

MAY 2015

MAGAZINE OF THE MARINES

Leatherneck

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An F-35B fighter jet is shown from a high-angle, rear-quarter perspective, flying over a vast, patchwork landscape of fields and forests. The jet's wings are swept back, and its canards are visible. The cockpit canopy is prominent, and the aircraft's stealth features are evident. The background shows a mix of green, brown, and tan fields under a clear sky.

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Compiled by Nancy Lee White Hoffman

From the American cemetery in Belleau, France, to Camp Pendleton, Calif., Marines the world over pay tribute to their fallen comrades on what was first known as Decoration Day. Today, Memorial Day is observed with pomp and ceremony and also quiet reflection while the hills and seas echo the sound of “Taps.”

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By Mike Hoeferlin

Thunder over the desert as Marine Capt Chuck “Sly” Magill, piloting an Air Force F-15 Eagle, led the first daylight raid of Desert Storm in 1991 and became the only Marine aviator since Vietnam to record an air-to-air kill.

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By LtCol Gabriel “Fabs” Fabbri, USMC

It takes more than \$1 million to produce one Marine strike pilot. Training is complex, grueling and crammed into a demanding schedule. The results are Marine pilots with wings of gold and the know-how to fly close air support missions for fellow leathernecks on the ground.

36 F-35B “Howls” Overhead: Marine Corps Conducts Flight Operations, Establishes Protocols for Joint Strike Fighter *By CWO-4 Randy Gaddo, USMC (Ret)*

The future of Marine aviation has landed at Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, S.C., where squadron members continue to write the book on flight operations and maintenance for the Corps’ variant of the Joint Strike Fighter.

48 Amphibious Readiness: 15th MEU Tests the Waters During COMPTUEX *By Cpl Anna Albrecht, USMC*

When Marines cross the beach, they are the spearhead of countless hours of combat planning, armed with the exact amounts of beans, bullets and bandages they will need. The Marines who support them remain in constant motion reacting to changes on the battlefield and adapting to the fog of war.

54 Tools or Toys? The SHOT Show Showcases the Latest in Outdoor Gear and Gadgets *By Scott Dinkel*

From Marine Corps knives to Zippo All-Terrain Grills—Those of us who remember MacGyver know he would find endless uses for the gadgets and goodies that soon will be making their way to Marine Corps exchanges.

56 Sea Stories *Compiled by Sara W. Bock*

A rifle inspection in 1953 made a splash at sea, and “Drop your skivvies and spread your cheeks!” takes on a new meaning to a young recruit.

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COVER: The F-35B Lightning II goes through its paces as the Corps’ newest multimission aircraft. It performs the roles of the F/A-18 Hornet, the AV-8B Harrier II and the EA-6B Prowler. It is also the only variant of the Joint Strike Fighter that features short takeoff and vertical landing (STOVL) capabilities. See the story on page 36. Photo by LCpl Neysa Huertas, USMC. Copies of the cover may be obtained by sending \$2 (for mailing costs) to *Leatherneck Magazine*, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134-0775.

Sound Off

Edited by R. R. Keene

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

Letter of the Month

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

Recent news about one's veteran status, whether it is combat, in country, stateside, etc., prompts the question: "What is a veteran?"

A veteran is anyone who put on the cloth of our nation, took the oath and served honorably. There always will be someone who has seen more combat or tougher tours, but that doesn't lessen one's military service.

According to the Korean War Veterans Association, if you served in Korea from 1945 to present or outside of Korea from June 1950 to January 1955, you qualify for membership. A veteran is the Marine riding in a parade who puts on his ribbons with a prosthetic hand. He's the quartermaster who watches the ribbons and medals pass him by and awarded to others; the nurse who fought against futility and nursed our loved ones back to health sending them home to us. The veteran is the old guy who slowly bags groceries, but once liberated a Nazi death camp.

A veteran is an ordinary citizen who sacrifices his or her early and vital years in order to serve his or her country so that others won't have to. The next time you see a veteran, two words are in order: "Thank you."

Cpl Ted Smith
USMC, 1960-64
Sarasota, Fla.

I Just Had to Respond to the "Letter of the Month"

I just received my *Leatherneck* and had to respond to Corporal Bruce Bender ["Sound Off," March]. I liked the letter, but when I got to the last paragraph, my blood pressure rose a little. [Cpl Bender wrote: "... where is the pride we once had in our flag and where is our patriotism?"]

I served in the Marines and still believe that it was the best decision I ever made (other than marrying my dear wife of 62

years). As far as Cpl Bender's "Where is the pride we once had in our flag and where is the patriotism?" remark, I see it every day, thank God.

My middle daughter joined the Navy right out of high school, served 10 years and got her college degree. She then was commissioned and retired as a commander after 29 years. Her oldest son served in the Air Force. Her middle son was ROTC in high school and one year of college until accepted at the U.S. Naval Academy. He graduated and was assigned to the submarine service. Her daughter is in her third year of college at Villanova pursuing a nursing career through the NROTC.

I live in South Jersey and don't see a lot of Marines down here, but I sure as hell see a lot of young dedicated people, such as those attending Coast Guard boot

camp at Cape May. I'm very confident in all these young people and the future of this country.

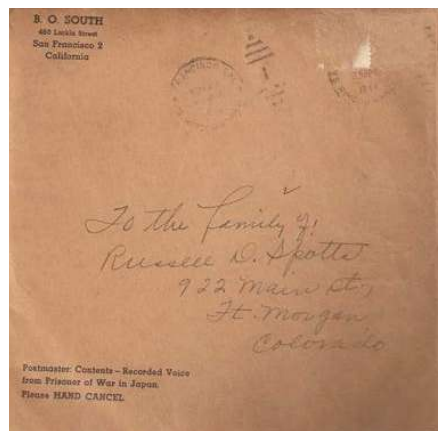
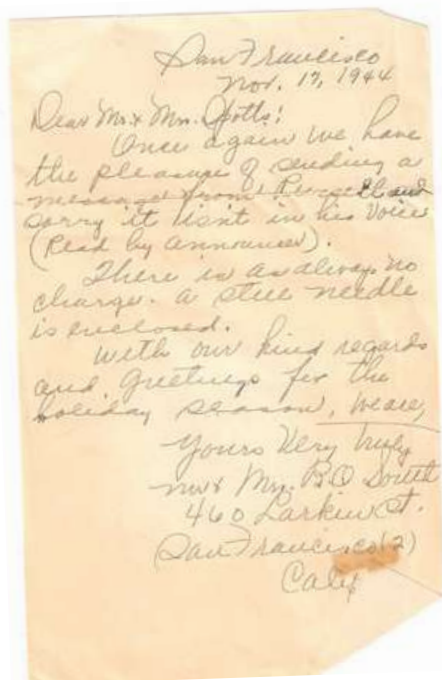
Cpl John E. McLaughlin
USMC, 1952-55
Cape May Court House, N.J.

Letters and Recordings From POWs in Japan

My father was in the Army prior to the start of World War II. He was stationed in the Philippines at Fort Drum, the Army's "concrete battleship" at the mouth of Manila Bay, which carried 14-inch guns on turrets like a battleship.

Of course, he became a prisoner of war. While working in the Yokohama, Japan, shipyards, he was able to write some letters home. Very little-known facts are that the POWs would write letters and give them

Although little is known about this, the Japanese during WW II did send some censored letters from American POWs to their families stateside. Some families received 78 rpm records with phonography needles that contained a message read by civilian operators at Army and Navy listening stations. (Images courtesy of Ben Spotts)





To those who were vigilant so we could rest,
Who gave everything that we might thrive,
Who are silent that we may breathe free,

We honor you.



MEMORIAL DAY, MAY 25

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Leatherneck

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to the Japanese for censorship. Some letters were picked out, and the Japanese would read the letters over the radio to stations across the American West Coast.

The times were prescheduled by the Swiss and Japanese. American civilian and military stations would pick up the broadcasts and copy them to be sent to the families at home.

Each broadcast would start with the name and address of the family to whom it was to go. The first one my grandparents received was via Western Union from a civilian in the state of Washington. Nothing was asked by Western Union in return. They also received some that were typed out by both Army and Navy listening stations. I also have two that the civilian operators actually recorded to a small 78 rpm record and sent to the parents of the POW. Nothing was ever asked in return for this work.

The men who did this are true heroes who never will get their due credit nor recognition.

I'm sure that many Marines' families received the same letters and recordings and that's why I'm sending this to *Leatherneck*.

