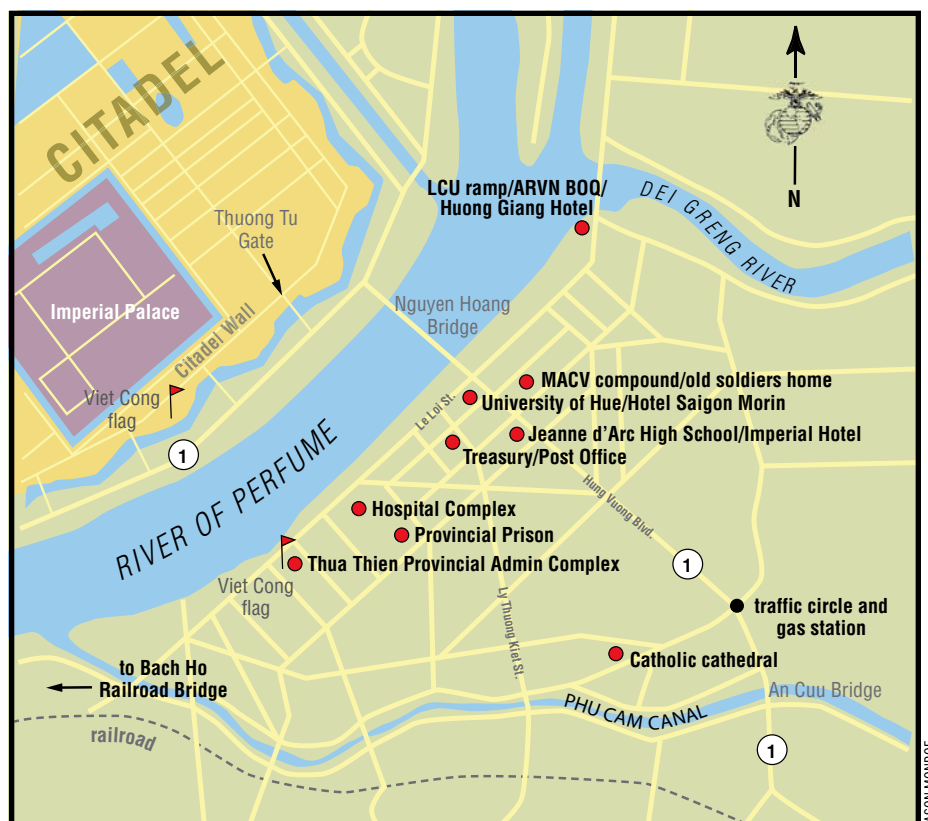
journalists, Catherine Leroy and Francois Mazure, joined the convoys headed into Hue. They claimed they had “wandered” into the North Vietnamese lines and were captured. Leroy talked their way out and emerged as the first newsperson to take photos of the *Bo Doi* in Hue. The story made the cover of *Life* magazine.

On 3 Feb., the South Vietnamese lifted all restrictions on fire support south of the River of Perfume. It opened the way for support from up to 8-inch howitzers, naval gunfire and, if the weather cleared,

fast-moving tactical aircraft laden with rockets, bombs and napalm.

However, the weather hadn’t cleared. A fine rain mist coated the chilled Marines and enshrouded the city in an eerie bank of fog.

Today, across and down the street from the home for old communist soldiers, previously known as the MACV compound, is the Saigon Morin, another of Hue’s great hotels. Renowned for its excellent brunch and evening steaks, it stands on the corner of Le Loi Street overlooking the Trang



Tien Bridge. The marble-colored, multi-story structure in 1968 was Hue University.

In 1968, Cheatham's battalion wanted it as the command post, but first they had to take it. Only a short distance away at the provincial headquarters, the NVA had set up a similar CP. It was close-quarters fighting with bullets, grenades and rockets fired at less than pistol range. (One Marine in a building saw a grenade come through his window. He fired his M16 so rapidly one of the rounds luckily hit the grenade and knocked it back out into the open.)

The leathernecks slowly continued down the multiple-story buildings with rooms that had to be cleared, searched and secured. They learned quickly, blowing holes in walls and throwing grenades into rooms to ensure they were cleared. The Golf Co Marines flooded into the university and remember shoving the beakers, test tubes and accoutrements of the chemistry and science labs aside to make room for the accoutrements of war. Outside, the courtyard was studded with the tubes of 81 mm and 60 mm mortars

dangerously fully elevated for targets just across the street.

Across the street, the *Bo Doi* were ticks ensconced in the treasury and post office buildings designed to withstand just about anything while providing excellent fields of fire down the streets. The Marines threw everything and then assaulted, five or six times. According to his statement in "U.S. Marines in Vietnam: The Defining Year, 1968," LtCol Cheatham said, "That means mustering everybody's courage and energy up. ... You'd assault and back you'd come, drag your wounded and then muster it up again and try it again."

In the university, Golf Co Marines muscled a 300-plus-pound 106 recoilless rifle up a staircase to a classroom overlooking the treasury. The Marines would mark a target with the 106's .50-caliber tracer spotting rounds. It dawned on Staff Sergeant James Long that the 106 mm rifle's back blast was going to devastate the room and anyone dumb enough to be in it. The Marines improvised, firing the 106 mm recoilless rifle with a lanyard. And, while the round took out the NVA, its back blast took out the rear wall, collapsing the building. The leathernecks just dug out the rifle and continued the fight.

At 0700 on 4 Feb., Capt George R. "Ron" Christmas' Hotel Co crossed Ly Thuong Kiet Street and busted its way through walls into the hospital complex across from the university. Squad rushes supported by 3.5-inch rockets carried the advance and allowed a base of support to be laid down for Capt Michael P. Downs' Fox Co's assault on the treasury building.

Again, they relied on 106 mm recoilless rifles. According to Christmas, the Marines threw smoke grenades to cover the



The University of Hue (above) on Le Loi Street saw Marines occupying the north side of the building as they moved to the fighting in 1968. Today, the same building (right) is the Hotel Saigon Morin, offering luxury rooms and restaurants.





R. R. KEENE

movement of an unprotected and completely exposed small flatbed four-wheel drive vehicle, known as a “mule,” which mounted a 106 mm rifle. Although the NVA were now wise to smoke screens, the Marines continued to pop a smoke grenade, and when the enemy opened up, the mule-mounted 106 mm would go into action.

Although fully exposed on the street, Marines went through the full drill: crank off a .50-cal. spotting round and then the 106 mm round. The blast forced the NVA to hunker down. Taking advantage of the opportunity and the dust cover, the Marines dashed across the street.

Describing the action to Marine historians, Christmas noted that once his Marines were across a street, they would focus their fire on any enemy automatic weapons that were uncovered by their crossing. Nonetheless, thick walls and steel doors kept the Marines at bay.

Major Ralph J. Salvati, 2/5’s executive officer, told Cheatham that CS gas might do the trick. He remembered a stack of CS launchers in the MACV compound. Lightweight and compact, one launcher could fire 64 CS canisters in four volleys of 16 each. It certainly was worth a try. A quick jeep ride, and the major returned with the launchers. He joined Capt Downs in an abandoned school and prepared.

Marines cleared their masks, adjusting for a tight seal and waited. Misfire. After a few adjustments, Salvati tried again and

Above: The five-story structure just near the center of the photograph stands where the treasury and post office stood in 1968. Diagonally to the right is the Hotel Saigon Morin, which in 1968 was the University of Hue. Ly Thuong Kiet Street runs in between and was the scene of some of the heaviest and costly fights in 1968.

Below: The treasury building, as seen from the second story of the University of Hue in 1968, was solidly built and withstood almost everything the Marines could fire at it. It took clouds of tear gas to force the occupants to retreat from the building.



CPL WILLIAM PETERSON

the launchers sent canisters into the treasury compound. The Marines launched CS until there was no more. They threw in protective fire from 81 mm mortars and 3.5-inch rocket launchers. Fox Co charged into the “huge chemical haze” and into the treasury.

In later interviews Downs said the NVA

in the treasury compound quickly left the building when the CS gas was employed. Once inside, grenades banged, rounds went off, and Marines emptied their rifles into the trapped NVA. But the treasury and also the post office were secured.

On 4 Feb., the *Bo Doi* blew the bridge over the Phu Cam Canal. It forced the



CPL WILLIAM PETERSON

Marines to deliver supplies via river to the LCU ramp or by helicopter.

The urban warfare continued. Capt Christmas in "U.S. Marines in Vietnam: The Defining Year, 1968" described the action: "Street fighting is the dirtiest type of fighting I know."

In 2013, the MHT group learned the five-star 16-floor Imperial Hotel in Hue is a two-minute walk from the Trang Tien Bridge up Hung Vuong Boulevard, past the Saigon Morin Hotel and old MACV compound. From the outdoor rooftop restaurant one easily can get a CH-46 view of the city and survey the site of the street-to-street fighting almost directly below.

But in 1968, it was block to block. The leathernecks stepped forward as one with G/2/5 on the right going down Le Loi Street, while a block over H/2/6 was in the middle, with F/2/5 on the far left. Elements of 1/1, augmented by headquarters types—supply and admin clerks and technicians—had the grunts' backs.

The first objective was the large hospital complex several blocks away. There was an "inadequacy of maps." Earlier, Meadows had confiscated a tourist map from a gas station that wasn't tactically accurate, but it showed where things were. "That's what you really needed," said Meadows.

There were no spectacularly innovative tactics. *Bo Doi*, Viet Cong, ARVN soldiers, Americans and civilians were too intermingled for Marine air to bomb. Among the buildings, artillery flashes could not be spotted easily and adjusted. Tanks had very little maneuverability in the narrow streets and even narrower alleys, and, as Cheatham later noted, they drew a great deal of attention from the NVA. One tank took more than 120 hits and another went through five or six crews.

Above: A Golf Co 106 mm recoilless rifle mounted on a motorized mule prepares to send a round into enemy positions during the street fighting.

Below: LtCol Ernie Cheatham commanded 2/5 during the fighting at Hue. He was experienced and considered "brilliant" tactically, but even he had not previously fought the bitter urban warfare encountered in Hue.



USMC

The often maligned M50 lightly armored tracked antitank vehicle with six externally mounted 106 mm recoilless rifles and whose name "Ontos" is Greek, meaning "The Thing," had few critics at Hue, at least on the American side. It blew four-square-meter holes, or completely knocked out exterior walls and was very effective at 300 to 500 meters. Smaller than a tank and therefore less a target, its mobility made up for its lack of heavy armor most of the time. One problem was that after the rifles fired, crewmen had to jump out into the open to reload.

In "U.S. Marines in Vietnam: The Defining Year, 1968," Cheatham is quoted as passing the word: "If we even suspect the enemy are in a building, blow it down." Capt Downs later said this marked the point where taking the city became even more serious.

On 5 Feb., Golf Co went after the main hospital building, which the NVA was using as a medical aid facility, and the *Bo Doi* took a stand. There are buildings that still are pocked with bullet holes as testimony to the 90-minute firefight where the Marines employed an M48 tank, recoilless rifles, 3.5-inch rockets, grenades, machine guns and rifle fire. By 8 p.m., the Marines occupied the hospital. In the psychiatric ward patients wandered aimlessly and there was no food for any of the sick and wounded. One Marine noticed a nun moving in his direction. He also noticed the nun was wearing boots. He fired first and found a man wearing the habit.

Two sergeants from Fox Co had two Vietnamese spread-eagled up against a wall. Capt Downs asked what happened. One of the sergeants noted that one of the prisoners was claiming to be the Hue mayor. It turned out he was the mayor and had been hiding with his bodyguard in an attic.

The next day, Golf Co assaulted the provincial prison. The leathernecks breached the stone outer walls and started at the top floor and worked their way down. The company's first prisoner was an NVA sniper armed with a 7.62 mm SKS rifle, an M1 rifle and eight grenades. The 1st Platoon's commander, Second Lieutenant Michael A. McNeil, put his Thompson .45-cal. submachine gun up to the prisoner's face. Unfazed, the man jumped Sgt G. B. Zachary, trying to get his grenades. McNeil wrestled the NVA to the floor, got him in a "half nelson" and tied him tight. He still was fighting as Marines carried him away. Golf Co killed 36 NVA with only one Marine wounded.

In 1991, the Navy commissioned USS *Hue City* (CG-66), a *Ticonderoga* class guided-missile cruiser. Annually, the ship hosts a Battle of Hue memorial service attended by ship's company and veterans of the battle. *Hue City* is the only U.S. Navy ship named for a Vietnam War battle. An American flag is encased on her quarterdeck. Here's how it got there:

Hotel Co, with Capt Christmas, was trying to pry the defenders from the provincial headquarters which the *Bo Doi* used as a CP for the 4th NVA Regiment. The NVA were everywhere, shooting from windows and doors, from behind walls

and from well-hidden fighting holes. The Marines, using mortars and gas mixed with accurate rifle and machine-gun fire, took the building by midafternoon. They saw the frayed Viet Cong National Liberation Front flag waving over the courtyard.

In his book, "Fire in the Streets," Eric Hammel says Christmas looked at Gunnery Sergeant Frank A. Thomas and said, "We've looked at that damned North Vietnamese flag all day, and now we're going to take it down." The Marines unceremoniously hauled it down, and the gunny cut it free from the lanyard with his Ka-Bar.

Hammel goes on to note that Christmas radioed Cheatham: "We have the building, Sir. We're going to run up the American flag."

There are international protocols concerning the raising of flags. Hoisting the American flag over the city without raising the flag of South Vietnam was *verboten*. Cheatham knew the Marines had no authorization. According to author Keith Nolan in his book, "Battle for Hue: Tet 1968," Cheatham said: "We're doing the fighting, we may as well have our flag get the credit. I want those NVA guys across the river to see this."

Nobody's sure who produced the flag; some say the gunny had run back to the MACV compound and "appropriated" the large American flag waving over the compound. Anyway, it was just past 4 p.m., when Thomas and two privates first class, Walter R. Kaczmarek and Alan V. McDonald, ran up the color. CBS news and Marine photographer Sgt Bill Dickman



SGT WILLIAM DICKMAN

Marines take one of their wounded off the roof of the University of Hue and into the school's courtyard to be treated. It was fighting from almost every compass direction and from above and below.

filmed the event as Don Webster, the CBS reporter, described it: "There was no bugler and the other Marines were too busy to salute, but not often is a flag so proudly raised."

Dickman took a photo of Thomas, McDonald, Kaczmarek and Lt Leo Myers with others holding up the NVA flag. Thomas then walked along the courtyard wall and there, not more than a yard away, was an NVA soldier in a spider hole. Thomas killed him with his shotgun. In his book, Keith Nolan records that Thomas shouted, "Check the holes!" There were half a dozen other holes, and McDonald calmly walked down the line putting perfunctory rounds into each occupant

who made no effort to surrender or looked remotely hostile.

In "Fire in the Streets," Cheatham reports to regimental headquarters: "Be advised we've taken provincial headquarters. Somehow or other, an American flag is flying over there." It is that same flag which is displayed today on the quarter-deck of USS *Hue City*.

On 7 Feb., Viet Cong sappers blew the center spans of Nguyen Hoang Bridge. However, when the provincial headquarters fell, Communist resistance south of the River of Perfume seemed to collapse and Hue became two battles: retaking of the city south of the river and the recapture of the Citadel.



R. R. KEENE

Above left: Retired MajGen Orlo K. Steele, a major during the Battle of Hue, returned 45 years later. Here, he takes time to show 20-year-old Tyler Canfield, grandson of Hue City Marine veteran Larry Verlinde, the 1968 *Life* magazine with a story and photos by French journalists Catherine Leroy and Francois Mazure.



R. R. KEENE

Above right: From front to back, retired Gen Peter Pace, retired Col Chuck Meadows and retired MajGen Orlo K. Steele orient their maps and view a good portion of the battle area from atop the Imperial Hotel. In 2005, Gen Pace became the first Marine Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, but in 1968, he was a second lieutenant commanding 2d Plt, G/2/5 during the latter portion of the Battle of Hue.



They'd been fighting all day to secure the flagpole at the Thua Thien provincial headquarters and haul down the Viet Cong flag and run up the "Stars and Stripes." It was against protocol and policy to run the U.S. flag up alone. But it was because of the efforts of GySgt Frank A. Thomas, at right with a shotgun, and the Marines with him that the American flag went up almost directly across the River of Perfume from the Communist flag flying over the Citadel. LtCol Cheatham had announced he wanted the NVA to see the U.S. flag.

that day, and they paid dearly. I remember telling Lester, 'I'm sorry I got your two Marines killed.' Lester replied, 'Barney, that's war.' "

That was not enough for Barnes: "I've tried to live an honorable life that would make those Marines we lost proud. I contacted their families to let them know those young Marines will never be forgotten."

And they aren't. During Tet 2013, on a day with weather remarkably similar to those days in 1968, the men of Golf Co gathered in the Catholic cathedral not far from the An Cuu Bridge. They recalled the fact that Marines killed more than 1,000 NVA and VC, while their casualties included 38 dead and 320 wounded. For the North Vietnamese, their belief in a massive uprising by the populace never happened. They did, however, purge an estimated 2,800 to 6,000 civilians and left them in mass graves.

But it is the men of Golf Co being solemnly remembered. Meadows tells them: "I can see the misty figures. I recognize many men ... in their youth ... coming from across that bridge and that street: Clyde Carter, Glen Lucas, Donald Kirkham, Gerald Kinny, Alphonzo Holmon, Horace Howard, John Winter, John Rowden, Troy Threet, Eddie Harris, James Stewart, John Lewis, Kenneth Stetson, David Warner, Terry Sutton, Albert Dandridge, Ramon Jurado, Paul Stasko, William Adams, Allan McCall, Robert Murphy, Ronald Kustaborder, Joseph Sinkewicz.

"I have come to honor your service, to be a 'presence' here on the ground where you fell, to represent all your brothers in Golf, 2/5. You are each my brother ... as I am to you," and he adds as only a Marine who has the terrible responsibility of command can, "For you gave me your trust, and for that I am eternally grateful."



Leatherneck—On the Web

To see more MHT and Hue images, go to www.mca-marines.org/leatherneck/hue

Golf Co, with 1/1, had secured the northern end of the wrecked An Cuu Bridge over the Phu Cam Canal. They had come full circle since crossing into Hue 10 days earlier.

Lance Corporal Barney Barnes of Golf Co took a squad toward the bridge. When they reached the same site where Golf Co was ambushed their first day into Hue, they started taking fire. The radioman was shot. Barnes' rifle was hit. He told the wounded radioman: "Radio Captain Meadows. Let him know we're taking fire at the same spot we were ambushed the first day!"

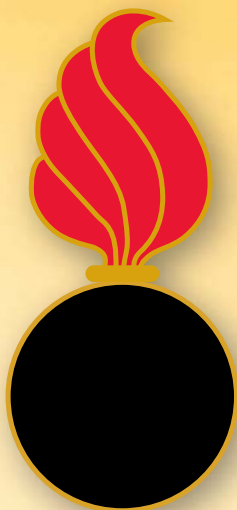
The platoon showed up. Two Marines crossed into the fire trying to help Barnes'

squad. PFC Troy "Tony" Threet was shot in the street. Barnes remembers Threet calling: "'Barney, I'm hit. I need a corpsman!' He was going into shock." Barnes reached him and assured him, saying, "'We're going to get out of this,' and then he died in my arms.

"PFC John Wayne Rowden was the best shot in the company," says Barnes. "I don't know how many he killed, but it was a lot. Now, he was yelling, 'Barney, I'm hit!' and then, 'Barney, I'm hit again!'

"For whatever reason, the NVA used him as target practice," says Barnes.

"Those two Marines [PFCs Rowden and Threet] were from Corporal Lester Tully's squad and didn't have to do what they did



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We—the Marines

Edited by Clare A. Guerrero

Past and present HMX-1 Marines, along with their family members and friends, mingle on the flight line with the newest addition to the squadron, an MV-22B Osprey, after an induction ceremony was held for the aircraft on May 4. The squadron is scheduled to receive 11 more MV-22Bs by summer 2014.



SGT REBEKKA HEITE

Ospreys to Replace HMX-1 Sea Knights For Presidential Support Flights

■ One week after six MV-22B Ospreys successfully flew the longest and largest transatlantic flight of any Osprey squadron to date, Marine Helicopter Squadron One (HMX-1) hosted an MV-22B introduction ceremony at the HMX-1 hangar on May 4 at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va.

The ceremony marked the beginning of HMX-1's transition from CH-46E Sea Knights to MV-22B Ospreys for green-side and presidential support flights—that is, carrying White House staff members and press, said Colonel John Faircloth, HMX-1 commanding officer.

Although the aircraft immediately will begin supporting the troops at Officer Candidates School and The Basic School, the aircraft is scheduled to fill the presidential support role late this year or early next, he added.

"The Marine Corps is transitioning its

medium platform helicopters, so it's a natural transition," Faircloth said. "It's a tremendous airframe and a game-changing machine."

The game-changing machine adds its own capabilities.

"The Osprey is a wonderful addition in speed and range," said Col Kevin Wild, incoming HMX-1 commander. "It takes a CH-46 a couple of hours to fly to New York; it takes an Osprey one hour. That means we can make more trips in one day."

"The Osprey can fly higher, making it less vulnerable to weather. It can get over or around bad weather better than the -46."

Major John Sarno agreed with Wild. "The Osprey can fly higher, faster and is a more comfortable ride," said Sarno, HMX-1 lead transition officer for the MV-22B. "It's an additional capability. Not better, different. She has her own capabilities."

"It is quiet in airplane-mode, but even in

conversion-mode it's quieter than a [CH-53E Super Stallion]," said Sarno.

"The Osprey adds flexibility and capability in speed and lift," added Capt Peter D. Benning, the operations schedule writer with HMX-1 Operations and an MV-22B pilot.

Major General Andrew W. O'Donnell Jr., deputy commander, United States Forces Japan, a guest speaker during the ceremony, said that the operational record of the MV-22B was outstanding, logging more than 170,000 flight hours.

"The aircraft is very good and very, very safe. It's changing how we do business," he said.

Currently, HMX-1 has one Osprey, which is identical to those used by Marines in the operating forces except for its paint job, but it expects to have 12 by next summer, according to Maj Sarno.

SGT Rebekka Heite

PAO, Marine Corps Installations Pacific

Advisor Training Cell at Pendleton Prepares Female Engagement Teams

■ The Advisor Training Cell (ATC), I Marine Expeditionary Force, is providing scenario-based training for the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit's female engagement team detachment at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif.

The two-week training program is designed by the ATC staff to enhance and test the Marines' ability to work with the MEU's battalion landing team in accomplishing common MEU tasks such as embassy evacuations, establishing medical camps and community outreach.

"It's a very condensed version of the FET training we designed for Afghanistan," said Sergeant Sheena Adams, the lead FET instructor, who deployed with a female engagement team to Afghanistan in 2010. "I built their schedule and decided exactly what they needed to be able to go through."

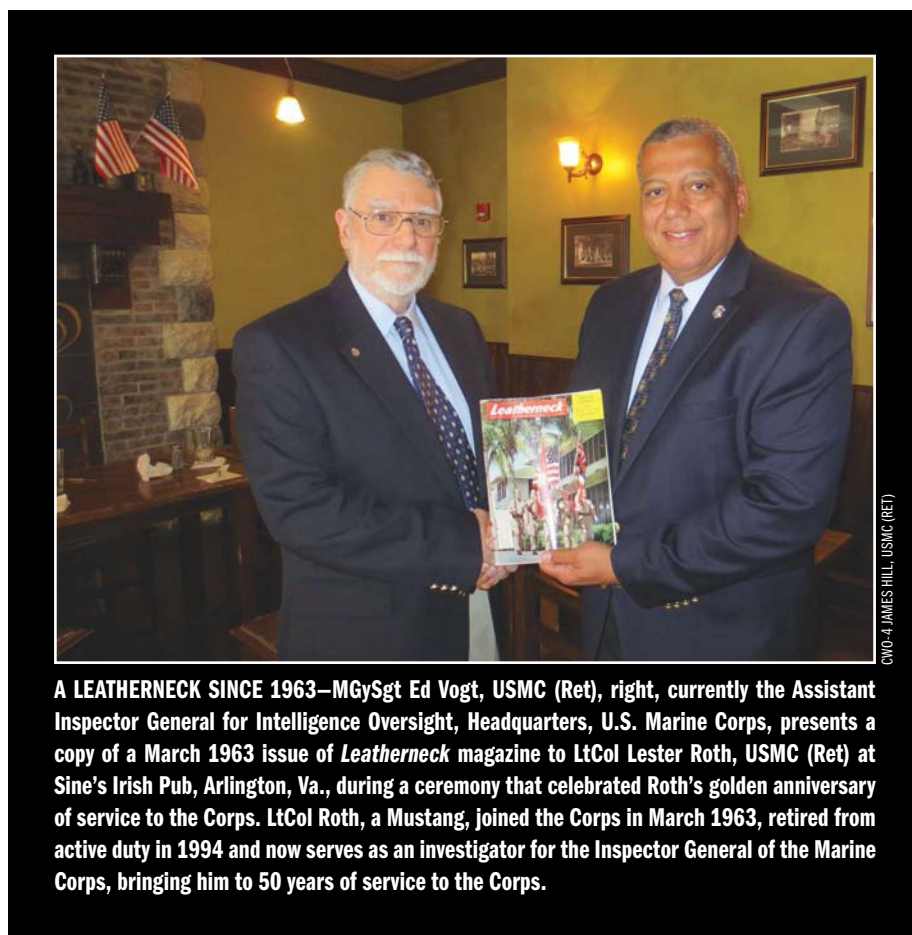
The training was conducted at the Infantry Immersion Trainer, an area primarily used to prepare Marines for deployment to Afghanistan and Iraq over the last decade. Role players representing citizens of Yemen and Somalia who were of the same descent took part in the training to diversify the cultures of the training that Marines will encounter.

The ATC designed the training to represent conflicts or challenges a MEU could face while deployed.

"We had to adjust them to do more [expeditionary] activities rather than all combat elements like in Afghanistan," said Adams. "There are places and different locations they might go to when they're on a MEU."

An expeditionary unit's mission can range from answering the call for war to providing humanitarian assistance for a country in need. The Marines are trained to adapt to many different scenarios, but the element of surprise can play a role in their response.

"The MEU could be adapted to go anywhere at any time," said Captain David



A LEATHERNECK SINCE 1963—MGySgt Ed Vogt, USMC (Ret), right, currently the Assistant Inspector General for Intelligence Oversight, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, presents a copy of a March 1963 issue of *Leatherneck* magazine to LtCol Lester Roth, USMC (Ret) at Sine's Irish Pub, Arlington, Va., during a ceremony that celebrated Roth's golden anniversary of service to the Corps. LtCol Roth, a Mustang, joined the Corps in March 1963, retired from active duty in 1994 and now serves as an investigator for the Inspector General of the Marine Corps, bringing him to 50 years of service to the Corps.

CWO-4 JAMES HILL, USMC (RET)

Keltner, the ATC operations officer. "Our instructors have real-world experience adapting to the mission and carrying on the lessons of that into operations to interact with female populations. We've basically adapted the lessons we've learned from Operation Enduring Freedom to potential scenarios they might face. You have to be prepared for a large spectrum of warfare and humanitarian relief."

The female Marines conducted several scenarios throughout the training. The ATC instructors critiqued the Marines following each scenario and provided feedback on what they did well or how they could improve.

"They're stumbling as they go through

it, but they're getting better as they go and they're learning from the mistakes, which is what we wanted," Adams said. "They're getting there."

The female Marines are vital in building community relations, relationships with male and female foreign nationals, and de-escalating tense situations, explained Adams.

"We are able to adjust and help," Adams said. "I think the FET has the capability that is key to any mission success."

The FET detachment has been conducting the training side by side with the 13th MEU's battalion landing team. The training gives the Marines opportunities to get to know each other before the deployment to develop better communication and cooperation.

Cpl Joshua Young
Combat Correspondent, I MEF



Sgt Kimberly Barton, a team leader with the 13th MEU female engagement team detachment, communicates with Yemeni role players through an interpreter during a two-week condensed training program for FETs at MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif., April 29.

CPL JOSHUA YOUNG

DOD Names Kaneohe Bay Marine Best Linguist of the Year

■ Breaking past language barriers is a challenge, but it's one Sergeant Miguel Iles meets every day. Iles, an Asia-Pacific cryptologic linguist with 3d Radio Battalion, prevailed among his armed services colleagues and recently was named the Department of Defense Language Professional of the Year. He is a non-native speaker of Mandarin Chinese and became



SGT MALLORY S. VANDERSCHANS

SIX SERIOUS FOUR-STARs—A moment in Marine Corps history is captured. For a short few months, the U.S. Marine Corps had six four-star generals, and they gathered at the Home of the Commandants, Marine Barracks Washington, D.C., April 19. From left: John F. Kelly, James N. Mattis, Joseph F. Dunford Jr., James F. Amos, John R. Allen and John M. Paxton Jr.

proficient in Korean through DOD training.

"The program at the Defense Language Institute is great," said Iles, a native of Grand Rapids, Mich. "I went from knowing just *kimchi* and hello in Korean to being able to understand newspaper articles and television news."

Iles gained proficiency in Korean after less than two years of training and deployed for eight months during the last fiscal year. He has served as a translator during joint efforts of the Ulchi-Freedom Guardian exercises and alongside Republic of Korea and U.S. Army personnel, processing intelligence reports.

"From the time we got there, we hit the ground running," said Sergeant Kenneth Nienhuser, who is another Asia-Pacific cryptologic linguist with 3d Radio Bn and deployed with Iles in 2012. "He completed every bit of training he needed to do, and every time he could go up for advancement, he did. Within the short amount of time he was there, he accomplished quite a bit."

His language skills are vital to processing and analyzing collected intelligence information, said Captain Devin Phillabaum, Company A commander, 3d Radio

Bn. Phillabaum said it was both Iles' significant contribution to intelligence and his high proficiency scores in two challenging languages that set him apart from others.

"The fact that he learned Korean in 18 months, and Chinese largely through



CHRISTINE CABALO

Sgt Miguel Iles, an Asia-Pacific cryptologic linguist with 3d Radio Bn, reads a traditional Chinese legend in his office at MCB Hawaii. Iles recently was named the Department of Defense Language Professional of the Year.

immersion, is a testament to his work ethic," Phillabaum said. "He enjoys and embraces challenge. He went out and actively sought out the hardest languages to learn."

Although much of his work is classified, Iles said he has learned a lot of cultural background information from unclassified sources in their native languages.

"I can read not only what the Western media is saying, but read the original press releases from North and South Korea, as well as commentary made by China," he said. "I find the Western media is very lazy when it comes to reporting from foreign media."

Since his college days, Iles has studied Mandarin Chinese and is intrigued by Chinese literature. As he reads through current political commentary, the Marine linguist said Chinese media condemns North Korea's recent nuclear test but also blames tensions on the United States for extensive combined exercises with the South Koreans.

Since studying North Korean resources, Iles said he has noticed the country's government reacts strongly to any negative criticism.

"North Korea is very sensitive about their security and their place in the world and their reputation," he said. "The average North Korean believes that the Korean War is the result of American aggression because that's what they're taught in school."

Iles' win comes at a time when 3d Radio Bn and other military units with foreign language components are facing stiff financial budgets, Phillabaum said. The conference honoring Iles and other top linguists may not occur this year due to reductions in those budgets.

"Budget cuts have already affected our ability to send Marines to language training," Phillabaum said.

Indonesian classes have been canceled due to reduced funding on the DOD level, and Phillabaum said units would need to begin thinking of creative ways to facilitate foreign language training.

To keep up his Korean and Chinese language skills, Iles said he's looked for resources that hold his interest. In Chinese, he has studied kung fu novels, and for Korean, he has learned more about the social differences in North Korea. Reading and studying the languages in context has helped Iles, and it is advice

that he has passed on to others.

"He's helped me to remember to keep the language in context," Nienhuser said. "You can't just study the words and expect to remember them all. You have to use them within sentences to better retain them."

Iles' advice will be on the minds of many military linguists, since his next duty station will be teaching at the institute in Monterey, Calif.

As a teacher he will continue to break down barriers, one word at a time.

Christine Cabalo
PAO, MCB Hawaii

Quick Shots Around the Corps

CIA Looking for A Few Good Transitioning Marines

■ Ameesha Felton, Public Affairs Office, Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., reports that a Transition Readiness Seminar delivered by the Central Intelligence Agency was hosted for transitioning Marines and civilians at MCB Quantico, May 3.

The information session gave personnel an opportunity to meet and greet CIA representatives.