MSgt Ben Spotts, USMC (Ret)
Fort Morgan, Colo.

At Sea With *Donald Cook*

Greetings from the guided-missile destroyer USS *Donald Cook* (DDG-75). I am writing in regard to the article by Don Price in the January 2015 issue of *Leatherneck* magazine: "Medal of Honor Recipient Colonel Donald G. Cook: Do What Is Right and Just, No Matter What the Personal Cost." We received several copies on the ship, and they have made the rounds through the wardroom, chief petty officers' mess, and on down to the deck plates.

The spirit of Col Cook is alive and well on board. Since shifting homeports from Norfolk, Va., to Rota, Spain, in the spring of 2014, the ship has been busy on two Ballistic Missile Defense patrols in the U.S. 6th Fleet area of operations. We currently are underway and soon will be participating in Joint Warrior, a multinational training exercise hosted by the Royal Navy. We were awarded the U.S. Navy Battle Efficiency, or "Battle E," award for the second consecutive year this month [March].

On Dec. 29, 2014, while underway in the Black Sea, a Prisoner of War/Missing in Action remembrance ceremony was held on the mess deck. The 50th anniversary of the capture of Col Cook was of great importance. Many younger-generation Americans, including some of those currently serving on board, do not grasp

the magnitude of his sacrifice. It is the duty of those of us who are serving on board to pass the lesson on to those who have not heard the message.

"Faith Without Fear" and "Do What Is Right and Just, No Matter What the Personal Cost" have a meaning much greater than just the words. They echo the beliefs and values of an American who paid the ultimate sacrifice for those beliefs. I am proud to serve on board this great ship, as are all the nearly 300 other sailors, and will continue to honor Col Cook's memory as long as I live.

Chief Machinery Repairman (Surface Warfare/
Expeditionary Warfare) Russell S. Ver Nooy, USN
USS *Donald Cook* (DDG-75)

• *Bravo Zulu! Thank you for your service, Chief, and for your letter. I am always impressed by the respect sailors have for their ships' namesakes, especially those named after Marines. God bless you and the crew of Donald Cook. "Fair winds and following seas."—Sound Off Ed.*

A Brief History of H&MS-12 And the TA-4F in Vietnam

I was assigned to Headquarters and Maintenance Squadron 12, Marine Aircraft Group 12 Group Supply as an aviation storekeeper and, later, as part of the group guard on perimeter duty for the period beginning July 1969 to July 1970.

MAG-12 departed South Vietnam for Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan, at the end of February 1970. The TA-4F Skyhawk aircraft in MAG-12 were all transferred by November 1969 to MAG-11 at Da Nang Air Base and did not go out of country with MAG-12.

Da Nang was the first Marine air base in South Vietnam. MAG-11 would direct most operations assigned Da Nang aircraft that flew north of the base and over the Demilitarized Zone and southern North Vietnam.

A second airfield was sorely needed. Chu Lai located about 55 miles south of Da Nang was chosen for the new airfield. Starting in April 1965, Navy Seabees worked in 100-degree-plus temperatures to prepare the remote Chu Lai site for an aluminum plank SATS (short airfield for tactical support) "tinfoil strip" 4,000-foot runway. A catapult and arresting gear were planned to allow A-4C and A-4E Skyhawks to use the field.

The arresting gear was soon installed, but a catapult was not available. So JATO (jet-assisted takeoff) was planned to reduce the Skyhawk takeoff distance by half. Soon the Chu Lai facility had a runway, arresting gear, taxiways and a parking ramp. A catapult was installed May 14, 1966.

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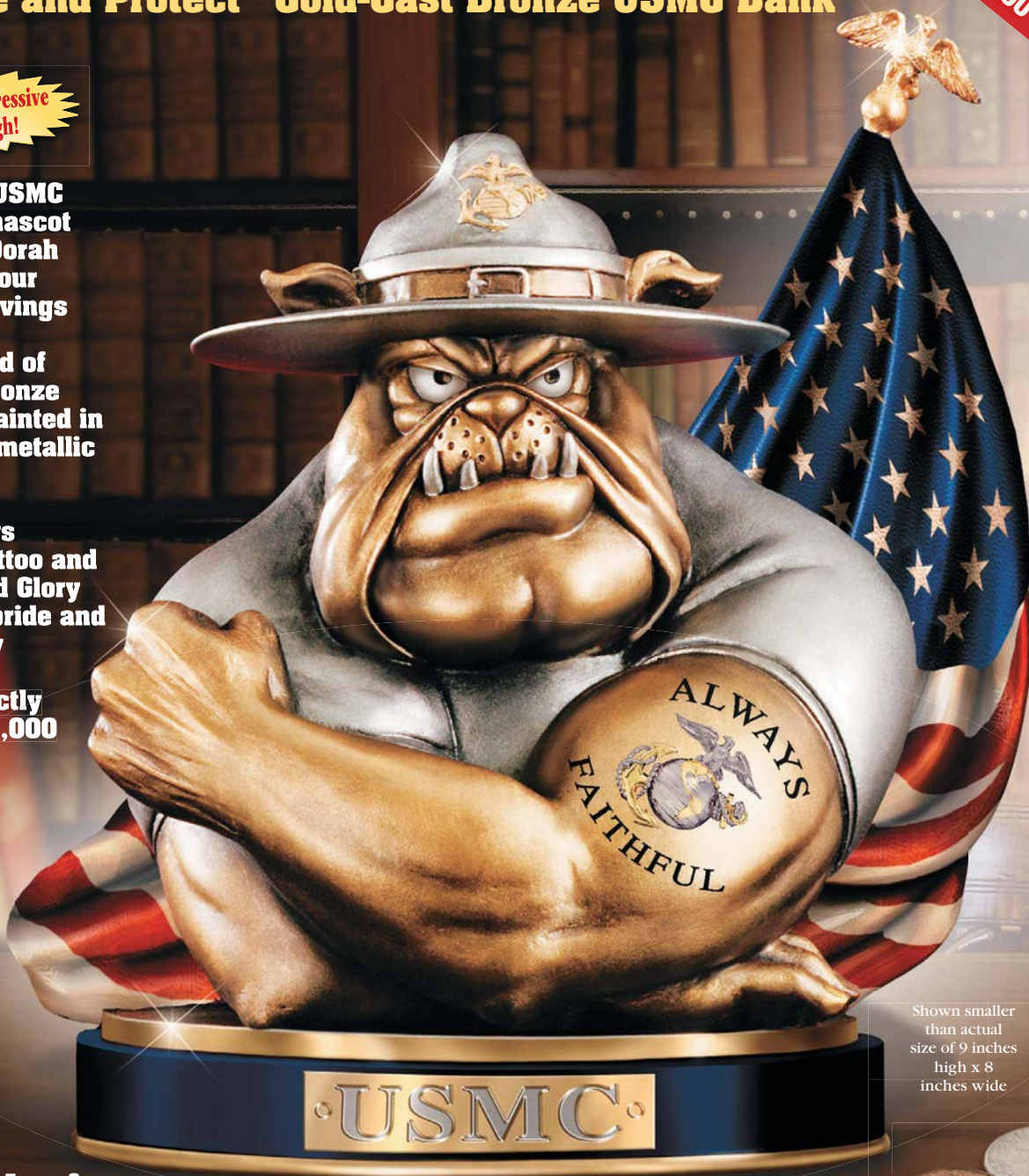
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MAG-12 was assigned to Chu Lai to provide most Skyhawk operations in South Vietnam. The plan was to rotate Skyhawk squadrons between Chu Lai and Iwakuni to conduct combat operations.

The Skyhawk: The Marine Corps had flown the Douglas A-4 Skyhawk since 1957, but had to wait eight years to fly the Skyhawk in combat. The A-4 Skyhawk was armed with two internal 20 mm cannons and could carry additional guns in external pods. The A-4C had three external stores stations available, and the A-4E had five external stores stations available. From the external stores stations, Marine pilots could deliver approximately 8,500 pounds of ordnance—"iron" bombs weighing up to 1,000 pounds, napalm, Zuni 5-inch rockets, cluster bombs and 2.75-inch rockets.

MODEX (a name used by naval aviation, both Navy and Marine) assigned WA as the tail code for H&MS-12. The "00" nose number was assigned by the squadron; i.e., the number aircraft out of five aircraft assigned to the squadron. In the case of the commanding officer, "00" would be affectionately known as "double nuts." The tail code, the nose numbers and the last four numbers of the bureau numbers (3488) appear on both starboard and port sides of the aircraft.