For separating Marines with prior de-

ployment and education experience, shifting to a career in the intelligence community can be a fluid transition. Candidates who have prior military, international and educational experience are very desirable, agency representatives said.

Agency representatives also said the CIA offers a wide range of job opportunities, many of which are in the Washington, D.C., area.

Marine Corps League Detachment Funds Online Basilone Archive

■ Marine Corps League Detachment #1284, "Road Detachment," reports that it has provided funds for permanently preserving the John Basilone Archive in digital format. The archive consists of letters, photos, articles and other memorabilia in the John Basilone Museum located at the Raritan Public Library, Raritan, N.J. The archive is available for viewing online.

The digitized collection can be viewed at the following websites:

www.basiloneparade.com
www.raritan-online.com
www.raritanlibrary.org



Crazy Caption Contest

Winner



"Shut up! We're almost out the gate."

Submitted by
Robert A. Hall
Des Plaines, Ill.

This Month's Photo



(Caption) _____

Name _____

Address _____

City/State _____ ZIP _____

Dream up your own Crazy Caption. *Leatherneck* will pay \$25 or give a one-year MCA membership for the craziest one received. It's easy. Think up a caption for the photo at the right and either mail or 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.



Above: One of the peripatetic chessmen hand-carved by an American civilian captured by the Japanese on Wake Island shows the owner's initials, W H C.

The Case of the Peripatetic Chessmen

Story by William Howard Chittenden · Photos by Forrest Salter

This mystery begins just before World War II on Wake Island, a speck of land in the vastness of the central Pacific Ocean. Wake Island, in those days of fall 1941, was a beehive of activity for 800 civilian craftsmen and 400 United States Marines engaged in fortifying this militarily strategic mountain peak. Laborers, hired by the Morrison-Knuteson construction company of Boise, Idaho, were feverishly engaged in building airplane landing strips, deep-draft docks for large ships, and various other support facilities.

Shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor, Wake was assaulted by Japanese naval forces in what was possibly the first engagement of American and enemy forces of WW II. The Marines and civilians decisively defeated the Japanese. Several days later, Wake was attacked a second time by overwhelming force. That time the valiant Americans surrendered the island on 24 Dec. 1941. Those skilled workers and 400 Marines became prisoners of war and were shipped to their first prison camp in Woo Sung, China. It was there that the mystery of the peripatetic chessmen began to emerge.

Prisoner living quarters in the Woo Sung camp originally had been Chinese military barracks. Wake Island Marines occupied one building, and Wake civilians filled two. Embassy guard Marines from North China (203) had one barrack, as did 100 British prisoners from Hong Kong. The Governor-General of Hong Kong, Sir Mark Young, was one of our fellow prisoners.

Woo Sung prison camp was considered by the Japanese to be a "model" camp. There were periodic inspections and assistance by the Shanghai unit of the Red Cross. "Assistance" included improving food rations and providing library books and some sports equipment. The Japanese occasionally issued inferior cigarettes which soon became "money" used in trade within the camp. Word that one of the Wake civilians was carving and selling chess sets went through the prison population. The standard price was 20 packs of cigarettes. I, a nonsmoker, acquired the "standard price" and purchased a set of these peripatetic chessmen in winter 1942.

Time moved along, and in early August 1943, 500 prisoners were transferred to Japan for forced labor in its war effort. That was in direct violation of the 1927 Geneva Convention regarding treatment of prisoners of war.

Several of the North China Marines, including me, were a part of the 500. We sailed for Japan on 20 Aug. After a voyage across the China Sea and through the Japanese Inland Sea, the huge freighter arrived at Kobe on 24 Aug.

Prior to departure from the Kiangwan prison camp (we had moved from Woo Sung in December 1942), I decided the chessmen's security would be better served if they were not carried to the unknown of Japan. Ergo, my next move was to contact a longtime friend, Sergeant Vic Ciarrachi. He agreed to take the chessmen stored in a tin tea can and hold them, if possible, until we could meet again after liberation.

In November 1945, we did meet again in Springfield, Ill., where Vic updated the story of the peripatetic chessmen. After the 500 prisoners were taken from the camp in 1943, the rest remained in the Kiangwan camp until spring 1945. They were transported by rail to North China and Korea and then by ship to the Japanese island of Hokkaido, where they were assigned to work in the coal mines.

Divided into groups, they became separated and sent to different prison camps in the general area north of Sapporo. In preparation of that move, Vic carefully had packed the chessmen in a crate of garden tools which also made its way to Hokkaido, but not to Vic's camp at Utashinai #3 coal camp. The crate containing the chessmen went to nearby (perhaps two miles away) Akahira #2 coal camp where Platoon Sergeant Thomas R. Carpenter was assigned. Vic never saw the chessmen again.

President Harry S. Truman ordered the use of the two atom bombs and ended the war, thereby saving the lives of all American and British prisoners. That action also saved several hundreds of thousands of lives, both American and Japanese because an invasion of Japan was no longer necessary.

Formal terms ending WW II were signed on 2 Sept. 1945, aboard USS *Missouri*



William Howard Chittenden, a Marine veteran and former prisoner of the Japanese, sits beside his returned chess pieces, which he had last seen in 1943 when he packed them in a tea tin while in the Kiangwan, China, prison camp.





William Howard Chittenden, left, shows the well-traveled tea tin (left and inset) containing his peripatetic chessmen to neighbor Toney Terreo.

(BB-63) at rest in Tokyo Bay. A great liberation operation of war prisoners then began in the Pacific theater. Joyfully celebrating its newfound liberty, the chess set made the big move across the ocean to the Land of the Free in the company of PltSgt Carpenter.

Of the 203 North China Marines captured on Pearl Harbor Day, 90 remained in the Corps. PltSgt Tom Carpenter, who joined the Marines in 1932 and was honorably discharged as a warrant officer in 1957, was one of the 90 who reenlisted. When Carpenter returned to the States, the travels of the brave little chessmen continued in their original tin tea box.

The chessmen's first home in America was San Diego, where they were stored with other WW II memorabilia for two years. Their next move was in 1947 to Encinitas, Calif., about 20 miles south of Camp Pendleton, the famous Marine Corps base situated at the Pacific Ocean. In 1949, Carpenter was assigned to duty at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C., and the chess set went cross-country to add even greater travel mileage. The next move occurred in 1951 when they returned to Encinitas. Carpenter was discharged from the Marine Corps six years later in 1957.

In 1962, Tom and the chess set moved to the town of Quartz Hill, Calif., where

the chessmen rested in Tom's den with his medals from rifle competitions and other keepsakes. In September 1983, at the age of 73, Thomas R. Carpenter died in Lancaster, Calif. Once again it was time for the chess set to travel, that time to Tom's sister, Eleanor Talmadge, in Beaufort, S.C. The chessmen remained in South Carolina until her death in 2011 when they were passed to Peter Carpenter, a Marine veteran and Tom's son, in Payson, Ariz.

Soon after arriving in Arizona in early 2012, the perceptive Peter observed the barely legible "W H C" on the lid of the old tea box in which the chessmen always traveled. On further inspection, the same initials faintly appeared through the dust and grime on several of their underbases. Peter was galvanized into action.

He contacted the North China Marines' computer website, created and maintained by John Powers of Wittenburg, Wis. Carpenter asked how to contact the person who might match the mysterious W H C. He was advised to telephone William Howard Chittenden in Wheaton, Ill., to see if I could help resolve the matter. The phone conversation between Pete and me quickly confirmed the final destination for the peripatetic chessmen.



For nearly 70 years, from 1943 to 2012, I wondered about the fate of the chessmen. That question has been answered now ... mystery solved ... case closed.

Editor's note: William Howard "Chick" Chittenden was a corporal in the Marine Detachment, American Embassy, Peking, at the time of his capture. At war's end and his release as a POW, he held the grade of platoon sergeant.

There were three detachments of Marines—Peking (Peiping), Tientsin and Chinwangtao—in China at the beginning of the war, a total of 203 Marines captured. Mr. Chittenden reports that at 93, he is one of five remaining. His book, "From China Marine to Jap POW: My 1,364 Day Journey Through Hell," originally was published in 1996 and still can be found via the Internet. He asked that Leatherneck highlight his gratitude to Peter Carpenter, whose Marine determination pushed him to find W H C.



Sergeant Will Hayden: Taking the Road Less Traveled

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

American poet Robert Frost typifies life's decision points in the poem "The Road Not Taken" when he writes: "Two roads diverged in a wood, and I, I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference."

Famed baseball catcher, outfielder and manager Yogi Berra had another perspective on it: "When you come to a fork in the road, take it."

Marine Corps veteran and star of Discovery Channel's popular show "Sons of Guns," Will Hayden reached his fork in the road at age 16. That's when he dropped out of high school, passed the GED two days later, then joined the Marine Corps' delayed-entry program and shipped to boot camp just after turning 17.

Had he not taken that road, his life undoubtedly would have been very different.

"I joined the Corps to get into a safer environment," he joked with a low, slow Cajun drawl. Behind his desk in a small office at his thriving Baton Rouge, La., company, Red Jacket Firearms, he looked at home, surrounded by weapons of all kinds and calibers occupying his desk, hanging on the walls and propped up in corners.

"I grew up over there in Dixie, kind of a s--t area, in north Baton Rouge," he reflected. "It was nasty—there were gun fights at the age of 12," he said flatly, with a level of sarcasm that made it hard to tell if he was joking or not.

The real-life Will Hayden is not the edited version seen on the weekly reality show which features him, his daughter Stephanie and his crew of a dozen or so working on customized weapons ranging from .45s and AR15s to light armored vehicles and most anything in between. The unedited Hayden still employs a liberal dose of colorful and explicit language that calls for an "M" rating and leads magazine editors to make censorship decisions.



Marine alumni Will Hayden shows off a customized AR15 in the shop area of his business, Red Jacket Firearms, the setting of the hit Discovery series "Sons of Guns."

"There wasn't anything happening. I looked at the older guys around me who were at the height of success if they somehow managed to pay the rent on a \$250 a month shack. ... There just wasn't anything to dream for, to reach for," he said during an interview at his Red Jacket office not too far from the area where he grew up. "I didn't want to be one of the guys who sits around the bar when he's 50 years old and talks about the prisons he's been in."

The Marine Corps became a goal for him about the same time he built his first rudimentary rifle, a .22-caliber he pieced together from scraps at construction sites at age 12. "It wasn't much of a gun. You could hit the side of a barn, if you were in the barn," he joked. Hayden is quick with a joke, a colorful remark or offhand comment.

"The Marine Corps got in my head when I was 11 or 12 years old," he remembered, noting that he never had any

other Marines in his family. "I don't know if there was a pivotal moment or not where I decided this was going to be my goal.

"I've always been a reader, and when you read through history books about all the wars, you hear about these Marines who were out there, just a handful of them, and they got nothing, no support, got no friends, got dropped off somewhere and left all to their little lonesome—but somehow they pull it off; and they do it with nobility of purpose and a sense of pride and I wanted that. It just seemed that nine out of 10 times if there was some group of guys who pulled off some truly incredible stuff, they were frickin' Marines."

So at age 17, he was off to be a "Hollywood Marine" at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, located adjacent to the San Diego International Airport.

"I've often looked back at that boot-camp experience and thought that the

Marine Corps was in cahoots with the city of San Diego and the advertisers of various commercial products to just f--- with your head,” he remarked in characteristically colorful form. “I’d be on fire watch in the squad bay at night, and there were three things to look at: One was the airplanes taking off; another was this huge billboard of the Marlboro man, and I’d been smokin’ since I was about 13; and then there was another one that varied over the months that you were in boot camp, but it was always a liquor billboard. So you could just imagine yourself sitting on an airplane with a cigarette in one hand and a bottle of Wild Turkey in the other hand. ... It was insidious genius.”

Over the years, a few recruits gave in to the temptation and climbed the chain-link fence between boot camp and the freedom of the San Diego skyline, not thinking through exactly where they’d go once they hit the ground on the other side.

“It was my desire to be a Marine that kept me out of the kind of trouble that would bog me down,” Hayden declared seriously. “If you came out of North Baton Rouge and made it to [age] 17 without getting a felony conviction, you learned to think things through. There’s only a certain level of trouble you can get in before it kills your chances.”

He recalled the friends he had in those days just before he left for San Diego. He said one killed himself in early 2013; the rest of them are dead or in prison. He is certain that his goal to be a Marine kept him focused on the straight and narrow. “I had a higher goal other than the impulse of the moment because I knew I couldn’t go in the Corps with a felony or even a nasty list of misdemeanors,” he observed.

He graduated from boot camp in 1982. “It was the first time in my life I’d ever really accomplished something I’d set out to do, a truly worthwhile goal I’d carried through to the finish,” he said, recalling that he had no family there to share the experience. “It was just me,” he reflected pensively, noting that he went home on leave for just three days before leaving for basic aviation training in Memphis, Tenn.

In spite of several “formal meetings” with the base sergeant major while he “learned his boundaries” and after discovering that the Millington (Tenn.) Police Department did not appreciate the use of their unlocked patrol cars for extracurricular dating activities, he

Will Hayden, left, discusses a project with Dave Willman, a Red Jacket staff member who operates the CNC Mill, a computerized milling machine.



Will Hayden observes as Layne Zuelke, hand engraver, works on a project at Red Jacket Firearms.

finished aviation school.

He began Reserve duties as a helicopter mechanic working on power trains, transmissions and rotors of UH-1 Hueys and AH-1 Cobras. Hayden jokingly referred to duty at the Reserve center in New Orleans as “washing helicopters in the swamp at Belle Chasse.”

Not happy with life in the Reserve force of the early 1980s, he shipped over to active duty in 1984, even though he

lost one grade by doing so. Transferring to Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., he also went to Okinawa for six months in 1986 before ending his six-year enlistment as a sergeant in 1987.

Since completing active duty, he has not been back to MCRD San Diego, but he maintains contact with Marines through his business.

“I run into a lot of Marines, some just getting out of boot camp, some just going in,” he said. “These young Marines are sharp; they’re razors. What a Corps we must have today.”

Hayden becomes emotionally charged, even angry, when he talks about the level of care for veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan.

“I worry about the last two or three generations of veterans who have been at war with very little public support, and when they come back it’s, ‘OK, thanks, bye.’ ... You have to harass the VA into taking care of the returning veterans. There are a few private organizations that have been formed to help with that, do what they can. Individuals have also stepped up. I know a lady in Washington state who will spend 12, 16 hours a day—she’s gone physically to meet warriors getting off the plane because there just wasn’t anybody else there.”

Consciously or not, Hayden’s company is patterned after a Marine Corps aviation squadron or, maybe more aptly, a heavy-weapons company. There is an organization and a chain of command.

"Pity the fool that jumps the chain of command, even me," he exuded. "Part of my operations officer's job is to put a boot up my butt if I go directly to the staff instead of through him. That whole 'setting the example' thing that the Corps kind of beats into you, when you're somebody like me, that sure comes back to bite you in the butt," he said. "The thing is that the men and women around here have got this idea about me. ... I've got to live up to it or at least try to."

Hayden recalled a time period when his home life was in "absolute chaos and disarray, and I was staying here a lot. Unbeknownst to me, I had the whole night crew ready to go into therapy over feelings of inadequacy and discontent and terror over fear for their job. They thought I was checking up on them."

He credits the quality and dedication of his staff for Red Jacket's success and the reason the company probably was noticed around 2008 for a TV show, on into the show's opening season in January 2011 and continuing with its returning season in April 2013, but a thread still leads back to his days as a Marine.

Not the kind of man who does well in an office environment ("It's like the office has spikes on it, and nobody wants to come in here"), Hayden found a way to stay in the middle of the action without appearing to hover. He set up a small work area in the back of his shop where he putters on his current passion—flint-

locks—while his crew works on company projects.

"I started doing flintlocks, which allows me to be back in the shop; the guys will talk to me as I walk by, shoot the breeze. ... It's the environment I'm accustomed to, like a Marine Corps aviation maintenance bay ... with different shops—AK shop where they work on Russian-designed AK [Kalashnikov] rifles, AR shop where they work on Colt-designed AR15s, machine shop, retail shop, wholesale shop—all these shops under the same roof."

Through his life, Hayden has continued to harken back to the lessons he learned in the Marine Corps. "The only thing I really know is the examples I've seen in front of me in the Corps, these 'gunnies,' the sergeant majors. ... It seemed like there was always at least one old-school Marine around, just salty enough to know when it was more important to get the mission done than to follow the book. I think if the Marine Corps ever loses those guys, they're f-----."

In a 2011 *Guns and Ammo* magazine article, Hayden wrote about being asked to be a guest speaker at a Marine Corps Birthday Ball. He had never been to a ball, and it was his first public speaking experience.

"I was pretty nervous about the whole thing," he wrote. "These are Marines. They have a different set of priorities. So I thought about it and threw out everything I had written and just walked out with a question every Marine gets:

'What's it like being in the Marine Corps?'

"How do you tell people what that's like? Walking your post in a military manner and there's nobody around for two miles to see you do it, and you're still doing it right. I couldn't tell you why. Living and serving with people that live words like 'duty,' 'honor,' 'courage' and 'integrity' every day of their lives. It's not just stuff that they see in a movie or words they see on a page in a book; it's their whole reason for being. How do you tell people what it's like knowing men like that?"

In the end, a simple "thank you" was the best speech he could think of. "Being called 'Marine' was the proudest moment of my life. It's a title I felt unworthy of then and one I'm still trying to live up to, to this day. There were a lot of young Marines at the Ball, and I wanted to tell them 'thank you,' and I wanted to tell them that as they go through life and through the ranks, they'll earn many titles, but it's that first title, 'Marine,' that will make all the rest possible."

Editor's note: 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. Currently, he is embarked on a series of Marine alumni articles for Leatherneck.



Above left: Will Hayden shows off a flintlock rifle project to Rebecca Ramsey, his social networking coordinator and personal assistant.



Above right: (From left) Will Hayden's daughter Stephanie; Hayden; Stephanie's husband, Kris; and family friend and longtime employee Troy Turner take a timeout while working on a Red Jacket project.

In the Highest Tradition

Edited by R. R. Keene and Tina Pearce

Under Fire, Squad Leader Carries Wounded Marine to Landing Zone



The Silver Star was awarded to Corporal Christian A. Brown, a former squad leader with 1st Battalion, Sixth Marine Regiment, Second Marine Division, May 3, at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C. Friends, family and Marines from 1/6 filled the Second Marine Logistics Group amphitheater to witness Brown's heroism being recognized with the Silver Star presentation.

Brown, a Munford, Tenn., native, was presented the naval services' third-highest combat award for heroic action while deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

On Dec. 7, 2011, Brown's squad was attacked while on a patrol. During the intense firefight, Brown ordered two Marines to move in an effort to gain the advantage against the attacking insurgents.

One was critically wounded in the head. Brown radioed in the medical evacuation request and led his squad to the designated landing zone while taking heavy fire, but the helicopter was unable to land. Brown

identified an alternate landing zone 400 meters away. He carried the wounded Marine the final 300 meters while still under heavy fire.

After assuring the Marine was safely evacuated, Brown and his squad returned to the firefight until it ceased.

At the presentation ceremony, the crowd gave a roaring ovation for Brown, who lost both of his legs in an unrelated incident, when he stood to accept his Silver Star.

"Brown had only been a squad leader for about a week at the time of the action," said Brigadier General James W. Luke-man, Commanding General, 2dMarDiv. "He got the squad leader job by just being the guy—being the one people naturally follow. He is a natural leader with physical courage and competence.

"Brown is just a force of personality. Ask anyone in Wounded Warrior Regiment and they'll say the same thing. Even after losing his legs, he continues to lead, mentor and train other Marines and sailors."

Cpl Brown's personal awards include the Purple Heart, Combat Action Ribbon, "General Kvinitaze" Georgian Achievement Medal and the Marine Corps Good

Conduct Medal. He currently is with Wounded Warrior Battalion-East, Marine Corps Detachment, Walter Reed National Military Medical Center.

LCpl Scott Whiting
Combat Correspondent, 2dMarDiv

Guam Native Awarded Silver Star



Hospital Corpsman First Class Benny Flores, currently serving as a corpsman with 1st Air/Naval Gunfire Liaison Company, was awarded the Silver Star for action on April 28, 2012, while with Regional Command Southwest and providing medical support on a mission to Zaranj, Nimroz province, Afghanistan.

HMI Flores, from Talofofo, Guam, was presented the medal during a ceremony May 3 at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif.

It was Flores' first trip to Zaranj, the capital of Nimroz province, and nothing was out of the ordinary. It was just another mission.

While driving down the highway in a convoy, Flores' truck was hit by a suicide bomber, sending shrapnel into the vehicle. "I had about five to 10 seconds of blurriness because I was right next to the blast," he said.

Flores, who was riding in the bed of the truck, was hit with shrapnel to his arms and neck. Bleeding from his wounds, Flores grabbed his medical bag and started to aid the wounded Marines and Afghan Uniform Police officer who had been driving.

After the initial blast, the convoy came under enemy gunfire. Flores ran through incoming rounds as the Marines laid down covering fire. He would risk his life four times to help save the Marines and AUP officer wounded by the blast.

"My first thought after the blast was to go through the basic steps to take care of the Marines—check all the massive bleeding and their airways, just the basic things they teach us. My main concern was just making sure they were all OK and that nothing too crazy or too serious had happened to them," Flores said.

Master Sergeant Scott E. Pruitt, riding in the passenger seat, was critically wounded



LCPL SCOTT WHITING

Cpl Christian A. Brown addresses those in attendance for his Silver Star ceremony May 3 at Camp Lejeune, N.C. Cpl Brown was awarded the Silver Star for his leadership and courage while under fire Dec. 7, 2011, with 1/6 in Afghanistan.



CPL MARK GARCIA

HM1 Benny Flores, a corpsman currently serving with 1st ANGLICO, is presented the Silver Star at Camp Pendleton, Calif., May 3. Flores was recognized for his heroic actions on April 28, 2012, while with Regional Command Southwest providing medical support on a mission to Zaranj, Nimroz province, Afghanistan.

and subsequently died, but Flores' actions enabled him to save the lives of multiple Marines and their Afghan partner.

"I wish we all came back," Flores said. "I really, truly wish we all came back; unfortunately, we didn't. We lost one guy ... and to this day he's always in my thoughts and prayers. I really wish he were here, maybe not for the ceremony, but just to see his face and him being with his family—his two daughters that he left behind. Please keep him in your prayers."

During the ceremony, Major General Charles M. Gurganus, Commanding General, I Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward), congratulated Flores. "Wounded with a concussion, running four times back out into an ongoing firefight without any hesitation at all, I don't think 'Doc'

Flores got up that morning and thought: 'Today's the day I'm going to be a hero,' said MajGen Gurganus.

"He saw what needed to be done and he acted—and he acted with bravery. ... It's something pretty special to be able to serve with young guys who will lay down their life for one another."

Cpl Mark Garcia

Combat Correspondent, I MEF

EOD Marine Clears a Path To Save a Wounded Man



Staff Sergeant Daniel W. Ridgeway, an explosive ordnance disposal team leader with 2d Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company, 8th Engineer Support Battalion, Second Marine Logistics Group, was awarded



LCPL SHAWN VALOSIN

SSgt Daniel W. Ridgeway, an EOD team leader with 2d EOD Co, 8th ESB, 2d MLG, thanks his wife and family during his Silver Star presentation ceremony at Camp Lejeune, April 30. More than 200 people attended the ceremony to honor Ridgeway.

the Silver Star during a ceremony April 30 at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C.

The Silver Star medal has been awarded to only 40 Marines for actions in Afghanistan. His award citation states that Ridgeway cleared a 40-meter path on his hands and knees to a fellow Marine after the team member was struck by an explosive device. Upon reaching the victim, he treated the Marine's wounds and turned him over to a corpsman for continued care. Ridgeway then began clearing a 100-meter-by-100-meter landing zone so his team member could be evacuated. Once the Marine was evacuated, Ridgeway's unit came under fire.

He continued to clear more paths for his team and disarmed five more improvised explosive devices.

"What he did for the Marine Corps and his fellow Marine was absolutely selfless," said Major General Michael G. Dana, the Assistant Deputy Commandant for Logistics at Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps. "His actions reflect the best that EOD brings to the fight." MajGen Dana was the commanding general of 2d MLG (Forward) in Afghanistan during Ridgeway's deployment.

Ridgeway fought back tears as he thanked his mentor, Gunnery Sergeant Ralph "E. J." Pate, an EOD technician who was killed in action in 2011. "He gave me the training and tools I needed to disarm IEDs as if it were easy."

Ridgeway currently is assigned to Wounded Warrior Battalion-East and says he will continue to wear the uniform of which he is so proud.

LCpl Shawn Valosin

Combat Correspondent, 2d MLG

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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 April:



Bronze Star With Combat "V"

Capt Matthew A. Dowden,
Seventh Marine Regiment, First
Marine Division

1stLt Stephen C. Huff,

3d Battalion, 8th Marines, 2dMarDiv



Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal With Combat "V"

Capt Jason S. Balentine, 2/7,

1stMarDiv

Sgt Trey T. Cholewa, 3/8, 2dMarDiv

HM Christopher J. Coughlin, 3/8,
2dMarDiv

Capt Michael R. Donlin,
7th Marines, 1stMarDiv

SSgt Daniel A. Draher Jr., Marine
Special Operations Regiment
(MSOR), U.S. Marine Corps Forces
Special Operations Command
(MARSOC)

Capt Evan J. Fairfield, 3/8, 2dMarDiv

GySgt Michael R. Gonzales, 3/8,
2dMarDiv

MSgt Jorge L. Gonzalez, 2d Air/
Naval Gunfire Liaison Company,
II Marine Expeditionary Force
Headquarters Group, II MEF

Cpl Shaun A. Grant, 7th Marines,
1stMarDiv

SSgt Nathan F. Hager, 2d
Reconnaissance Bn, 2dMarDiv

SSgt Lee W. Harris, 2d Recon Bn,
2dMarDiv

SSgt Jason N. Hilker, 6th Marines,
2dMarDiv

Cpl William C. Howard, 1/8,
2dMarDiv

Cpl Eric M. Mabry, 1/1, 1stMarDiv
HM3 Alexei B. Novak, 1/1,
1stMarDiv

Capt Jonathan M. Ringlein, 2d
Marine Special Operations Bn
(MSOB), MARSOC

Sgt David F. Solano, 2d Recon Bn,
2dMarDiv

Capt Christopher A. Southard, 1/1,
1stMarDiv

GySgt Benjamin W. Stryffeler, 3/8,
2dMarDiv



Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal With Combat "V"

Sgt Joshua V. Armstrong,

1/8, 2dMarDiv

LCpl Timothy J. Bergeron, 7th
Marines, 1stMarDiv

LCpl Christopher T. Bristol, 1/1,
1stMarDiv

HM2 Daniel L. Brown, 1st Recon
Bn, 1stMarDiv

HM2 Jason E. Buikema, 1/8,
2dMarDiv

1stLt Martin X. Burke, 1/1, 1stMarDiv

1stLt Alexander S. Carney Jr., 1/1,
1stMarDiv

Cpl Calvin R. Colclough, 1/8,
2dMarDiv

Cpl Christopher J. Cooksey, 1/1,
1stMarDiv

Cpl Logan R. Cox-Torres, 1/1,
1stMarDiv

SSgt David A. Francisco II, 1/1,
1stMarDiv

1stLt Logan A. Giger, 1/8, 2dMarDiv

Sgt Timothy L. Glaze, 1/1,
1stMarDiv

Sgt Timothy G. Golden, Combat
Logistics Regiment 2,
Second Marine Logistics Group

SSgt Christopher G. Hadden, 1/8,
2dMarDiv

Sgt Daniel A. Hansmeier, 1st Recon Bn,
1stMarDiv

Sgt Amadeo R. Hernandez, 7th
Marines, 1stMarDiv

1stLt Ryan J. Higgins, 1/8,
2dMarDiv

SSgt Matthew H. Hutcheson, 1/8,
2dMarDiv

Sgt Phillip M. Kantor, 3d Radio Bn,
III MEF

Cpl Tyler R. Leith, 1/8, 2dMarDiv

1stLt Daniel A. Lester, 1/8,
2dMarDiv

HM1 Courtney Lust, 2d Recon Bn,
2dMarDiv

1stLt Daniel P. Maher, 2/5,
1stMarDiv

Cpl Eli E. Marino, 1/1, 1stMarDiv

Sgt Austin N. McClure, 1/1,
1stMarDiv

1stLt Jonathan T. McCormack, 3/8,
2dMarDiv

LCpl Connor T. McMullan, 7th
Marines, 1stMarDiv

Sgt Philip E. Meekins III, CLR-2,
2d MLG

Sgt Travis W. Morris, 1/8, 2dMarDiv

1stLt Kevin S. Mott, 1/1, 1stMarDiv

Sgt Todd J. Padilla, 3/8, 2dMarDiv

1stLt David V. Pham, 1/8, 2dMarDiv
1stLt Daniel D. Phillips, 1/8,
2dMarDiv

LCpl Russell C. Quandt, 1/8,
2dMarDiv

Cpl Patrick D. Ramsey, 1/8,
2dMarDiv

Sgt Tyler M. Reeb, 1/8, 2dMarDiv

1stLt John A. Reynolds Jr., 1st
Combat Engineer Bn, 1stMarDiv

Cpl Ryan J. Rhoades, 1/1, 1stMarDiv

SSgt Levi G. Stuart, 1/8, 2dMarDiv

Cpl Joshua K. Taylor, 1/1, 1stMarDiv
Cpl Daniel J. Thompson, 1/8,
2dMarDiv

Sgt Michael T. Till, 1/1, 1stMarDiv

Cpl Ryan M. Torrez, 1/1, 1stMarDiv

Cpl Brennan T. Zimmerle, 1/8,
2dMarDiv



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The Saga of an 83-Year-Old “Techie”— Modern Technology Improves Space-A Travel Planning

By Capt Jack T. Paxton, USMC (Ret)

A neighbor of mine called the other day excited about his new cell phone but with a question: “Jack, this thing is fine, but what the hell is an app?” I resisted the urge to tease him and instead explained that it was an application he could download onto his new phone. “Download?” he questioned. I knew then that he needed help.

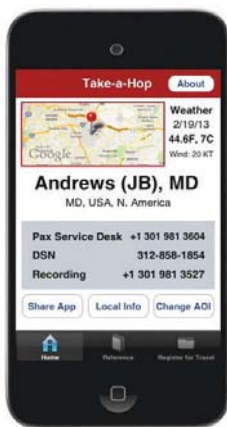
My wife gladly will tell anyone that when a new electronic marvel comes out, I probably will buy it and then spend the next two years learning how to use it. That should tell you that I have my own learning-curve problems. Such was the case when I purchased my new Samsung Galaxy cell phone.

Rather than spend hours poring over an online technical manual, I generally do it the hard way and ask someone else with more expertise than I. My wife, listening to my rants, readily will verify that is not the correct way to do things. Also, if I were the least bit smart, I would call either of my teenage granddaughters to guide me through the learning curve. For the cell phone, I have managed to spend some time online and now know its basics. And

I also have added some great apps.

Leatherneck readers may remember that I also am an avid traveler on military airplanes to various corners of the world, one of the greatest perks we retired military could have. Therein lies the purpose of this article.

In the late 1970s, I read about a gent from



Take-a-Hop app

My wife gladly will tell anyone that when a new electronic marvel comes out, I probably will buy it and then spend the next two years learning how to use it.

Philadelphia who yearned to play the great golf courses of the world. Specifically, he wanted to try his hand on the Open Championship venues we Yanks refer to as the British Open. He chronicled his trip in one of the many golf magazines of the day. I read it and was hooked.

If he could do it commercially, I reasoned I should be able to do it militarily.

In those days, however, getting a military hop meant physically going to a military departure point, signing up and then waiting until something went where you wanted to go. Today that has been simplified. You can sit at your computer, iPhone, or Droid, iPad or Kindle Fire and sign up online for a departure from virtually any military air base in the world and then attempt to complete your travel within a 60-day time frame.

There are constraints. If you are retired military, you are at the bottom of the totem pole for consideration. Active-duty personnel and their dependents come before you. Yet, it is still a fair fight. We retirees compete within our category. No rank is involved. It is date of signup only. With patience and knowledge of the system, you can succeed.

In recent years my wife and I have visited some of the great World War I and II battlefields, including Belleau Wood in France and the site of the Battle of the Bulge in Belgium, spent a week on the island of Crete, enjoyed tasty tapas on two trips to Spain and watched grizzly bears on jaunts to Alaska. The transportation price: Nada!