The TA-4F is the two-seater version of the A-4 aircraft. The pilot typically sat in the front seat, and a pilot/aerial observer sat in the back seat. The TA-4F aircraft was designated as a tactical airborne coordinator air (TACA) as well as training and support. It flew as a reconnaissance bird over target areas and controlled air strikes and naval gunfire in support of the grunts. This was the main purpose of the TA-4F Skyhawk in Vietnam. MAG-13, also located at Chu Lai, and MAG-11, at Da Nang, all had them.

H&MS-12 did not possess any single-seat aircraft, but MAG-12 had from three to five A-4 squadrons at any one time which flew either the A-4C or the A-4E.

A single-seat A-4E might carry a typical load of a centerline drop tank with three MK-82 500-pound "snake eyes" on each inboard wing station on a multiple bomb rack and one 500-pound MK-77 napalm on the outboard wing stations. The A-4E gun squadrons in MAG-12 at this time were Marine Attack Squadron (VMA) 211 (CF), VMA-223 (WP), VMA-121 (VK) and VMA-311 (WL).

The TA-4F would typically be best configured with two drop tanks, one each on the inboard wing stations and a four-pack of 5-inch Zuni rockets on each outside wing station. This gave the aircraft endurance with extra fuel to hunt for targets and forward firing ordnance to mark targets for other aircraft. H&MS birds normally did not have a squadron insignia on the fuselage in country.

Sgt Thomas M. Dunne
USMC, 1967-71
Hedgesville, W.Va.

• *Thanks, Sergeant Dunne. We appreciate all of your information. We are commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War. We will feature more about Chu Lai in upcoming issues, but until then, this informative vignette fills in an aspect we could not expound on heavily in our upcoming features.—Sound Off Ed.*

Stripes From the Past: Overseas Chevrons, Wound Chevrons

What does the chevron on Major General Smedley D. Butler's uniform mean?

Gary Rowe
Sylvania, Ga.

• *According to my hash-marked PFC bar-keep buddy, what you probably saw is MajGen Butler's overseas chevrons authorized by the U.S. Army indicating six months of service in a combat zone; in MajGen Butler's case, his two chevrons were earned during World War I. The chevrons were inverted and worn on the lower-left sleeve. If worn on the right*

sleeve, it is a wound chevron. That chevron was authorized between the years of 1918 and 1932. It denoted wounds received in combat against an enemy force or hospitalization following a gassing. Initially created for the Army, sailors and Marines wounded in combat also received it.

My bar-keep buddy also offered another excellent piece of uniform minutia. Sea-going Marines wore overseas chevrons with the point up.—Sound Off Ed.

Kudos for "Sea Stories"

I just wanted to say what a great addition "Sea Stories" is to *Leatherneck* magazine. Whoever came up with the idea deserves some recognition. If I could only come up with a printable story, I would send it.

Although I had an eventful two years in the Corps, most of my sea stories are best left in the past. And my interest in Major General Smedley D. Butler is, for me at 65, a long-standing admiration.

I remember one of your answers to the issue of Marines and tattoos being that MajGen Butler not only had a Marine tattoo, his entire chest was the eagle, globe and anchor. I think there is a photo of that entire work of art on the general's chest. But MajGen Butler was just tops as a Marine, and we've had so many outstanding individuals: "Chesty" Puller, "Manila John" Basilone and John J. McGinty III, and more—how do you choose?

Former Sgt Richard B. Ellenberger
Normandy Park, Wash.

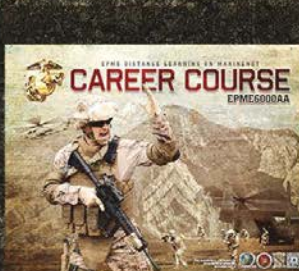
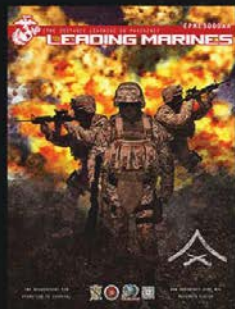
• *The idea for "Sea Stories" was a Leatherneck staff notion, but Smedley D. "Old Gimlet Eye" Butler was for real and one of the "Giants of the Corps." It is Marines like him, those others whom you named and you who give this outfit its famous and solid reputation.—Sound Off Ed.*

Good Eye, Tanker! That's a "Zippo"

I have to admit that I don't know a lot, but I do know a lot about tanks. The tank that you feature on page 30 of the March *Leatherneck* is not an M48 gun tank. It may have been incorrectly identified as such by the photographer, but based on the larger circumference of the gun tube and the lack of a searchlight, my highly trained Marine tank commander's eye tells me that it is an M67A2 flame-thrower tank. The way that the tank was originally designed, it was meant to confuse the enemy, who did not necessarily want to be fried into "crispy critters" by the 360 gallons of napalm that this amazing machine of war carried inside of its turret.

If you will send me the photograph via e-mail, I will ask the USMC Vietnam Tankers Association members if any of

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our more than 500 members can identify the crewman and if he is in fact Corporal William M. Lovell of Company B, 3d Tank Battalion.

Former Sgt John Wear
3d Tanks, RVN
New Hope, Pa.

• *No-bout-a-doubt-it, Sergeant Wear, you still know your tanks. According to "Tanks Encyclopedia," the M67A2 tank called the "Zippo" was a flame-thrower version derived from the M48, designed in 1952-54, at the initiative of the Marine Corps. The M7 projector [flame thrower] was fitted inside a fake gun with a fake muzzle brake to give the illusion of a standard tank. It fired liquid petrol up to 120 meters (490 feet). The production spanned from 1955 to 1959, according to sources, and 109 were produced for the U.S. Army and Marines. The Marines widely used this model in Vietnam.—Sound Off Ed.*

Mistake? Not So Fast

In your March issue on page 31, you made a mistake. According to the book "The First Battle: Operation Starlite and the Beginning of the Blood Debt in Vietnam" by Otto J. Lehrack, Major General Lewis W. Walt recommended that 1st Battalion, Seventh Marine Regiment re-

lieve 3/3 in the defensive perimeter at Chu Lai because that's what they were going to do anyway. So, 1/7 came in later on.

I was on the attack transport USS *Talladega* (APA-208) with "Mike" Company, 7th Marines. Just before midnight, we made an amphibious landing in Chu Lai, Vietnam.

Charles J. Kurtz
Brooklyn, N.Y.

• *I reread the caption and reread the caption and reread it again, and I can't find an error. It only says that 2/4, 1/7 and 3/3 "conducted the amphibious-heliborne search-and-destroy operation, which took place Aug. 18-24." The information was taken directly from "U.S. Marines in Vietnam: The Landing and the Buildup, 1965" by Jack Shulimson and Major Charles M. Johnson, USMC of the History and Museums Division, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, 1978.—Sound Off Ed.*

The 3dMarDiv God Squad

I was intrigued with *Leatherneck's* story in January, "Chaplains and RPs: Shepherds in Combat Boots" by CWO-4 Randy Gaddo, USMC (Ret). It brought back memories.

While on Guadalcanal with the Third Marine Division, I was cleaning my gear



COURTESY OF EARL CHLOUPEK

Chaplain Burns with the assistance of his altar boy, Sgt Chloupek, said Mass on Guadalcanal in a grass-hut chapel over a grass altar.

when a stranger walked in and introduced himself as Chaplain Burns. He asked my name, said he heard I was a Catholic and asked if I would serve Mass with him.

I told him I forgot the Latin responses required of a server. He told me to fake it. He had a grass chapel built with grass altar. The only time Marines attended Mass and confession was before going on

[continued on page 64]

In Every Clime and Place

Compiled by Sara W. Bock

■ AL ASAD, IRAQ Leathernecks Train Iraqi Soldiers, Prepare for Urban Operations

U.S. Marines with Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force–Crisis Response–Central Command (SPMAGTF–CR–CC), Task Force Al Asad, along with other members of coalition forces, trained Iraqi soldiers in military operations on urban terrain (MOUT) at Al Asad Air Base, Iraq, Feb. 14-16.

The coalition forces taught Iraqi soldiers how to clear rooms and hallways, cross “danger areas” and conduct fire-team and squad-sized maneuvers through urban spaces.

Coalition members worked with the Iraqi squad leaders until they had a solid understanding of the techniques. The squad leaders then instructed their junior soldiers using what they had learned, and the coalition forces were present to oversee the training.

“We start out teaching them clearing corners, watching their sectors of fire and to never go into a room alone,” said First Lieutenant Christopher Solop, a platoon commander with SPMAGTF–CR–CC.

Marines and Danish soldiers made “tape houses” for the training by hammering large metal stakes into the ground, then

wrapping them with white engineer tape to create “rooms” and “hallways.”

The training started with a basic three-man fire team, which increased in size to five-man teams as the soldiers began to understand the necessary concepts.

“This is important for them because MOUT is a dangerous situation to be in,” said Solop. “It’s good to teach them and the squad leaders the basics on what to do so they will have something to fall back on if put in this situation.”

During the second day of training, coalition forces took the Iraqi soldiers to a different facility where the soldiers learned to navigate different types of rooms, hallways and stairs.

“The overall goal of the training is to teach them squad tactics in [many] environments so the unit will be successful later on,” said Corporal Joseph N. Hawley, a squad leader with SPMAGTF–CR–CC.

The final part of MOUT training challenged the Iraqi soldiers to clear large buildings and cross “danger areas” while working as a team.

“On the third day we go to a new facility where they are able to use everything from the first two days,” said Solop. “They have to clear rooms, cross linear danger areas, go up stairwells and maneuver as a squad.”

Task Force Al Asad continues to support the mission in Iraq by preparing Iraqi soldiers for future operations through a variety of training exercises—defense and ambush, range, counter-improvised explosive device and MOUT training.

Cpl Tony Simmons, USMC

■ HOHENFELS, GERMANY Exercise Allows Marines, Georgians To Prepare for Deployment

As part of a month-long Mission Rehearsal Exercise (MRE), Georgian soldiers and U.S. Marines of 2d Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company conducted a mission in a simulated Afghan village at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center, Hohenfels, Germany, in late February.

The MRE was part of the Georgian Deployment Program-Resolute Support Mission, which is a partnership between the U.S. Marine Corps and Georgian Armed Forces that prepares Georgian military personnel to support the North Atlantic Treaty Organization’s Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan.

“What the MRE is designed to do is put the Georgians in an environment where they deal with civilians in the battlespace while having a living, breathing enemy in the form of the OPFOR [opposing forces] that’s working against them,” said Major James Geiger, the officer in charge of the Georgia Liaison Team. “The Georgians also have a higher headquarters that they have to interact with and make sure all their procedures are correct.”

Upon completion of the final portion of the MRE, the Marines embedded with the 43rd Georgian Infantry Battalion made final preparations before deploying to Afghanistan.

The training events included close air support training during which Marines and Georgian troops communicated with one another to coordinate the use of air evacuation and strikes on the enemy targets. The second portion was the six-day situational training exercise.

Georgian troops patrolled through simulated Afghan villages, talked to the “key leaders” and “village elders” to support regional security, receive intelligence on the enemy and provide humanitarian aid.

The six-day event required the Georgians



CPL TONY SIMMONS, USMC

From the left, a Danish soldier and a U.S. Marine with SPMAGTF–CR–CC, Task Force Al Asad, teach an Iraqi soldier how to clear a room and maneuver in a fire team during a three-day MOUT training event at Al Asad Air Base, Iraq, Feb. 14.



PFC LLOYD WILLANUEVA, USMC



SFC TYLER KINGSBURY, USA

Above: Georgian soldiers, left, and U.S. Marines from 2d ANGLICO prepare to clear a building during a Mission Rehearsal Exercise at the Joint Multi-national Readiness Center, Hohenfels, Germany, in February. The exercise was part of the Georgian Deployment Program-Resolute Support Mission.

Left: 2d ANGLICO Marines and Georgian soldiers take a knee while conducting a dismounted patrol during a Mission Rehearsal Exercise in Hohenfels, Germany, in February.

to complete operations similar to those they may conduct during their deployment to Afghanistan with minimal support from the training teams. During the MRE, the forward operating base simulated Bagram Air Field in Afghanistan, complete with a simulated bazaar within the base.

The Georgian soldiers and U.S. Marines worked to ensure that the “key leaders” and “village elders” were supportive of

their presence and that the “villagers” were willing to cooperate with them.

“I think the relationship is very positive. I feel we built a level of trust where we can be open with each other, and we can discuss what we are doing well and where we need to improve,” said Geiger of the Marines’ interaction with the Georgian soldiers.

The Marine Corps Security Cooperation Group (MCSCG) trains the Georgia Train-

ing Team and the Georgia Liaison Team in cultural immersion, basic foreign language and foreign weapon systems.

The MCSCG also provides logistics, communication and operational support throughout the exercise. Marine Corps Forces Europe oversees the Georgia Deployment Program while MCSCG handles the MRE and ensures its success.

LCpl Calvin Shamon, USMC

■ SABAH, MALAYSIA 31st MEU Leathernecks Demonstrate Amphibious Capabilities

Members of the Malaysian Armed Forces, alongside Malaysian and U.S. government officials, observed a theater security cooperation event with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit in Sabah, Malaysia, Feb. 27.

The amphibious air-ground demonstration provided an opportunity for the U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corps and the Malaysian Armed Forces to build relationships and pave the way for future exercises in Malaysia.

"I think with more and more cooperation and military dialogue, it will be good because it is something very positive," said Datuk Teo Chee Kang, minister of special tasks in the Malaysian Liberal Democratic Party. "It will make for a better regional security. It is our pleasure and our honor, and we appreciate it," he said of the event.

The event included a live-fire platoon vertical assault at Kota Belud Range in Sabah, which highlighted the 31st MEU's ground combat element. Leathernecks from Company G, Battalion Landing Team, 2d Bn, Fourth Marine Regiment, 31st MEU, performed fire-and-maneuver tactics with small arms and medium machine guns and had support from 60 mm mortars.

The demonstration also highlighted the 31st MEU's aviation combat element—Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 262 (Reinforced). An MV-22B Osprey

dropped off Marines in their designated landing zone as two UH-1Y Super Huey helicopters demonstrated live-fire and close air support using the GAU-17/A Gatling gun, GAU-21 .50-caliber machine gun and 70 mm rocket fire.

"This has been the highlight of our patrol," said Colonel Romin Dasmalchi, Commanding Officer, 31st MEU. "We look forward to any opportunity to do a bilateral engagement and to train with our partners in the region. This is really an honor for us to be able to do this, and I look forward to the next opportunity."

After the live-fire event, the group of Malaysian military and civilian officials loaded onto an MV-22B Osprey and flew to USS *Bonhomme Richard* (LHD-6) operating at sea for a quick tour of the ship.

"We are very grateful to have partners in the region who allow us to visit beautiful places like Sabah, and we are grateful for our military partners visiting us," said Captain Heidi Agle, USN, Commander, Amphibious Squadron 11, as she addressed the crowd of Malaysian visitors aboard the ship.

Since 1951, the United States and Malay-

sia have shared diplomatic relations. This particular event demonstrated the continued commitment to the Marine Forces Pacific-Malaysian Armed Forces 2015 security cooperation program and the increased engagements between III Marine Expeditionary Force and the Malaysian Armed Forces.

SSgt Joseph Digirolamo, USMC

■ YUMA, ARIZ.

Scorpion Fire Allows Aviation Units, Ground Forces to Rehearse CAS

Pilots and crew chiefs from Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron (HMLA) 369, the "Gunfighters," along with Marines from tiltrotor and fixed-wing squadrons within the Third Marine Aircraft Wing, took part in the annual Exercise Scorpion Fire aboard Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz., Jan. 26-Feb. 6.

Scorpion Fire provides a realistic environment for ground units in need of close air support (CAS).

"It is imperative to have aircrew trained as forward air controllers (airborne) [FAC(A)s] to allow them to control [engaging targets] in an operational area where ground forces may be unable to do

Marines from BLT 2/4, 31st MEU run to an MV-22B Osprey from VMM-262 (Rein) during a theater security cooperation event in Sabah, Malaysia, Feb. 27. The event was part of an amphibious air-ground demonstration that was observed by Malaysian and U.S. government officials. (Photo by LCpl Ryan C. Mains, USMC)





CPL BRENDAN KING, USMC

Sgt Eric Hamer, a crew chief with HMLA-369, fires a .50-cal. machine gun downrange at the Chocolate Mountains Aerial Gunnery Range, Calif., Jan. 29, as part of Exercise Scorpion Fire, which was based at MCAS Yuma, Ariz. The exercise allowed HMLA-369 to rehearse CAS for ground units.

so due to visibility issues or enemy fire,” said Captain David Femea, external support coordinator with HMLA-369.