So, what does this have to do with being a techie?

Years ago, an enterprising retired Army lieutenant colonel developed a fledgling computer website devoted to Space-Available travel. When I found it in the late 1990s, I was hooked, as were hundreds of others. As his website developed, so did government thinking, fortunately, in our favor. Most credit former Army Chief of Staff General Colin Powell for being the most innovative when it came to making changes in Space-A procedures.

First, the restriction was eased on having to be physically at a base to sign up to travel. You could fax a request to many bases. In those days we could sign up and delay travel for 30 days. This changed to the present 60-day delay and with it the use of the Internet and email to sign up at most bases.

Also, early on dependents could not travel within the United States, only from either coast to out-of-country locales. Obviously, they had to fly commercially or drive to coastal points to join their eligible spouse. When that was eliminated, Space-A flying really took off.

Active-duty Army First Sergeant Dirk Pepperd then took over the Space-A mes-



Mrs. Pat Paxton enjoys the time to focus on a good book while flying Space-A aboard a USAF C-17 Globemaster III headed to Alaska.

CAPT JACK T. PAXTON, USMC (RET)



COURTESY OF AMC

sage board from an Army officer who later passed on. Fortunately for us, Pepperd is a techie and soon took the board into the 21st century, with many of us kicking and screaming at the many technological advances.

As Pepperd retired from the Army and entered the civilian workforce, he continued to dabble and introduced us to more advances. He joined forces with another active-duty Army type, John Doyle, known as John D. In addition to acting as moderator of Pepperd's board, Doyle has his own pages that chronicle everything from A-to-Z in military travel, including the nuts and bolts of "how to" do things. Between the two, the Space-A board is amazing and rivals anything available.

The board, www.pepperd.com, has many components including a forum, travel experiences and ground travel ideas, as well as up-to-date flight information from the world's military departure points. Volunteers make daily calls to departure passenger terminals to determine what is flying where and when and how many seats (if any) will be available. While it is an inexact science, it does give the would-be traveler an idea of what to expect, usually within the next 72 hours.

One of those nightly callers, Lee Ness, started tinkering with his portable GPS and then asked others who participate on

It's doubtful there is a reader of *Leatherneck* who has never ridden in, or been close to, the Marine version of the venerable C-130 Hercules (above), which may not offer many amenities but continues to be available for Space-A travel. The upper deck of the C-5 (below), which can accommodate 73 passengers, provides the comfort of airline-type seats.



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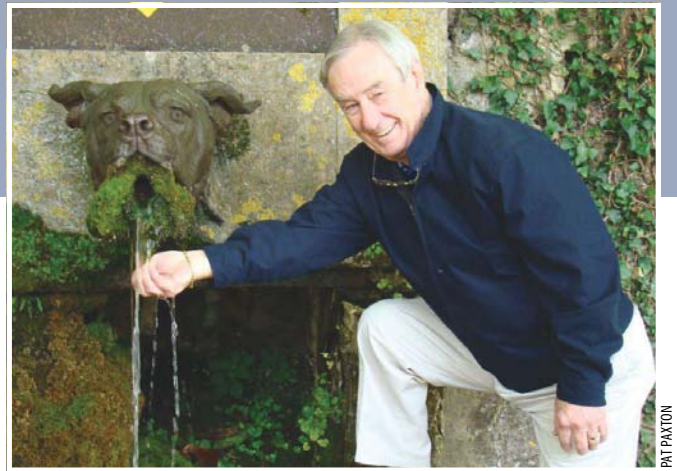
the board to record the latitude and longitude of each military installation visited. Soon he published GPS listings of every military location in the world that a Space-A traveler could reach. It took me about 10 minutes, using his instructions, to download it into my Garmin GPS that has worldwide capabilities. I have

used this throughout Europe and the States. It makes MapQuest look like something used in the Dark Ages.

In the past two years, other modern advances have dramatically improved the board for its followers, especially in the area of communications. Various apps have been incorporated into offerings



CAPT JACK T. PAXTON, USMC (RET)



PAT PAXTON

Above left: The New Ramstein Inn at Ramstein AFB, Germany, recently opened, offering luxurious rooms at low lodging prices. The building also holds one of the largest BXs in the world plus a number of restaurants.

Above right: A drink from the Devil Dog fountain, near Belleau Wood in France and only a five-hour drive from Ramstein AFB, Germany, guaranteed the author 10 more years of life.

for those of us who own iPhones, iPads, tablets, PCs and the various Droid phone models now available.

Take-a-Hop was developed by a young genius named Rob G and initially enabled a potential traveler to go online with a personal computer and sign up at any of the world's departure points and receive confirmation of the sign-up. Now Rob G has advanced that science to both iPhones and Android systems. I recently paid his app charge of \$2.99 and downloaded it into my Samsung Galaxy II phone. It is simply marvelous, showing me all known passenger terminals, information about the base, including food and lodging.

Best of all, it gives me the ability to sign up for a flight. It even has a map showing how to get to each.

Another great app available is Skype, a

voice-over-Internet protocol, that can be downloaded into any unlocked cell phone allowing the traveler to call (and see) family or friends from anywhere in the world at no cost in the United States or at a very low cost when out of the country. Skype is not limited to cell phones. I have used it regularly on a netbook or a laptop with or without an on-board camera. The charges

category boarding at the various bases of the world.

Having previously traveled with a laptop and later a netbook with all of the necessary wires and chargers and a bundle of paperback books to while away a long flight, we now board with a cell phone, my NOOK color e-reader and my wife's Sony tablet which give us instant communications and make it a breeze to stay in touch with the world.

As Gomer Pyle would shout: "Shazam! Sergeant Carter."

Editor's note: Jack Paxton is a frequent contributor to Leatherneck. He is a Mustang captain and is the executive director of the United States Marine Corps Combat Correspondents Association. He and his wife, Pat, reside in Wildwood, Fla.



Tap-a-Talk app

A Tap-a-Talk app directly connects me to the www.pepperd.com website where I can read ... news of the last category boarding at the various bases of the world.

are minimal to anywhere in the world. A Tap-a-Talk app directly connects me to the www.pepperd.com website where I can read travel reports from the thousand or so members of the board, finding tips on lodging, flight information, ground transportation and even news of the last

What Are "Categories (CATs)"?

Your travel-status "category" is your priority. There are six categories (CAT-I thru CAT-VI). CAT-I is highest priority (first offered a Space-A seat), and CAT VI is the lowest category (last offered a Space-A seat after CAT I thru CAT V). A general, edited explanation of each category is provided, but for a complete listing, visit DOD 4515.13-R, which may be found on the Internet.

- **CAT I:** Emergency leave, unfunded travel
- **CAT II:** Environmental and morale leave (EML), active duty and their accompanied dependents
- **CAT III:** Active duty, ordinary leave and accompanied dependents, house-hunting permissive TDY, Medal of Honor holders, dependents of deployed military personnel whose sponsor is deployed 365 consecutive days or more (selected

behind active-duty members regardless of date/time of sign up)

- **CAT IV:** Unaccompanied dependents on EML or dependents whose sponsor is deployed between (and including) 120 to 364 consecutive days and teachers in the Department of Defense Dependents Schools system on EML during summer break

- **CAT V:** Unaccompanied command-sponsored and noncommand-sponsored dependents of active duty, permissive TDY (nonhouse hunting), students

- **CAT VI:** Retired and their accompanied dependents, Reserve, ROTC, nuclear-power officer candidates and Civil Engineer Corps

—Capt Jack Paxton, USMC (Ret)

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, April 1-30, 2013 There are no casualties to report for this month.

Marines Lay Brothers to Rest After 38 Years

Under overcast skies, 10 Marines, two sailors and one airman were laid to rest in an internment ceremony at Virginia's Arlington National Cemetery, May 15, for the troops who didn't make it home in the aftermath of the May 1975 Battle of Koh Tang Island.

The 13 interred were in a CH-53 helicopter crash off the coast of Koh Tang, in the Gulf of Thailand, where half of the 26 occupants didn't make it out alive.

The Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command recovered the dead from the battle wreckage between 1991 and 2008. A wreath-laying ceremony was held May 12 at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier for three Marines who were left behind on Koh Tang Island in the chaos.

Those interred were **Air Force Second Lieutenant Richard Vandeguer** of Cleveland; **Navy Hospital Corpsman First Class Bernard Gause Jr.** of Birmingham, Ala.; **Hospitalman Ronald Manning** of Steubenville, Ohio; **Lance Corporal Gregory Copenhaver** of Lewistown, Pa.; **LCpl Andres Garcia** of Carlsbad, N.M.; **Private First Class Lynn Blessing** of Lancaster, Pa.; **PFC Walter Boyd** of Portsmouth, Va.; **PFC James Jacques** of La Junta, Colo.; **PFC James Maxwell** of Memphis, Tenn.; **PFC Richard Rivernburgh** of Schenectady, N.Y.; **PFC Antonio Sandoval** of San Antonio; **PFC Kelton Turner** of St. Louis; and **PFC Daniel Benedett** of Seattle.

"There's finally a little bit of closure to it," said David Fowler, a former sergeant who was part of the assault. "People are accepting what happened and are understanding of our particular situation. It wasn't the Tet Offensive, but when you're in combat and it's solid fighting all day, it's a pretty heavy duty thing."

The Battle of Koh Tang, otherwise known as the Mayaguez incident, is considered by some to be the last battle of the Vietnam War. The mission came about when SS *Mayaguez*, a U.S.

merchant vessel, was captured by Cambodian Khmer Rouge forces, May 12, 1975, claiming the ship crossed into Cambodian waters. The response was immediate, although in a tragic turn of events, 23 airmen, preparing to support the coming rescue mission, were killed in a helicopter crash in Thailand the same day. As a result, Marines were tasked with a full-on assault.

For the operation, more than 200 Marines of "Echo" and "Golf" companies, 2d Battalion, Ninth Marine Regiment were to hit the island in a helicopter assault, flown by the U.S. Air Force.

Three days later, the 14-hour joint mission was underway to rescue the crew. The landing was overcome by intense enemy fire, where the Communist troops directed machine-gun, rocket and indirect fire at the aircraft and disembarking Marines.

Once it began, the mission quickly broke down. After the Marine elements landed, they were scattered in three positions across the island, fighting throughout the day to consolidate. While that occurred, the crew of *Mayaguez* was released by the Khmer Rouge on a previously captured fishing boat to return to their ship, which was recaptured by Delta Co, 1/4.

Once *Mayaguez* and crew were back in U.S. hands, the operation turned quickly to withdrawing the Marines from Koh Tang. As fighting continued and the Marines came together, extraction became a harrowing affair.

When the mission was coming to an end, and most troops were heading to the aircraft carrier USS *Coral Sea* (CVA-43), or already aboard, three Marines were left behind in the darkness and confusion of the hectic extraction. **LCpl Joseph N. Hargrove**, **PFC Gary L. Hall** and **Pvt Danny G. Marshall**, members of an M60 machine-gun team, didn't make it to the last departing helicopter.

Overall, 15 Marines, two sailors and one

airman died, and 50 were wounded in the battle, but the invisible wounds still remain for the Marines who fought that fateful day.

Cpl Christofer P. Baines
DivPA, HQMC

George "The Possum" Jones

George G. Jones, who served three years as a Marine and went on to become a beloved country-music singer known for his long list of hit records, his distinctive voice, his fight with alcoholism and drugs and his tempestuous marriage to country singer Tammy Wynette, died April 26 in Nashville, Tenn. He had been hospitalized since April 18 with fever and irregular blood pressure. He was 81.

Born in Saratoga, Texas, and raised in Vidor, when he was 7, his parents bought a radio and he heard country music for the first time. Given a guitar when he was 9, Jones later played for money on the streets of Beaumont.

He left home at 16 and went to Jasper, where he sang and played on the radio station. He married his first wife, Dorothy, when he was 19, but they divorced within a year. Jones joined the Marine Corps in 1951 during the Korean War. He was not sent overseas; instead, he sang in bars near Moffett Field Naval Air Station, San Jose, Calif., and became friends with fellow Marine and later radio icon Don Imus. Of his time in the Corps, Jones said, "It was steady work. I could make financial allotments for my dependents, and best of all I could get out of Texas and the troubles that seemed to follow me there."

After leaving the Corps, his music career took off. In a career that spanned nearly six decades, he ultimately recorded more than 160 chart singles, more than any other artist in any format in the history of popular music. Those hits include "Why Baby Why" (1955), "White Lightning" (his first No. 1 hit) (1959), "Tender Years" (1961), "She Thinks I Still Care" (1962), "We Must Have Been Out of Our Heads" (with Melba Montgomery) (1962), "Walk Through This World With Me" (1967), "He Stopped Loving Her Today" (1980), "Still Doin' Time" (1981), "Yesterday's Wine" (with Merle Haggard) (1982), "Who's Gonna Fill

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Their Shoes?” (1985), “Choices” (2007) and many more.

Jones won Country Music Association prizes for best male vocal, and his top single “He Stopped Loving Her Today” revived a flagging career. He also earned a Grammy for best male country vocal performance. Initially, Jones was not going to record the song, saying, “It’s too damned sad. Nobody’s going to buy it.” Poet Maya Angelou later said the song was a “weeper among weepers,” and that Jones in only a few lyrics had said what other writers took books to say.

He made other headlines: his drinking, stormy relationships with women, and violent rages. The shape of his nose and facial features gave Jones the nickname “The Possum,” and his wild lifestyle, which led to missing many performances, earned him the nickname “No Show Jones.”

His last wife, Nancy Sepulvado, who went on to become his manager, is credited by Jones for rescuing him from drinking and cocaine.

He was a member of the Grand Ole Opry, inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1992 and collected the nation’s Highest Arts Award, The Kennedy Center Honors, for his lifetime achievements in 2008.

Charles J. Bush, 79, of Morgantown, W.Va. He served three years during the Korean War. He was a member of MCL #342 in Morgan-

town and the MCL Union Colony Det. #1093 in Colorado. He coached Little League baseball and helped start the Morgantown Football Pony League. He also was a well-known and popular bingo caller.

Col Philip A. Davis, 90, of South Miami, Fla. He served for 30 years, including combat in the South Pacific during WW II where he earned a Purple Heart with the 6thMarDiv on Guam.

He served in China after WW II and fought in the Korean and Vietnam wars.

After retirement from the Corps, he worked as director of the Chamber of Commerce for the city of Coral Gables and went on to serve as contract administrator for the Aviation Department of Miami-Dade County. He volunteered in the Guardian Ad Litem Program for the Department of Social Services in Miami and with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Miami.

Cpl Priscilla J. (Bedore) Gass, 89, in Ironwood, Mich. She served from 1944 to 1946 and went on to work in inventory control at Blackhawk Manufacturing and the Milwaukee Gas Co. Later, she worked at Big Powderhorn Lodging Association and was employed as the society editor at the *Ironwood Daily Globe* for 15 years, retiring in 1988.

Capt William M. Meyers, 90, of Covington, La. He enlisted in 1942 and later was commissioned in 1944, serving as an infantry

officer and ship’s Marine Detachment gunnery officer in USS *Washington* (BB-56). He saw action in the Pacific providing naval gunfire for Marines landing at Iwo Jima and Okinawa. He was discharged in 1946.

He later graduated from the LSU Law Center and became associate editor of the *Louisiana Law Review*. He became a member of Liskow & Lewis in Lake Charles and was with that firm for more than 41 years. He was particularly active in legal and environmental issues relative to offshore operations in the Gulf of Mexico, the Atlantic Ocean and waters bordering the state of Alaska. He established a system for recording lease titles at the U.S. Bureau of Land Management and the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act, which still is in use today.

He was the LSU Law Center’s first practitioner in residence where he taught for a semester. He was inducted into the Law Center’s Hall of Fame in 1987 and presented the Law Center’s Distinguished Achievement Award in 2012. He also was inducted into the Louisiana Tennis Hall of Fame in 2012.

Ronald J. Nelson Sr., 71, of Dallas. He was a Marine veteran, who served with VMF-214.

Arthur Peskoe of Lafayette Hill, Pa. He was a member of Co C, 1st Bn, 14th Marines, who made four landings in the Pacific and served in the battery fire direction center and as a forward observer. On Tinian, he reorga-

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nized the FDC after it was hit by a shell that killed all but one man. After the war, he and his brother went into a car parts distribution business.

Pearson T. "Tru" Pollard, 79, of Dallas. He was a Marine officer and naval aviator who flew both fixed-wing and helicopters during his four years in the Corps.