The person who controls and authorizes aircraft fire during a CAS mission is the joint terminal attack controller (JTAC). FAC(A)s can locate, mark and fire on targets while in flight when the JTAC deems it necessary.

The ranges surrounding MCAS Yuma make it the ideal place for squadrons throughout 3d MAW to conduct the training.

“We have pilots gaining the initial qualification, gaining proficiency, or just getting a good exposure to the CAS environment,” said Sergeant Matthew Piciocco, a crew chief with HMLA-369. “This is the environment we operate in during a time of war with multiple friendly ground forces and air forces working together.”

Making sure air and ground units work hand in hand to coordinate exercises like Scorpion Fire prepares the Marines for real-life scenarios in which similar coordination is required.

“When an aircraft checks into an objective area where ground fire controllers are unable to control fires due to task saturation, low situational awareness, enemy fire or combat losses, a FAC(A)-qualified crew will be able to assess the friendly and enemy situation and develop a plan to control aviation and ground fire in support of ground forces,” said Femea.

Marines throughout HMLA-369 know that training exercises like Scorpion Fire exist in support of a greater mission.

“It feels good to go to the desert for a couple weeks knowing you are helping the guys on the ground,” said Piciocco.

Sgt Raquel Barraza, USMC

■ MORÓN AIR BASE, SPAIN EOD Marines, Spanish UME Set Stage for Lasting Relationship

U.S. Marine explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) technicians with Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force—Crisis Response-Africa laid the foundation for future combined training with their Spanish allies during an introductory training session at Morón Air Base, Spain, Feb. 18.

The Marines joined with members of the Spanish Defense Force’s Unidad Militar de Emergencias (UME), a disaster relief unit also stationed at Morón Air Base, to

explore future training opportunities to benefit both nations.

“That’s why we’re out here,” said Sergeant Travis Vuocolo, an EOD technician with SPMAGTF—CR-AF. “You really never know where you’re going to turn up something useful to you, and I’m sure it’s the same thing with them. That’s why we’re trying to get out and do this as much as possible.”

The EOD Marines provided a demonstration of some of their robotic equipment for UME personnel, who in turn offered a tour of a realistic disaster-training site they created nearby. They offered to make that site available to the Marines so the two groups could train side by side.

“They definitely came to us with open arms,” said Staff Sergeant Andrew Cooper, an EOD technician who took part in the exchange. “We’re trying to create a relationship with each other. We’re not just here to do our own thing. We want to come here and work together, learn about each other and learn what our capabilities are and what we can teach each other. They [the UME] had so many questions for us, and they wanted to show us around their area,” Cooper added.

The training facility captured the chaos of a disaster site—or even a war-torn city street. Rubble, destroyed vehicles and collapsing infrastructure above and below ground offers a unique training environment for the EOD technicians. Similarly, the expertise of the U.S. Marine technicians and their robotic equipment could bring a different dimension to training scenarios that could be conducted there.



LCPL CHRISTOPHER MENDOZA, USMC

SSgt Andrew Cooper, left, an EOD technician with SPMAGTF—CR-AF, demonstrates the capabilities of a remote-controlled robot to members of the Spanish Defense Force’s UME at Morón Air Base, Spain, Feb. 18. The Marines used the demonstration as an opportunity to build a stronger relationship with UME personnel and set the stage for future training opportunities.

“When you have professionals get together, you’re going to have some common ground,” said Vuocolo. “It’s very interesting to see what we have in common. Although they are not serving in that billet now, several of the UME members have worked as EOD technicians in the past. Even without having a mastery of Spanish, I could immediately tell when they were talking about certain [procedures].”

Several members of UME served in Afghanistan, where they performed missions similar to those by the Marine EOD technicians supporting the International Security Assistance Force.

“They’ve already talked about opening up doors beyond UME,” said Cooper. “We are very excited here about working with them and learning from them.”

Sgt Paul Peterson, USMC

■ KANSAS CITY, MO.

Marine Reserve Logisticians Experience Tactical Environment During Force-Level Exercise

Leathernecks with Combat Logistics Regiment 4, Fourth Marine Logistics Group participated alongside I Marine Expeditionary Force during a force-level exercise in Kansas City, Mo., Feb. 20-22.

The exercise marked the first time in 10 years that I MEF has done an expeditionary force-level exercise; I MEF’s principal focus during that time had been primarily concentrating on deployments to Afghanistan and Iraq.

“Our guidance from Marine Forces Reserve commander—our vision and strategy—and all of the messages we’ve received has told us that the Marine Corps is changing,” said Major John L. Gallagher, the operations officer with CLR-4, 4th MLG. “Our focus is on being expeditionary, interoperable and [on] our mission-essential tasks, which is the ability to command and control.”

During the exercise, CLR-4 provided logistical support, tracked supplies, unit locations and movements, as well as provided aid to I MEF. CLR-4 also conducted a Logistics Operation Center Exercise with its battalions—Combat Logistics Battalion 23 in Fort Lewis, Wash., and CLB-453 in Aurora, Colo. They set up communications with each battalion to interact and relay information from the regiment to I MEF headquarters at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif.

“We’re creating and simulating a tactical environment as much as we can within the narrow scope of a drill weekend,” said Gallagher.

CLR-4 worked with I MEF to conduct operations with the active component and simulated a field environment by building a Tactical Logistics Operations



CPL GABRIELLE QUIRE, USMC

Cpl Joseph Howell, a tactical switching operator with CLR-4, 4th MLG, observes his surroundings on a patrol in Kansas City, Mo., during a I MEF force-level exercise, Feb. 22. The exercise enabled Marines to improve interoperability between the active and Reserve component, while preparing them in a realistic training environment.

Center. The center was set up as a tent that contained a command and control center with a section for communications and was protected by a guard force for security. The guard force also conducted helicopter and casualty evacuation drills.

“When we deploy, it won’t be just as a Reserve component,” said Captain Andrew S. Cole, an assistant communications officer with CLR-4. “We will integrate with active-duty Marines, so the more we can have that interaction in training and in peacetime, that will make it a lot easier to do our job when we have to go downrange.”

The exercise also introduced the use of a new Reserve Component Unclassified Network (RCUN), which tracks the locations and movements of troops and equipment.

“The RCUN is basically our own training network between different Reserve units,” said Staff Sergeant Derek Holthaus,

the data chief with CLR-4. “It also allows commanders to keep a visual representation of where the different units are out in the field and enables us to communicate.”

The training exercise tested the CLR Marines’ skills to show how well they could perform if they were called upon to do similar operations in a deployable environment. Exercises like these help increase interoperability between the active and Reserve components, which is vital to the Marine Corps mission and overall success, according to Holthaus.

Providing Reserve Marines with realistic training in a field environment and opportunities to conduct operations with the active component benefits the Corps by maintaining a ready and relevant force with interoperable capabilities.

Cpl Gabrielle Quire, USMC

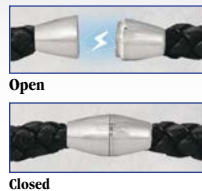


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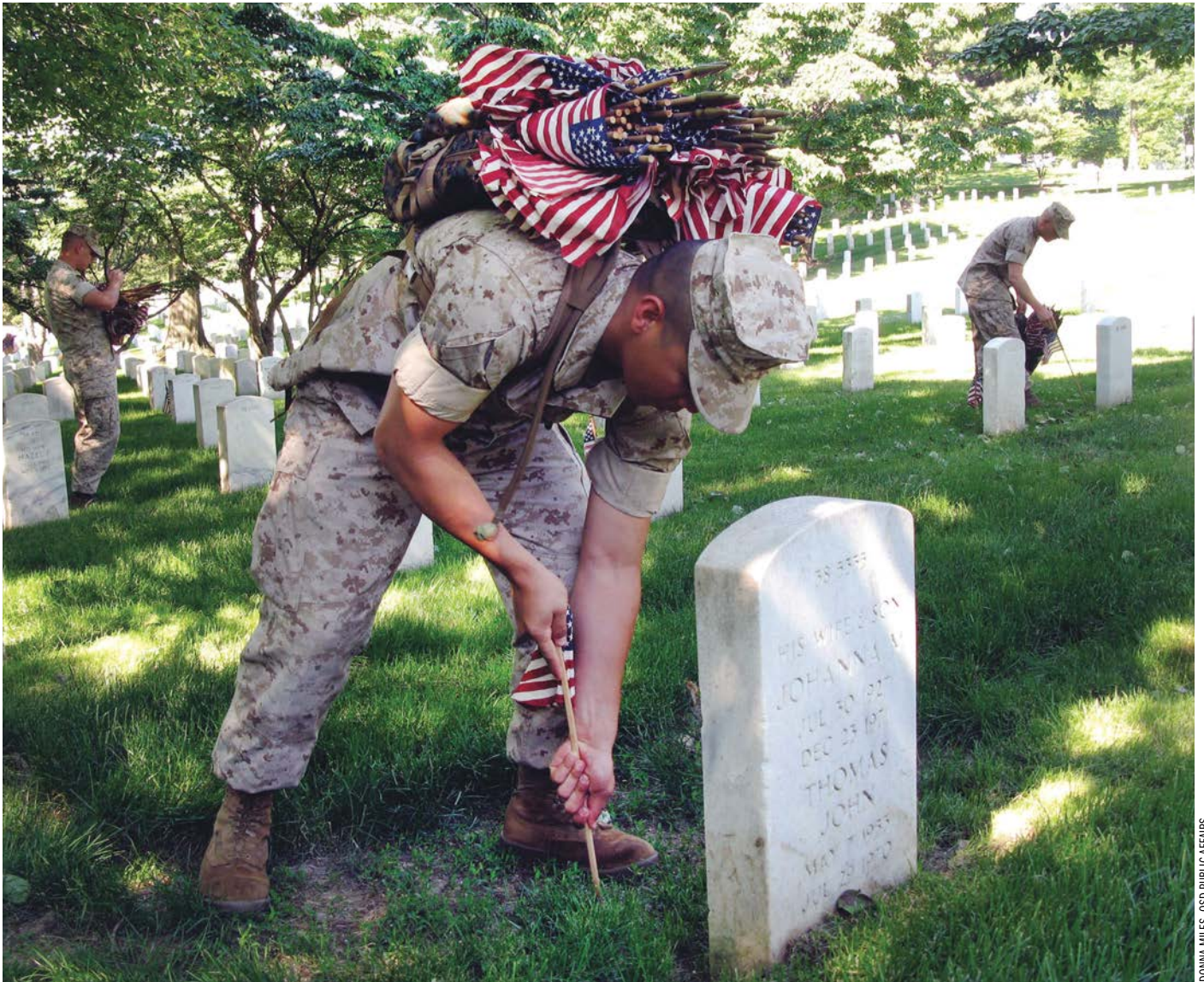
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DONNA MILES, OSD PUBLIC AFFAIRS

LCpl Travor Smith and other Marines from Company A, Marine Barracks, Washington, D.C., place flags at the graves of the fallen in Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Va. "I am further honoring those who have gone before," said LCpl Smith.

REMEMBERING Those Who Have Gone Before

Editor's note: General John F. Kelly, USMC gave the following speech at the Semper Fidelis Society of Boston luncheon in celebration of the Marine Corps Birthday, Nov. 10, 2014.

I have had the privilege of walking with heroes my entire life. It began in the 1950s and '60s when I was growing up in a working-class section of Boston. Nearly everyone in my life was a veteran. By the time I knew them, they'd put up their uniforms and were making lives and raising families as postal workers, freight men for the railroad, or cops, firefighters and maintenance men in the city. Others were tradesmen: construction workers, brick masons, plumbers and linemen for the phone company.

There were a few teachers and others who worked administrative jobs for the city, but most were barely high school graduates, so those kinds of occupations were closed to them. "Besides," they'd say, "I like working with my hands, or outside, or serving and protecting. I wouldn't want to be cooped up inside."

Veteran or not, there was something special about their generation. They worked so hard and had so little, but they loved this country in a way that is, in many ways, almost lost.

The ones who really caught my attention were the ones who called themselves "jarheads," "leathernecks," or just, "Marines." I will never forget listening to them at family gatherings or at neighborhood block parties or sitting on the stoop in the heat of

An Afghanistan army officer and U.S. Marines pay their respects to fallen Marines and sailors during Camp Leatherneck's Memorial Day ceremony May 31, 2010. Pictured from second to left are BGen Joseph Osterman, CG, First Marine Division; Col Robert Castellvi, Chief of Staff, 1stMarDiv; and SgtMaj Phillip Fasciotti.

the summer as they drank their Ballantine Ale and Schlitz. They would absolutely mesmerize us kids—these former soldiers, sailors, Coast Guardsmen and Marines—about the places they'd served and the things they'd seen and done. The older men, those in their late 30s then, would talk of places with alluringly foreign names like Coral Sea, where the Japanese onslaught was stopped; of Midway, where the Pacific tide was turned; or the Atlantic, where the battle against the U-boat made victory in Europe possible. And the former GIs spoke of Kasserine, Salerno, Monte Cassino, Normandy, Bastogne where a million GIs from every city, town and village in America liberated a continent, helping to crush Hitler.

But the Marines were different. When they spoke, they most often looked into the distance with reverence, often welling up yet seldom mentioning the names of the terrible battles they'd fought, but always of their Corps ... and of their pals ... particularly those who they left behind for eternity. They had names like Joe Pedalino, Al Hernest, Joe McCarthy and Brud Rogers. All names most of you have never heard, but they represent the Marines who have always been there for America. And when the task was done, they went home, dealt with their nightmares—and never forgot. It was their sense of esprit de corps and the devotion they had to each other and to the Navy corpsmen who served with them that made me want to be one of them.

Then there were the younger men of the neighborhood. Many only in their late 20s, the little brothers who spoke of Korea, of the North Korean communists and Chinese hordes they fought and defeated all the way to the Yalu River. Names like Dunford come to mind here, but although the names are different, the DNA is the same.

Like their World War II brethren, they seldom spoke, but when the others did, their eyes would search out brothers in the crowd who once wore the eagle, globe and anchor. They would nod to each other as they silently recalled the last-ditch defense on the perimeter, fighting their way across the beach in an impossible landing at Inchon, vicious house-to-house combat in Seoul, and, most terribly, of the Reservoir, and a cold so unimaginable that to this day when they depart each other's company their only farewell is what it was then ... "Stay warm." When they spoke, it was of Joe, or Bobby, or Jose, and of the silly things veterans think of so they



SGT HEDII AGOSTINI, USMC

won't have to focus on the reality of what they'd done to their fellow man, what they'd seen and suffered, of the loss of friends so young ... so precious ... so dead.

Finally, it was the turn of the sons and nephews of these men. The Marines I knew in the 1960s just back from Vietnam seldom spoke of the battles. Of Khe Sanh, Pleiku, Hue City, the DMZ and A Shau Valley, the Rockpile. But they spoke always of their brothers—Marines and Navy "docs"—who shared their dangerous lives and saved their lives. Names like Tony Zinni, Mike Myatt, Terry Ebbert and Van Riper, Tom Dowd,

Dave Wright, Phil Downey, Bob Mueller, Barney Barnum and Tommy Lyons were all there and have remained "Always Faithful" all these many years. They seldom speak of the bad times, but always of a cold beer and the grab-ass when in from the bush. It was a brutal war, no less so, than the ones their dads and uncles fought, but we always heard about their fellow Marines whom they would never forget. It was also the longest war ... at least until today.

All I ever wanted to do since meeting those men was to be a Marine. I got my wish, and in all the years I've served, I've only had one truly bad day since I raised my right hand and shipped off to Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island [S.C.]. My life changed forever the day I enlisted, and since the day three months later that I strapped on the title, I've never been the same. It is a common story and applies to almost every man or woman who ever stood on the yellow footprints.

The Marine Corps is unique among all the services, among all of America's fighting men and women. We have been accused by some of being a cult, because of the way we treasure our hallowed history, sport our impeccable uniforms, be-



USMC

Gen John F. Kelly, USMC

"But the Marines were different. When they spoke ... seldom mentioning the names of the terrible battles they'd fought, but always of their Corps ... and of their pals."

lieve in our fighting prowess, revere those who came before us, and because of our almost irrational dedication to each other and our families. I'll take that accusation as a compliment. We are certainly not a job, or an occupation, or a career—we are a vocation. We are not fair in how we train, organize and equip because war is not fair.

It is the most brutal and unforgiving human endeavor that exists, and we need to have the best of American society trained as Marines to dominate it, and we will accept nothing less than perfection on the battlefield. It is our sacred duty to do so, for the fate of the nation depends on her Marines.