He later worked flying to offshore oil rigs in the Gulf of Mexico and eventually became a pilot for Delta Airlines in 1960. During his 33-year career, he flew the DC-6, DC-7, DC-8, DC-9, Convair 440, Boeing 727 and the Lockheed L-1011.

William C. "Bill" Pritchett, 87, of Plano, Texas. He served during WW II. He worked for 38 years as a geophysicist for Atlantic Richfield Oil & Gas, retiring in 1985 as director of exploration services for the northeastern region. He wrote the book, "Acquiring Better Seismic Data." He worked with the International Society of Exploration Geophysicists and was sent on several teaching assignments to Canada, Japan, Indonesia and Ethiopia.

Col Bertram S. Ryder, 97, in McLean, Va. He was a member of Phi Beta Kappa, Colgate University, Hamilton, N.Y., and graduated Summa Cum Laude in 1942 with a degree in political science. He served in the Marine Corps Reserve from 1942 to 1968.

His awards include the Legion of Merit, the Joint Service Commendation Medal and the

Navy Commendation Medal.

He retired in 1985 as a member of the Colgate University board of trustees and trustee emeritus.

Robert L. Sendling, 84, of Longview, Texas. He served during WW II and the Korean War.

He was a machine operator at Sonoco Paper Products and Texas Eastman. He taught Sunday school at Central Baptist Church in Longview.

Cpl Everett J. "The Dakota Kid" Solper, 90, in Bottineau, N.D. He was a WW II veteran of Guadalcanal, New Britain, New Guinea, Peleliu and Okinawa, serving as a machine-gunner, 81 mm mortarman and forward observer. As an FO on Okinawa, he laid in fires that killed 48 Japanese and destroyed an ammunition dump. He was awarded the Navy Commendation Medal and the Purple Heart.

He returned home to farming and ranching and also worked on oil rigs. He was a member of the 1stMarDiv Association.

Ralph E. Torrens, 87, in Paso Robles, Calif. He was a WW II veteran who served with 3d Tank Bn, 5thMarDiv at Iwo Jima in 1945 and later in the occupation of Japan.

He was a career civil engineer working for the U.S. Civil Service at Offutt AFB, Bellevue, Neb. He founded a youth basketball league and was a member of MCL Det. #680, San Luis Obispo.

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Edited by Clare A. Guerrero

Young Marines Complete Funding For Molly Marine Statue at Museum

A sizeable donation from The Young Marines of the Marine Corps League has allowed for the construction of a Molly Marine statue at the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Triangle, Va. The presentation of the check, representing a \$50,000 donation, took place April 19.

The Women Marines Association had been raising money to fund the project, and construction of the statue had begun. Molly was placed on her pedestal April 24, and, at presstime, the monument was nearing completion.

"This is exciting because this will be the first statue honoring the women Marines here at the museum," said Betty Moseley Brown, president of the Women Marines Association.

The statue is a replica of the first statue of a female Marine in uniform, which was erected in New Orleans in 1943, as part of an effort to recruit women into the Corps during World War II. One such replica currently stands in front of the General Alfred M. Gray Research Center at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., and another is at the home of recruit training for female Marines, Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C.

Regarding the Molly Marine statue, the WMA and the donation, retired Marine Lieutenant Colonel Mike Kessler, CEO of the Young Marines, said, "They said they needed \$50,000, and we collaborated, and here's the result right here."

Mike DiCicco
PAO, MCB Quantico, Va.

Editor's note: Betty Moseley Brown, WMA president, announced that the Molly Marine sculpture will be dedicated at the National Museum of the Marine Corps at 10:30 a.m. on July 5.

City of Music Collaborates With Marine Forces Reserve Band For Historic Concert

Hundreds from all walks of life nodded their heads, tapped their feet and even locked hands and danced during the "Swing in the Oaks" performance, as Marine Forces Reserve (MFR) Band New Orleans and the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra (LPO) teamed up for the first



The Molly Marine statue at the National Museum of the Marine Corps, Triangle, Va., was placed on her pedestal April 24, thanks to the combined efforts of the Women Marines Association and The Young Marines of the Marine Corps League. The statue is a replica of the original sculpture by Mexican-born Louisiana artist Enrique Alferez, which was erected in New Orleans during World War II and dedicated Nov. 10, 1943.

time in a historic and harmonious concert in the Great Lawn at City Park, New Orleans, April 25.

The "Swing in the Oaks" concert was one of an annual series of free concerts by the LPO.

"It is immensely satisfying to present something like this for the first time," said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Bryan Sherlock, MFR Band New Orleans officer in charge. "For a lot of our musicians, I hope this may be one of the highlights of their musical experience. Hopefully, we will also reach a large new audience of people who have not attended a Marine Corps band

performance and impress them with our professionalism and ability."

The LPO and MFR Band New Orleans had only two combined practices prior to the concert, but in that short amount of time, a strong musical and personal respect was formed, according to Dave Salay, percussion, LPO.

"I think this is a great partnership, and I hope to continue our collaborations in the future," he said. "It would have been nice to have more time to work with the Marines, because they are good players. And I noticed some stylistic differences that I would like to incorporate in how we do things."

Sherlock agreed and said that the opportunity to partner with the orchestra is very unique and unusual.

"Many accomplished musicians never get the chance to sit in a major professional orchestra, even after studying and performing for years. By the same token, only about 500 people on earth can say they are Marine musicians," he said. "For the Philharmonic musicians as well as the Marines, it is a rare chance to interact through music with one another."

Although the concert was mutually beneficial, it also was about connecting with the community; and it was a success, said Sherlock.

"As is always true, we hope to represent the Marine Corps and Marine Forces Reserve to the community and our neighbors here in New Orleans in a way that is positive and reflects the honor and dignity that Americans expect of their Marines," Sherlock added.

The low chatter of the audience carried through the air, but it was quickly drowned out by the warm-up notes of the combined musical force.

After a short introduction by the LPO conductor, Carlos Miguel Pietro, the audience was asked to stand as the two music institutions performed the national anthem to open the event.

The concert playlist covered a wide range of genres, from classical to mamba, jazz and much more. Initially, the audience was seated on selected patches of grass, but ended on their feet moving to the various beats.

Early in the concert, Sherlock spoke to the audience, saying the Marines hope to

remind people of the military men and women who are currently, formerly and always in harm's way protecting their way of life and values.

In tribute to the dedication of American heroes, the LPO and MFR Band New Orleans ended the concert in patriotic fashion with John Philip Sousa's "Stars and Stripes Forever," followed by "The Marines' Hymn."

In addition to the large audience witnessing the historic event at City Park, the concert was broadcast live through a webcast supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the Louisiana State University College of Music and Dramatic Arts.

History was made on the Great Lawn at New Orleans' City Park as the crowd cheered and the two institutions took a bow, bringing the first collaboration between the LPO and MFR Band New Orleans to a close.

Cpl Fenton Reese
PAO, Marine Forces Reserve, New Orleans

Month of the Military Child Spotlights Youth

In April during the month of the military child, leaders worldwide united in honoring military children.

"Every day is their day," said Kathy Kim, director of Marine Corps Base Hawaii's Youth Activities Center. "Especially during this month, we try to put the focus on them."

Kim said one of the toughest dilemmas children of military personnel face is what to expect when their parents' job can be unpredictable and requires frequent relocation. She said the center works to provide regular activities for children and teens to ensure they have a positive outlet on which to depend.

"What we've tried to do [at the center] is help the children address their biggest challenge," Kim said. "We work hard to be a consistent, loving environment where they feel safe."

For many children, like 8-year-old Logan Miller, finding community support gives him needed strength. Miller, whose father is an active-duty Marine, said he is encouraged by his peers at the center and adults in the community who go out of their way to help his family during deployments.

"I can feel sad, sometimes disappointed, when my dad is on deployment," he said, "but I know it [the deployment] is just part of his job."

Madison Spurr, the 8-year-old daughter of parents who are active-duty Marines, recommends crafting care packages and decorating letters to parents as they're deployed. Both Logan and Madison suggest to children of deployed parents that



COURTESY OF HAWAII STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF

Members of the Hawaii Legislature wear purple in observance of the Month of the Military Child in April. The observance follows the initiative of Department of Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger, who began the tradition of honoring the children of military personnel in 1986.

they focus on ways to keep up communication, including Internet messaging and sending notes.

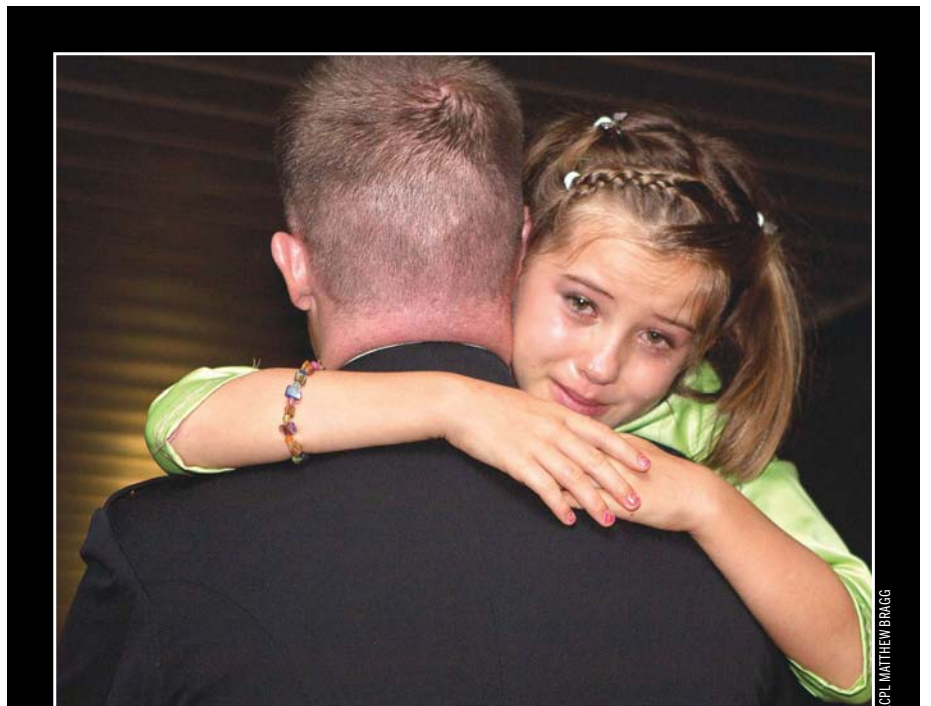
No matter how old the military child is, the dependence on a caring support system of adults and peers is critical, said 17-year-old Alexys Stephens, a frequent patron of the base center.

Stephens said she's found the courage to handle the challenges of life in a military

family by leading club activities and spending time with others at the center.

"If you're having a hard time at home, it's easier coming to the center," she said. "You can be among kids with the same things happening to them."

Christine Cabalo
PAO, MCB Hawaii

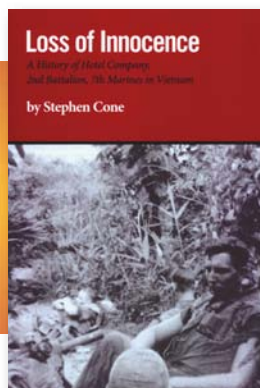
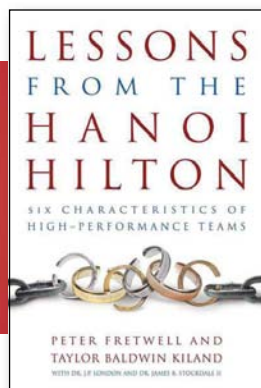


LOPL MATTHEW BRAGE

DANCE OF A MARINE DAUGHTER—Mariayah Smith and her father, CW0-2 Matthew Smith, share a moment during a slow song at the annual Father-Daughter Dance, Marine Corps Base Hawaii, April 20.

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.



LESSONS FROM THE HANOI HILTON: Six Characteristics of High-Performance Teams. By Peter Fretwell and Taylor Baldwin Kiland. Published by the Naval Institute Press. 176 pages. Stock #1612512178. \$25.16 MCA Members. \$27.95 Regular Price.

Of all the persuasive lessons learned in “Lessons From the Hanoi Hilton: Six Characteristics of High-Performance Teams,” none is more empowering than how courage is always at the heart of the high-performance, sustaining personality—as well as at the core of every successful group, organization or team.

In mid-February 1973, 591 prisoners of war, mostly survivors from the dreaded hellholes of the Hanoi Hilton, some having been incarcerated as long as nine years, were welcomed home. Military physicians who greeted and examined them were amazed that fewer than 5 percent of the men suffered from any serious form of mental illness or post-traumatic stress disorder. Virtually all the POWs had not only performed their active duty as bravely as they could with what little they had, but also behaved with the gravest dignity, resoluteness and varying degrees of heroism.

As co-authors Peter Fretwell and Taylor Baldwin Kiland, with J. P. London, give voice and vocabulary to the personal stories of harsh imprisonment, readers for a few moments live vicariously as they, too, must choose between “giving up,” “going it alone” and “every man for himself,” or banding together for the safety and

security of the whole.

The prisoners of the Hanoi Hilton collectively chose to be practical in the narrow sense to the uncompromising necessities of captivity; they were determined to be alert and ready to adapt themselves instantly to any threat to the individual or group, and, above all, remain calm while solving any problems, even the interpersonal, that arose each day. Providing their leadership were senior-ranking officers, in particular, the inimitable Vice Admiral James Bond Stockdale, a man whose character and fighting qualities are well-known.

Ten chapters outline a framework of six simple but strong characteristics, modeled mostly after VADM Stockdale, that today's leaders can replicate in achieving high performance and staying power within their own cultures and organizations, whether fledgling or experienced. The unity that grew among prisoners evolved from three broad elements: virtual leadership, viral culture and social networking. Over time, these three circumstances translated into six characteristics that the co-authors employed as chapter headings: (1) The mission always leads; (2) You are always your brother's keeper; (3) Think big and basically; (4) Never piss off the turnkey; (5) Keep the faith; and (6) Believe in the power of “We.”

In addition to the co-authors' combined qualifications, including meticulous research and writing in a lucid, easy-to-grasp narrative style, “Lessons From the Hanoi Hilton” is a tome, the forerunner

of future research into the nature of unyielding courage and its application to strategic leadership principles.

As for themselves, the Hanoi Hilton POWs somehow must have overheard Captain L. H. McNelly's comment at his retirement luncheon in 1875. A 35-year veteran of the Texas Rangers (the ultimate in organizational high performance and sustainability with little or no resources) who survived cunning Comanche warriors, murderous Mexican bandits and angry American outcasts, renegades and desperadoes, McNelly was asked by a young recruit, “How can I apply your courage to myself? What's courage mean to you?”

After reflecting for a moment, he answered softly, “Courage is simply to keep on coming on.”

Don DeNevi

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

LOSS OF INNOCENCE: A History of Hotel Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines in Vietnam. By Stephen Cone. Published by Friesen Press. 392 pages. Stock #1770973389. Softcover. \$27 MCA Members. \$29.99 Regular Price.

“Loss of Innocence” is a remarkably innovative military history. The book covers the five-plus years of intense combat experienced by members of Company H, 2d Battalion, Seventh Marine Regiment during the Vietnam War. There are countless histories written by the individual participants as well as an abundant amount of larger unit histories. However, to date, there has not been a comprehensive look at one single company's extended combat history. In “Hotel” Co's case, its long Asian war lasted a total of five years, three months and five days.

The author, Stephen Cone, served in Hotel Co from March 1967 through April 1968. But his work spans the entire extended tour of the regiment in country. Cone credits his dogged pursuit of the

“The Vietnam Funny Book (An Antidote to Insanity).”

If you're a “grunt” blistering in the sun near a village named Nhan Bien, in Quang Tri Province, Republic of South Vietnam, or in Iraq or Afghanistan, to paraphrase Waylon Jennings: You've always been crazy; it's kept you from going insane.

Many, to survive mentally, channel what they see into humor. Tad Foster did just that and could be a very funny grunt in sometimes deadly serious situations in Vietnam where he served with the 4th Combined Action Group: “It was Cowboys and Indians, and Capital gains,” he writes. “It was the ‘home team’ on tour and ‘is the food hot, honey?’ truth. It was visioned [sic] as the Bob Hope Special, John Wayne, and the U.S.O. Camouflaged; it was the great American migraine. ...

“The game was thirteen months, half-time maybe in Singapore. Ultimately, the game was each man's own. The game and the goal was survival.” Survival was all important, and Tad Foster's tour was cut short by an AK47 round. He put the finishing touches on the tour in a hospital on Guam. “The cartoons were light. The bandages were heavy.”

His first copies of “The Vietnam Funny Book” rolled off

the presses more than three decades ago and into the minds of veterans still in uniform or back in civvies attending school or on their new jobs. Foster had penned a series of drawings from the “bush” while he was still there. If you show them to some noncombatant civilians, they usually look, pause and, with a condescending smile, say: “Yes, funny.” Thinking really, “I don't get it.” They can't, and never will.

It is the classic “You had to have been there!” And, if you were, you get it, right down to the rough sketches and the profane punch lines. It takes you back to when you were doing things that you'd never have believed before you went to Vietnam, but were just normal in Vietnam. And while there, grunts, such as Tad Foster, found the humor to mark on their short-timers' calendars.

“The Vietnam Funny Book” is 110 pages of “there it is,” as we used to say. And it's as only a sketching Marine artist can concoct. Send \$9.90 for the softcover edition, or \$19.90 for the hardcover edition, along with \$4.50 for postage and handling (\$2.50 p&h for each additional book) to: Tad Foster, Blade & Brush, P.O. Box 6488, San Mateo, CA 94403, or visit www.bladeandbrush.com. (ISBN: 0-9622711-1-X)

topic to Ralph Sirianni, the Marine who first organized the H/2/7 reunion in 1995. Cone notes: “God Bless you, Ralph, for planting the seed.”

This book is well-documented using personal interviews, letters and abundant emails from many Hotel, 2/7 Marines and corpsmen. Cone also credits the six-volume Marine Corps History Division work “The U.S. Marines in Vietnam” for his precisely written global view of the larger war.

At 0600, 7 July 1965, the 7th Marines landed across Green Beach in Vietnam. Their landing was uncontested. In the early hours of the following day, things got real. A Viet Cong (VC) guerrilla probed Hotel's lines and tossed a grenade into the company lines wounding Ruben Sanchez. Sanchez became the first Hotel, 2/7 Marine to be awarded a Purple Heart. Sadly, and in the coming years, there would be many more.

The company began what was to be its long and difficult Vietnam experience: daytime “search-and-destroy” patrols, night ambushes and a never-ending search for its skilled and elusive VC and North Vietnam Army (NVA) adversary.

Acting as security for local bases in and around Chu Lai and Da Nang, the Marines learned fast. Throughout their time in “the 'Nam,” they sought to avoid and defuse various booby traps, faced non-lethal, but usually severe punji-pit-type wounds and endured the 90-degree-plus heat and humidity, soon followed by skin-soaking

rains during the monsoon season.

Hotel Co Marines stood watch, filled sandbags, strung wire, cleared fields of fire and fashioned countless bombproof bunker systems. Lack of sleep became the norm for many of the Marines who rotated through Hotel Co as the years marched along. In its time in country, the company was credited with participation in 50 named combat operations. From Operation Harvest Moon, in 1965, to Operation Imperial Lake, in the fall of 1970, Hotel Co Marines fought with aggressive ferocity.

In sum, the story of Hotel, 2/7 mirrors the American experience and involvement in Vietnam. The book is filled with the stories of many of the company's fighting heroes, including an abundance of uniquely leatherneck-type characters. The company's daily frustrations, triumphs and wartime boredom cram each page with humor, pathos and heartbreak. Generally, the book does a smashing job of capturing the viewpoint from the “grunt's” perspective: His worries, his experiences and his fixation with the rotation system are all there for the reader to review.

Gallows humor exudes. In one instance during a rocket attack, a veteran Marine jumped into a half-dug foxhole and directly on top of a recently arrived Marine. The replacement continued to squirm at the bottom of the shallow hole. Asked later what all the wiggling was about, the new man stated that he was attempting to remove the buttons from his utility jacket

so he could get even lower down into the foxhole. In true Marine style, this new Marine quickly was anointed with a war-time nickname: “Buttons.”

Stephen Cone's book is impressive. It does not place any disparaging indictment on this still controversial war, and it serves as no condemnation of the Corps that the author clearly continues to idolize. The book reflects the clear and unvarnished evolution of this harshly bitter conflict.

One interesting aside: Although the author served his tour between 1967 and 1968, he never felt the need to mention himself, or any actions in which he personally participated. Additionally, although the photo section of the book is rich with images of various Hotel Co Marines, the author's photo is conspicuously absent.

Its fight now over, the battalion set sail on 13 Oct. 1970 in USS *Juneau* (LPD-10) for Camp Pendleton, Calif., and home. We encourage our readers to visit Hotel, 2/7's well-crafted website: www.hotel27vietnam.com.

Robert B. Loring

Editor's note: A prolific reader and Leatherneck contributor, “Red Bob” Loring is dedicated to supporting social programs that improve the lives of citizens in Pasco County, Fla. He and his team of elves aid U.S. Marine Corps Reserve leathernecks in making each Christmas one of the very best for the Toys for Tots program in his community.



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[continued from page 9]

tivation I may need to get me through my current "mission," whatever that may be.

Darin Marsh
 Dothan, Ala.

Reunions

• **3dMarDiv Assn.**, Aug. 14-18, Alexandria, Va. Contact GySgt Don H. Gee, USMC (Ret), P.O. Box 254, Chalfont, PA 18914, (215) 822-9094, gygee@aol.com, www.caltrap.com.

• **4thMarDiv Assn. of WW II**, Aug. 25-30, Savannah, Ga. Contact Jim Westbrook, (601) 636-1861, JimWestbrook@aol.com, or Jack Rothermel, P.O. Box 315, Jensen Beach, FL 34958, (772) 334-5677, jackr451@yahoo.com.

• **6thMarDiv Assn.**, Aug. 15-18, Quantico, Va. Contact Sharon Woodhouse, (503) 642-2429, sjwoodhouse@gmail.com.

• **26th Marines Assn.**, Sept. 20-23, St. Louis. Contact Sonny Hollub, (512) 825-4730, www.26thmarines.com.

• **First Marine Aircraft Wing Assn. (RVN)**, Aug. 23-25, New Orleans. Contact Al Frater, (201) 906-1197, teanal@optonline.net.

• **USMC Combat Correspondents Assn.**, July 22-25, Joint Base Andrews, Md. Contact Jack T. Paxton, 110 Fox Ct., Wildwood, FL 34785, (352) 748-4698, usmccca@cfl.rr.com, www.usmccca.org.

• **China Marine Assn.**, Sept. 18-22, Savannah, Ga. Contact William J. Parker Jr., 183 S. Waterlilly Rd., Coinjock, NC 27923, (252) 453-4124, bp095678@gmail.com.

• **Moroccan Reunion Assn.**, Sept. 10-15, Daytona Beach, Fla. Contact Robert Sieborg, 2717 N. 120th Ave., Omaha, NE 68164, (402) 496-1498.

• **USMC Motor Transport Assn.**, Sept. 15-18, Norfolk, Va. Contact Terry Hightower, P.O. Box 1372, Jacksonville, NC 28541, (910) 450-1841, secretary@usmcmta.org.

• **USMC Vietnam Tankers Assn.**, Oct. 31-Nov. 4, San Antonio. Contact John Wear, (215) 794-9052, johnwear@yahoo.com.

• **West Coast Drill Instructor Assn.**, Sept. 5-8, MCRD San Diego. Contact Gregg Stoner, (619) 884-9047, greggstoner22@aol.com, or SgtMaj Bobby Woods, (760) 215-9564, www.westcoastdi.org.

• **2d Bn, 3d Marines (RVN-1965)**, Sept. 22-25, Las Vegas. Contact Ted Riccubono, 170 Cloudcrest Dr., Henderson, NV 89015, (702) 566-4692, gunneyusmc381@yahoo.com, <https://www.hotel233.com>.

• **7th Engineer Bn Vietnam Veterans**

Assn., Sept. 19-22, San Diego. Contact Norm Johnson, (989) 635-6653, deltal@centurytel.net; Doug McMackin, (623) 466-0545, gunnymac@hotmail.com; or Jim Taranto, (518) 567-4267, tarantoj@gmail.com.

• **11th Engineer Bn (RVN, 1966-69)** is planning a reunion for 2014. Contact Gene Spanos, (847) 770-9049, genethemarine@gmail.com.

• **"Stormy" Sexton's BLT 3/3 (1961-62)**, Oct. 21-25, Wilmington, N.C. Contact H. A. Phillips, (910) 540-2226, hphillips@ec.rr.com.

• **2/1 (RVN)**, Nov. 7-13, Washington, D.C., with 2/1 monument dedication at the National Museum of the Marine Corps, Triangle, Va., Nov. 8. Contact Paul Mangan, (515) 360-2600, namgrunt@aol.com, www.firstmarines.org.

• **Co A, 7th Motor T Bn (RVN)**, Sept. 26-29, Amarillo, Texas. Contact Pat Penna, (317) 834-2755, dzh6ck@yahoo.com.

• **2d Topo Co**, Oct. 27-30, Pigeon Forge, Tenn. Contact James Martin, (781) 572-7924, topotrooper@aol.com.

• **ANGLICO**, Nov. 7-10, Camp Pendleton, Calif. Contact Joe Luque, (661) 725-3415, jlлуque@sbcglobal.net.

• **A/1/7**, Oct. 13-18, Kerrville, Texas. Contact Roland or Iva Mae O'Con, 1018 High Point Dr., Kerrville, TX 78028, (830) 367-2801, rgocon@hctc.net.

• **B/1/5 (Korea) "Baker Bandits," (includes A, B, C, Wpns and Hq companies)**, Sept. 9-13, Omaha, Neb. Contact Richard Large, 9505 S. 27th St., Lincoln, NE 68512, (402) 423-6961, rlc19505@inebraska.com.

• **D/1/26 and all battalions, 26th Marines (RVN)**, Nov. 4-11, Branson, Mo. Contact Jack "Monk" Kline, (414) 303-3534, onemonk1950@gmail.com, or James Fizer, (937) 644-2952.

• **G/2/7 (RVN, 1965-70)**, Aug. 14-18, Kansas City, Mo. Contact Ron Myers, (916) 723-7324, rlmyers5@comcast.net, <http://golf2-7vva.com>.

• **G/3/1 (Korea)**, Sept. 16-19, Dana Point, Calif. Contact "Bing" Bingham, 1453 Patricia Dr., Gardnerville, NV 89460, (775) 265-3596, bingbingham@msn.com.

• **H/2/26 (RVN)**, Oct. 14-19, San Diego. Contact Bill Hancock, 2748 Moeller Dr., Hamilton, OH 45014, (513) 738-5446, hancockw@roadrunner.com.

• **H&S Co, 1/7 (Camp Sukiran, Okinawa, Japan, 1960-61)**, Sept. 26-29, Quantico, Va. Contact John T. Ward, (412) 371-3639, jtwardmarinel@yahoo.com.

• **K/3/7 (RVN)**, Sept. 18-23, Jacksonville, Fla. Contact William Rolke, (262) 780-0993, k37usmc@att.net, or Don Tackett, (678) 725-0329, tdontack@netscape.net.

• **M/3/7 (RVN)**, Sept. 4-7, Natick, Mass. Contact Jim Hastings, (508) 966-0364, snopymike@aol.com.

• **American Embassy Saigon (pre-1975, RVN)**, April 27-30, 2014, Galveston, Texas. Contact MSgt Gus Tomuschat, USMC (Ret), (804) 693-3007, saigongunny@yahoo.com, www.saigonmac.org.

• **Anacostia Naval Station Marines**, Sept. 8-13, Branson, Mo. Contact Ron Bursch, (612) 499-0776, ronbur38@gmail.com.

• **Marine Barracks Sasebo, Japan**, Oct. 22-25, Reno, Nev. Contact C. R. McCarthy, (515) 274-9110, coach430@aol.com.

• **Subic Bay Marine Barracks**, Oct. 28-Nov. 1, Pigeon Forge, Tenn. Contact Col Rufus Bowers, USMC (Ret), 1021 Stagecoach Ln., Friendsville, TN 37737, (865) 804-1898, (865) 995-1950, polly21@peoplepc.com.

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

• **Marine Corps League Tri-State Detachment #494**, Aug. 17, Youngstown, Ohio. Contact Chester Kaschak, (330) 533-6084, or Ed Levisur, (330) 702-0677.

• **Yemassee Train Depot**, Oct. 18-19, Yemassee, S.C. Contact Roy Hughes, P.O. Box 265, Yemassee, SC 29945, (843) 589-3385.

• **MarDet, USS Juneau (CL-119)**, Aug. 23-30, Alaska cruise. Contact William S. Gerichten, 141 Pinelawn Dr., Kernersville, NC 27284, (336) 993-5415.

• **MSG Paris** is planning a reunion. Contact Roland C. Beisenstein, 53 Castle Rock Dr., Mill Valley, CA 94941, (415) 388-4941.

• **Point Mugu Marine Security Detachment (1946-60)**, Sept. 22-24, Dayton, Ohio. Contact Arthur Smallenberger, (816) 436-6493, pt.mugumarine@kc.rr.com.

• **USMC Postal 0160/0161**, Oct. 6-11, Pigeon Forge, Tenn. Contact MSgt Harold Wilson, USMC (Ret), 835 N. Wood St., Logan, OH 43138, (740) 385-6204, handk.lucerne06@gmail.com.

• **Udorn Veterans**, July 12-15, Weatherford, Texas. Contact Jerry C. Long, 118 Mariah Dr., Weatherford, TX 76087, (817) 594-4623, jclhydsr71bafb@gmail.com.

• **Recruiter's School Class 3-69 (1968)** is planning a reunion. Contact MGySgt Bob Daniels, USMC (Ret), (904) 579-4346, bertojotol@gmail.com.

• **38th OCS/SBC 3-66**, Oct. 16-20, San Diego. Contact Terry Cox, (310) 732-6908, tcx95@cox.net.

• **21st SBC (1953)**, Oct. 9-13, Honolulu. Contact LtCol Tom Kalus, USMC (Ret),

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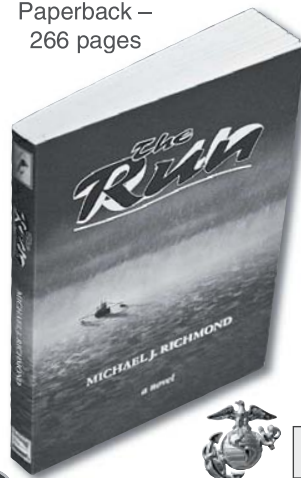
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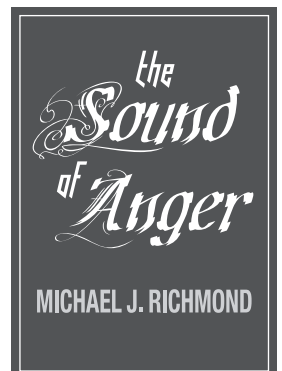
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• **SBCs (Korean War-era, 1950-54)**, Nov. 1-4, San Antonio. Contact Bob Lukeman, (405) 842-3601, jrlukeman@aol.com, or John Featherstone, (310) 833-2190, johnf9375@aol.com.

• **TBS 4-69/52d Special OCC**, Sept. 12-15, San Diego. Contact LtCol W. Todd Frommelt, USMC (Ret), 3402 Celinda Dr., Carlsbad, CA 92008, toddfrommelt@roadrunner.com.

• **Plt 170, Parris Island, 1963**, Oct. 10-14, Parris Island, S.C. Contact former Sgt Pete Sayles, (772) 360-7347, petesayles@yahoo.com.

• **Plt 218, Parris Island, 1963**, is planning a September reunion in Philadelphia. Contact Tony DiStefano, (215) 438-3630, adister456@aol.com.

• **Plt 280, Parris Island, 1963**, Oct. 4-6, Parris Island, S.C. Contact 1stSgt Malcolm Stewart, USMC (Ret), (904)

282-8319, malcolmstewart@comcast.net.

• **Plt 331, Parris Island, 1959**, is planning a reunion. Contact MGySgt Bob Daniels, USMC (Ret), (904) 579-4346, bertojotol@gmail.com, or Bob Wood, (205) 903-7220, bwood@bellsouth.net.

• **Plt 1040, San Diego, 1968**, July 26-27, Oklahoma City. Contact Stephen Norpel, (563) 451-8417, snorpel@yahoo.com.