The Marine Corps starts with a unique self-selection because only 1 percent of American society today even considers stepping forward to serve in the first place. Of the 1 percent who step forward, a very small fraction centers himself or herself on the Marine recruiter's door and says, "I want to be a Marine."

But "want" isn't good enough. The young recruit or officer candidate will have to pass through a furnace, a crucible, that will effect a change on them that will last a lifetime because they will and forever be a Marine. More than anything else they will have our motto—Semper Fidelis—seared into their souls. Always faithful: on the battlefield, at home, for the wounded and fallen, or for a Marine and his family who might need help.

Why do they join today when a brutal war is in their immediate future? To fight an enemy that is as vicious as any we have fought in our history. In a war that will continue for decades into the future.

I don't give a damn why he hates us; I just know our enemy

has an illogical hatred for who we are, for how we live our lives, for the tolerance we have for our fellow human beings to live their own lives in the way they see fit, to believe and worship any God, to raise our children in the privacy of our homes in safety and without fear. These cruel and heartless Islamic extremists despise us because we believe all men and women are created equal in the eyes of God and the law, and that no man has a right to tell another how to live. It is not about oil, or our support for our staunchest of allies, Israel, or of our friends in Europe and Asia, or around the world. It is about us as a people. He is totally unwilling to compromise. He will not negotiate. Men like him must be sent to hell, and America's Corps of Marines know how to grant him his wish.

Again, the question, Why in the hell would any young kid today step forward to be a Marine? Why would they not stay at home in the safety of America? You could ask the same question of America's veterans—who have served the American colors since the birth of our nation and of the million who

have died doing so. Most of them served proudly and, like their fathers and grandfathers, returned to their hometowns and built a life for themselves and their families. But they never forgot the pride, the camaraderie, the sense of contribution and commitment that serving the nation delivers to the heart.

And in spite of the fact that they are superb on the battlefield, there is comfort in the fact that Marines are not born killers, but are good and decent young men and women who throughout our history, but most recently in Iraq and Afghanistan, have performed extraordinary acts of bravery and selflessness to a cause they have decided is bigger and more important than themselves. And that like Marines who went before them in

**"They will have our motto—
Semper Fidelis—seared into
their souls. Always faithful:
on the battlefield, at home,
for the wounded and fallen,
or for a Marine and his family
who might need help."**



As a reminder of sacrifice and valor, photos of fallen coalition servicemembers line the halls of the Regional Command (Southwest) Headquarters, Camp Leatherneck, Helmand province, Afghanistan.

uniform, America owes them a debt that can never be repaid for protecting everything we hold dear. That any one of them could have done something more self-serving with their lives, but no, they chose to serve. To them it was more important to fulfill the most basic responsibility of a citizen—the defense of country—than to see to their own immediate well-being.

I believe they are the very best this country produces. Every American owes them a debt that can never be repaid, but Marines don't expect payment because it's reward enough to have worn the eagle, globe and anchor. There are some who criticize today's generation of young people as materialistic and self-absorbed. I don't because they are simply living the lives they were raised to live, a life most often held up by the current opinion makers and cultural icons as fulfilling and necessary in the modern America. What I do know, however, is that regardless of the rest, those who serve today in the Armed Forces in general, and the Marine Corps in particular, have broken the mold and stepped out as men and women of character who are already making their own way in life while protecting yours.

And while serving and fighting, and, yes, sometimes dying for us, they have learned what America used to hold as a common truth to its core. That the real strength of any group—of a platoon, a battalion, a people, a country—is not based on worshiping at the altar of diversity or separateness. No, on the contrary, they've learned by experiencing firsthand what our immigrant ancestors understood as they left their homelands and forged a nation that is full of hope.

They've learned that we are best when we are stitched together by a shared sense of history, values, customs, hopes and dreams that united us, as opposed to a selfish gaggle of "hyphenated" or "multicultural" individuals. They've learned the fundamental truths upon which this country was made great—that it's not about the color of skin, but about the character within. That it's not about where in the world you came from, but all about why you came and that you are eager to embrace America's customs, traditions and way of life because you chose to come here to live, to thrive, to integrate and to assimilate—to be an American. America welcomes you, and the price of happiness here is that you become an American. You do not have to stop being proud of who you were, but be prouder of what you have become ... an American.

If anyone needs a lesson, take one from our military men and women—particularly the 876 from this war who rest in Section 60 of Arlington National Cemetery. Rich and poor, native-born and immigrant, black, white and Asian, all of whom died for America. And what of their families who raised and nurtured them? These families are special and are often confused about the young man or woman they raised who walked into the house one day and informed everyone, "I just joined the Marines" or "I am going to be a Navy corpsman." For the rest of their loved one's time in the ranks, they worry. If their kid goes off to war, they drive themselves crazy with worry, but they try to never betray the terrible anxiety they feel. It wouldn't be right, they think. I would never want him or her to think they'd burdened us with this fear. They have to stay focused on where they are and what they are doing. Oftentimes they will hang a yellow ribbon on the front door, or a blue star in the window, and they wait.

These families are proud of their Marines. Proud they stepped forward when so many others never even considered it. Proud that by this one very personal decision—to serve a cause higher than themselves regardless of the outcome to them personally—they gave meaning to two questions that have over the centuries defined the dedication of free and righteous men and women in the fight against wickedness: "If not me, Dad, who? If not now, Mom, when?"

If we did not have citizens willing to serve, we would have lost in our struggle against the oppression of the British Empire. Slavery might never have been eradicated from our shores, and the rights of all Americans under the law might still be just a dream. The Nazis would have triumphed. The death camps never liberated and eliminated. Communism would never have been



Veterans from the Marine Corps League pay tribute to the fallen during the annual Veterans Memorial Day Committee Memorial Service and Day of Remembrance Ceremony at Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery, San Diego.

thrown onto the dustbin of history. And today the high tide of Islamic extremism—an empire of hate that Osama bin Laden proclaimed would last forever—was counted in only days after 9/11 once our country woke up and took the fight to them on their home turf. That is the kind of young person who volunteers. Their families are as proud that they stepped forward as they are crushed if, God forbid, they lose them.

What their family and friends never saw is how without hesitation their Marines climbed into trucks or helicopters, or departed the wire on patrol. The Marines learned early that fear is always with you. They also soon learned how random combat is ... how you have absolutely no control over whether you live or die ... what can happen to you—or just as importantly to your best friend or one of your men—in an instant.

They go, not because they are courageous beyond imagination—which they are. They go, not because of their country, or their flag, or their national anthem—all of which they love and carry in their hearts. No, they go because of the love they have for each other, for their fellow Marines, and they go because of the legends who wore the eagle, globe and anchor long before they were born and upon whose shoulders they stand. They go because of each other. They go because they are Marines.

The fear "out there," or "over there," or "overseas," or "in the fight" is routinely all-consuming and constant, but they push through it and do their duty regardless of the danger, because

that is what the Marines who came before them did—and they know it. Their families likely did not know them as one of the bravest, most courageous and committed young people our society produces, but their fellow Marines can attest to it.

As terrifying as combat is, when the explosions and tracers are everywhere and no man or woman would call them coward or think less of them if they dropped down and saved themselves, none of them do. They saddle up and move to the sound of the guns and are drawn forward by the presence and the power of their fellow Marines.

When there is no rational reason for a man or a woman to do anything but run away in horror or find a hole to hide in—they don't. When no one would call them chicken for cowering behind a wall or shivering in panic in a bunker, slave to the most basic of all instincts—survival—none of them do. When the calls for the corpsman are shouted from the mouths of young kids who know they will soon be with their God—when seconds seem like hours and it all becomes slow motion and fast-forward at the same time—and the only sensible act is stop, get down, save yourself—they never do. It doesn't matter who the enemy is, what kind of ideology they follow, or where on earth they've been sent to fight; they are simply magnificent.

And of the Marines and docs who will never come home and be forever young in the hearts of all who knew and loved them, there is comfort in the fact that when they fell, they were not alone. When they went, they were surrounded by the finest men and women on this earth—their fellow Marines and Navy

“And of the Marines and docs who will never come home and be forever young in the hearts of all who knew and loved them, there is comfort in the fact that when they fell, they were not alone.”

of Marines they proudly joined brought them home to the country they served ... to rest in the good earth of the America they loved ... forever.