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

• **Plt 2044, San Diego, 1973**, July 19, San Diego. Contact Douglas Bowyer, (408) 876-8966, douglasbowyer@yahoo.com.

• **Plts 4020/4021, Parris Island, 2000**, July 12-14, Parris Island, S.C. Contact Elizabeth Rossi, (914) 315-1728, elizabethannrossi@gmail.com.

• **MASS-2/MTACS-2 (all years)**, Sept. 23-26, Las Vegas. Contact George Macartie, (858) 566-5303, mass-2@sbcglobal.net.

• **Aviation Logistics Marines**, Sept. 20-21, MCAS Cherry Point, N.C. Contact Don Davis, (252) 444-1777, greyegl@ec.rr.com.

• **MACCS**, Sept. 18-22, San Diego. Contact Tom Mulkerin, (703) 644-1724, tom.mulkerin@mulkerin.com.

• **MACS-6**, Oct. 11-13, Havelock, N.C. Contact Gene Herrera, (757) 484-0091, geneathome@outlook.com.

• **Marine Air Base Squadrons 43 and 49** are planning a reunion for September. Contact Col Chuck McGarigle, USMC (Ret), 23 Greenwood Dr., Bordentown, NJ 08505, (609) 291-9617, mabsreunion@comcast.net.

• **Marine Air Groups (WW II-present)**, Oct. 2-5, Branson, Mo. Contact James Jordan, (417) 535-4945, james.m.jordan@hughes.net, or Bob Miller, (636) 327-5854, mbobsue13@gmail.com.

• **VMFP-3**, July 12-14, NAS Pensacola, Fla. Contact David Marquardt, 8718 Robinwood Cir., Milton, FL 35283, (850) 400-1118, d_m98@yahoo.com.

Ships and Others

• **USS Bremerton (CA-130/SSN-698)**, Sept. 8-12, St. Louis. Contact James Jensen, (406) 837-4474, jmbluff@centurytel.net, or R. F. Polanowski, (585) 365-2316, rpolanowski@stny.rr.com.

• **USS Canberra (CA-70/CAG-2)**, Oct. 2-6, Reno, Nev. Contact Ken Minick, P.O. Box 130, Belpre, OH 45714, (740) 423-8976, usscanberra@gmail.com.

• **USS Hornet (CV-8, CV/CVA/CVS-12)**, Sept. 24-29, Providence, R.I. Contact Carl and Sandy Burket, P.O. Box 108, Roaring Spring, PA 16673, (814) 224-5063, hornetcv@aol.com, www.usshornetassn.com.

• **USS Houston (CA-30/CL-81) Assn.**, Aug. 20-24, Chicago. Contact Donna Rogers, 3949 Little John Dr., York, PA 17408, (717) 792-9113, dlr7110@yahoo.com.

• **USS Iwo Jima (LPH-2/LHD-7)**, Oct. 2-6, San Diego. Contact Robert G. McAnally, 152 Frissell St., Hampton, VA 23663, (757) 723-0317, yujack@megalink.net, ussiwjojimashipmates.cfns.net.

• **USS Philippine Sea (CV/CVA/CVS-47)**, Oct. 24-29, Jacksonville, Fla. Contact USS *Philippine Sea* Assn., P.O. Box 496412, Port Charlotte, FL 33949-6412, (941) 743-5460, philsea@embarqmail.com.

• **USS Randolph (CV/CVA/CVS-15) and USS Terror (CM-5)**, Sept. 22-29, Indian Rocks Beach, Fla. Contact Sal Rizza, 1720 Sandy Ct., Merritt Island, FL 32952, (321) 454-2344.

• **USS Ranger (CVA/CV-61) (all members)**, Sept. 18-22, St. Louis. Contact George Meoli, (203) 453-4279, uss.ranger@yahoo.com.

• **USS Yorktown (CV/CVA/CVS-10) (1943-70)**, Oct. 3-5, Mt. Pleasant, S.C. Contact Nina Creasman, P.O. Box 1021, Mt. Pleasant, SC 29465, (834) 849-1928, ncreasman@yorktown.net.



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Darrell S. Cole
Cole was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions on Iwo Jima.

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Edited by Clare A. Guerrero

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Mail Call

- Former Sgt John Siwulich, (814) 441-9052, usmc1952@gmail.com, to hear from or about **SSgt Alva H. WESTBROOK**, who was a **drill instructor** and **served in Korea and Vietnam**. Also, to hear from those who served in **1st 75 mm AAA Gun Bn at Camp Geiger and MCTC Twentynine Palms, Calif.**, regarding a group photo.

- Marine veteran Bob Long, president of the Los Angeles Chapter of the USMC Combat Correspondents Association, thelachapter@gmail.com, would like to hear from **present or former Marine correspondents, videographers and combat camera for potential membership in the national organization and the LA chapter**.

- Tom Clavin, co-author of "The Last Stand of Fox Company," (631) 725-0151, beachreading@gmail.com, to hear from those who served in the **5th Marines and from participants in the Nevada Cities battle of March 1953**.

- SgtMaj Pete Seagriff, USMC (Ret), (502) 570-0641, sgtmajsgt@roadrunner.com, to hear from members of **Plt 258, Parris Island, 1962**.

- Former Sgt Arturo McDonald, (956) 533-2260, mcmuffy222@aol.com, to hear from **PFC SWANSON, PFC MacCULLUM and other Marines who served at Camp Fuji, Japan, 1953**.

- Former Sgt Roman Milanowicz, (717) 278-5634, roman.milanowicz@gmail.com, to hear from members of **Plt 386, Parris Island, 1968**, for a possible reunion. Drill instructors were **SSgt S. C. MAGANA, SSgt B. E. WEBB Jr. and P. A. YEAGER**.

- Marine veteran Steve Toman, P.O. Box 543, Nashville, MI 49073, (517) 852-0334, to hear from members of **Plt 2031, San Diego, 1956**, or from anyone who served with **Co G, 3d Bn, 1st Marines, 1stMarDiv, MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif., 1956-58**.

- Marine veteran Melvin Sherrod, (415) 236-0510, ncmel2009@gmail.com, to hear from members of **Plts 3048-3051, Parris Island, 1985**. Also, to hear from anyone with **Co B, MCCES/MCAGCC Twentynine Palms, Calif., 1985**, or in **Hq Co, 2d Marines, 2dMarDiv**, namely **Comm Plt, TOW Plt or Wire Plt, 2/2, 2/3, 2/4, 1/2, MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C., 1985-87**.

- SgtMaj Bobby Woods, USMC (Ret), with the West Coast DI Association, Sgt Maj Leland D. "Crow" Crawford Chapter, (760) 216-9564, www.westcoastdi.org, wants to hear from **present or former drill instructors interested in becoming members** (no dues or fees).

- Former Sgt William E. "Buddy" Hixon Jr., 3325 CR 1129, Arlington, KY 42021, (270) 694-4208, to hear from or

about the **Marine lieutenant from New Orleans in "Charlie" Co, 1/7 whose helmet was dented by an enemy tracer round on May 28, 1951**.

Wanted

- Marine veteran Dennis Weems, 5515 E. Meadow Dr., Bossier City, LA 71112, (318) 742-2545, wants a **recruit graduation book for Plt 1028, San Diego, 1969**.

- Marine veteran Joseph Brinson, 2560 Woodrow Wilson Blvd., #4, West Bloomfield, MI 48324, wilson64@netscape.com, wants a **recruit graduation photo for Plt 1025, San Diego, 1982**.

- Marine veteran Steve Shaw, 1129 Brookside Dr., Lebanon, IN 46052, (765) 482-3142, usmctboner1@gmail.com, wants **white shoulder straps (with chrome swivel snaps on each end) that Marine musicians used to carry their music pouch**, as well as **Marine Band-related chevrons, coins, patches, model bandsman figures**, etc. Will trade or sell two pairs of **1958 sergeant major chevrons** that were issued for only one year.

- 1stSgt Raymond W. Meaney, USMC (Ret), 101-28 117th St., Richmond Hill, NY 11419, (718) 849-0882, raymond182@verizon.net, wants a **USMC virgin wool blanket** in excellent or very good condition with "USMC" printed on it.

- Marine veteran Keith Vogler, (928) 649-3747, keithvogler@gmail.com, wants a **recruit graduation book for Plt 2123, San Diego, 1988**.

- GySgt Lew Souder, USMC (Ret), souderl@bellsouth.net, wants a **recruit graduation book and photo for Plt 253, Parris Island, 1956**. Drill instructors were **SSgt J. D. CAMP, Sgt H. W. JONES and Cpl J. R. "Hollywood" BROWN**.

- Cathy Lloyd, 96001 Brighton Pl., Yulee, FL 32097, cathy32097@aol.com, wants a **recruit graduation book** for her uncle, **Harold Dean BARGERON, Plt 457, Parris Island, 1952**.



Arturo McDonald wants to hear from PFCs Swanson and MacCullum as well as other Marines stationed at Camp Fuji in 1953.

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John Poole, USMC, 1965-93

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The New 2013 *Leatherneck* Marine-to-Marine Classified Information and Insertion Order

Classified Advertising Policy

Marine-to-Marine classified ads are accepted on a space-available basis and available only to those and/or their spouses who served in the United States Marine Corps and are members of the MCA&F. The ad must list the years served in the Marine Corps.

All ads are black-and-white in this section. Ads are accepted camera-ready and electronically; pdf, tif or jpeg formats (300 resolution). Any classified ad may occupy one column width (2.25 inches) by a maximum of 10 inches of column height.

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Marine-to-Marine classified ad rates are \$100 per column inch. There is a 10% discount for 6 months or more of insertions.

Please select the issues in which you wish to run, or write: "Run until further notice."

Issue	Ad Due
___ Jan	Nov 30
___ Feb	Dec 30
___ Mar	Jan 30
___ Apr	Feb 28
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___ Aug	Jun 30
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___ Dec	Oct 30

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\$ _____ Total
Credit Card Number _____

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Payment information must accompany order.

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Leatherneck Magazine, M2M
715 Broadway St., Marine Corps Base
Quantico, VA 22134
Or email to: s.dinkel@mca-marines.org
Fax: 718-238-8901
Office: 718-715-1361

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.

Alone Among Friends

Six hundred twenty-four acres of sorrow,
Symmetrical stones of grief,
Alone among friends and bitterly cold,
I stare in hollowed disbelief.

Some are unknown. None are forgotten.
I ponder when this will be me.
Honor, courage and selfless commitment,
Interred in the fields of Lee.

Six hundred twenty-four acres of sorrow,
Honeycombs of marbled pain,
Inconsolable, sobbing, I kneel,
Mourning brothers heroically slain.

Capt David Dixon

Semper Fi!

Brothers leave home, friends, family,
Embrace uncertainty.
Into those open doors,
Cold tile walls and floors.
Chaos begins, feeling alone.
Grab a rack, secure your pack.
In step, keep the beat, with burning back and aching feet.
Up before the rising sun, forever we must run;
New friends, new family, brothers of uncertainty,
Stronger still, we become. No longer alone.
Acceptance of the pain for the title we want to gain;
Weeks gone by, where does the time fly?
One hurts more than the other, we carry him, our brother.
Last test together, we do our best.
At attention in the street, no more aching feet.
Pride swells in our chest as we receive our crest.
Look right, look left, no, never alone;
Marching in formation, the Corps' new creation.

William Parmer

Life and Death in Korea

Whistles sound and bugles blow,
A full moon shines upon the snow.
Massive enemy hordes attack,
Initially, we throw them back.

Endless waves, they won't relent,
Hold or die, endurance spent.
God be merciful with me;
We battled back ferociously.

Frenzied fighting, hand to hand,
Frozen, godforsaken land.

Mind is numbed, senses reeling,
Certain death is what I'm feeling.

Cold, frostbitten, fighting fear,
Death coyly whispers in my ear:
"Relax, young man, and come to me,
I promise I will set you free."

I called on faith to make me strong—
To ignore death's subtle siren song.
With warrior ethos to survive,
I fought my way through hell alive.

Bugles silenced, whistles stilled,
Strangely quiet killing field;
Sleep deprived, a weary smile,
To hell with death, I'll live awhile.

Marine veteran Bob Vertacnik

Marines Again

In my dreams, they stand at attention;
Men I once knew, and memories now flow.
World War II is a lifetime past;
How many are with us, from 70 years ago?
These men I remember, I will list a few:
There is Scott, Knoll, Russell and McQue.
Rondeau, Jones, Ridgley and O'Hare,
King, Donovan, Rhodes and LeClaire.
There are others whose names I cannot recall,
And I am happy to see them all.
They are Marines, and in future battles, some will fall,
But in the afterlife, I know they will stand tall.
They now salute with their right hand,
As "Taps" now echoes across the land.
We spent more than 30 days at sea;
My dream now shifts and that bothers me.
We came this far, to a foreign land,
And on the beach, at attention they stand.
As each says a silent prayer, now I know why.
They hold the salute as my poncho-wrapped body
passes by.
I was pleased to see them, and sorry we must part.
But I pray that in the hereafter I will see them again;
Old age will fade, once more we will be Marines, and men.

Marine veteran Edward C. Shryock



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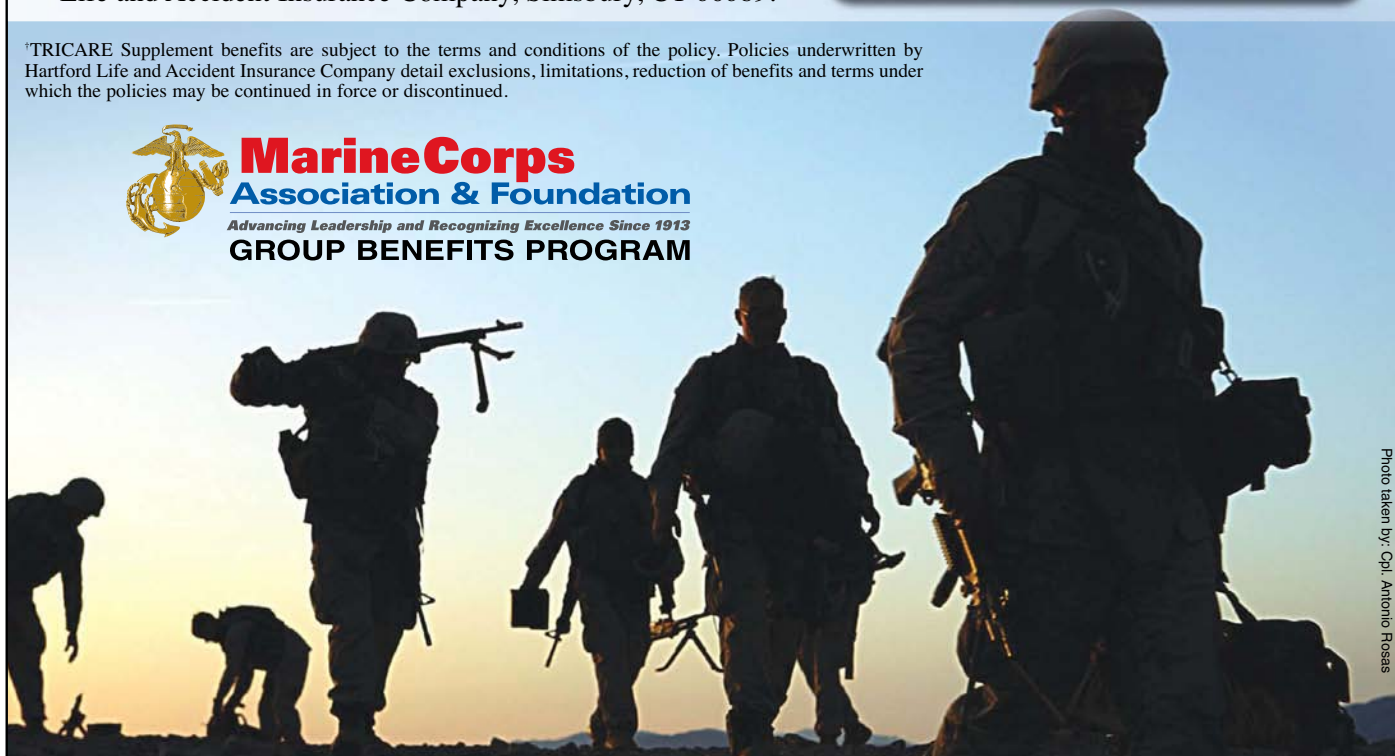


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