As our country is today locked in mortal combat with an enemy whose only dream is our complete destruction, and other potential enemies are increasingly stepping forward in Europe, Africa, Latin America and Asia, I am confident that there are young kids today gathered in small towns and city neighborhoods just as mesmerized as I was so many years ago. That as they sit just outside the circle of veterans drinking their beer and talking of the battles and the buddies they served with in this war, that just enough of these youngsters will appreciate the importance of service to the nation. That they will realize that there are matters in our dangerous world much bigger than themselves, and that there are dangerous men and ideologies just over our horizon that must be defeated. That as a wise man once said: “People sleep peaceably in their beds at night only because rough men stand ready to do violence on their behalf.”

And I have no doubt that the best of them will recognize the same thing I did: the reverence in which the Marines speak not of their own bravery, and not of the battles they fought in, but of their friends—living and dead—with names like Todd Desgrosselliers, James Clement, Dan Dowd, Pat Murray, Mike Dorsey, Tom Shuman, Cam West and Jake Fox who, thank God, are still with us, and Chance Phelps, Jonathan Yale, Jordan Heurter, Danny McGuire, Jennifer Harris, Rob Richards, Travis Manion, “Otis” Riable, Greg Buckley and the boys from “Dark Horse”: Ian Tawney, Derek Wyatt, Wil Donnelly, Farrell Gilliam and Robert Michael Kelly, who are now part of the legend—for eternity.

*“They went with songs to the battle,
they were young,
Straight of limb, true of eye, steady
and aglow.
They were staunch to the end against
odds uncounted,
They fell with their faces to the foe.*

*“They shall grow not old, as we that
are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the
years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in
the morning
We will remember them.”*

(An excerpt from “For the Fallen”
by Robert Laurence Binyon)

Semper Fidelis.

Author's bio: Gen John F. Kelly is currently serving as the Commander, U.S. Southern Command. He has served for more than 40 years in a variety of billets including Commanding General, I Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward) during Operation Iraqi Freedom and as the Senior Military Assistant to the Secretary of Defense. Gen Kelly considers his time as an enlisted infantryman, however, as the best job he has ever had and sergeant as the best grade in which he has served.



Cpl John J. Granville makes a rubbing of his father's name on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Washington, D.C. His father, LCpl John E. Granville, served as a machine-gunner with Seventh Marine Regiment in Vietnam and died in 2007 from a heart condition that stemmed from a land mine that severed his legs in Vietnam. His name was added to “The Wall” on May 4, 2010.

docs—who desperately tried to save their lives while holding their hands and staring into their eyes, praying with them, listening to all the little stories about their families and their homes until they were gone. They were not alone.

And when the spirit left them, their Marine family lovingly wrapped them in whatever passed for a shroud and sent them home. In this, their last journey, they were never alone. At every stop along the way, they were treated with the greatest reverence and deepest respect due a fallen hero until members of the Corps

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SSgt David H. Stewart, USMC deployed multiple times as a combat engineer in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. He was killed on June 20, 2014, in Helmand province, Afghanistan, while serving with 2d Combat Engineer Battalion. His father, LtCol Nelson H. Stewart, USMC (Ret), below right, wrote the following poem in tribute to his son.



COURTESY OF LTCOL NELSON H. STEWART, USMC (RET)



COURTESY OF LTCOL NELSON H. STEWART, USMC (RET)

FROM A MARINE TO HIS GRIEVING DAD

“Hey, Dad, it’s me—don’t worry, I’m fine,
and this isn’t your mind playing tricks;
My spirit’s alive and that’s what you’re hearing—
you’ve no mental issues to fix.

“You’ve said before that you sensed me near,
and this message is just to say,
You’re right and I’m here and my spirit is real
and I’m looking down every day.

“I wanted to tell you how that day in June
appears as I look at it now.
The tasking was clear, and we had all the gear
that our route-clearance mission allowed.

“Our team moved with care near the town of Showal,
where bombs had often been found;
We all knew the risks, and this was our job,
so we searched every inch of the ground.

“I’d done this for years through boredom and fears,
but today luck was with me no more;
The bastard who killed us knew what he was doing
and waited for truck number four.

“I want you to know that I never felt pain,
nor did either my young Marine brothers;
We left in an instant for those Pearly Gates
as the corpsmen worked hard on the others.

“My soul flew away, but I still saw my guys
and looked back upon them with love;
In spite of the carnage, they still tried to save us,
not knowing we’d flown far above.

“I looked down and cried when you took the call
and collapsed right down to your knees;
While I didn’t suffer, your torment was clear,
but your pain will eventually ease.

“So now is the time for me to convey a message,
sent straight to your heart,
I’m floating right here, a whisper away—
a spirit that never will part.

“You might want to know: Remember the times
when we’d sing about ‘Heaven’s Scenes’?
Well, that is all true and I’m proud to say
that I’m serving with many Marines.

“There are streets to be guarded and St. Peter knows,
it’s a job that I know how to do,
So off I must go to man this great post,
but remember: I watch over you.”

LtCol Nelson H. Stewart, USMC (Ret)
In memory of his son
SSgt David Stewart
KIA, Afghanistan, June 20, 2014

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Ensuring Our Fallen Heroes Are Not Forgotten



SGT TATUM VAYANANDA, USMC

A May 2013 Memorial Day ceremony takes place at Aisne-Marne American Cemetery in France near the historic battlegrounds of the World War I Battle of Belleau Wood. To observe Memorial Day, U.S. Marines and their French counterparts gather yearly at the cemetery to commemorate the fallen heroes. Memorial Day, originally called Decoration Day, was established to honor U.S. military personnel who died in the American Civil War. It was not until after WW I that the day was expanded to honor those who have died in all American wars. In 1971, Congress declared Memorial Day a U.S. holiday.



SGT CALEB GOMEZ, USMC

Decorating gravesites with wreaths, flowers and flags has become a tradition during Memorial Day celebrations. A wreath (above) floats on water during a Memorial Day commemoration at the *Intrepid* Sea, Air and Space Museum in New York, May 27, 2013. Leathernecks from U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Europe (right) set up the grounds of Aisne-Marne American Cemetery for the next day's Memorial Day ceremony by placing U.S. and French flags on each of the 2,289 graves and marking those of the Marines and sailors with flowers May 25, 2013.



SGT TATUM VAYANANDA, USMC



LCPL JAMES GULLIVER, USMC



DDO

Leathernecks of 3d Battalion, 10th Marines fire 105 mm howitzers during a Memorial Day gun salute at Camp Lejeune, N.C., May 28, 2012.



CPL CHRISTINA O'NEIL, USMC

Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., hosted a pre-Memorial Day formation run May 23, 2013, with each Quantico-based unit carrying its organizational colors from the site of the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Triangle to Quantico National Cemetery.

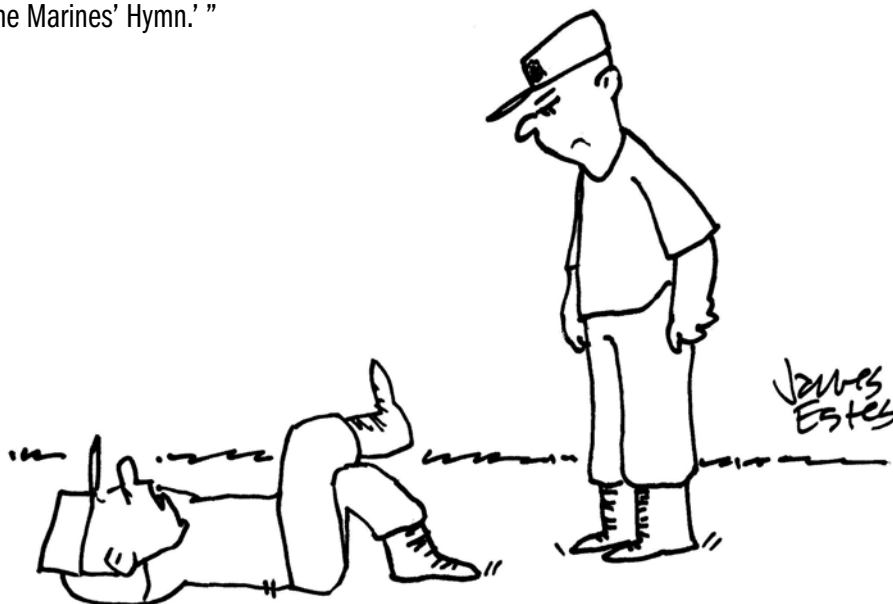
Leatherneck Laffs



"Maybe you'd have more luck with a lullaby than 'The Marines' Hymn.'"



Air Rage



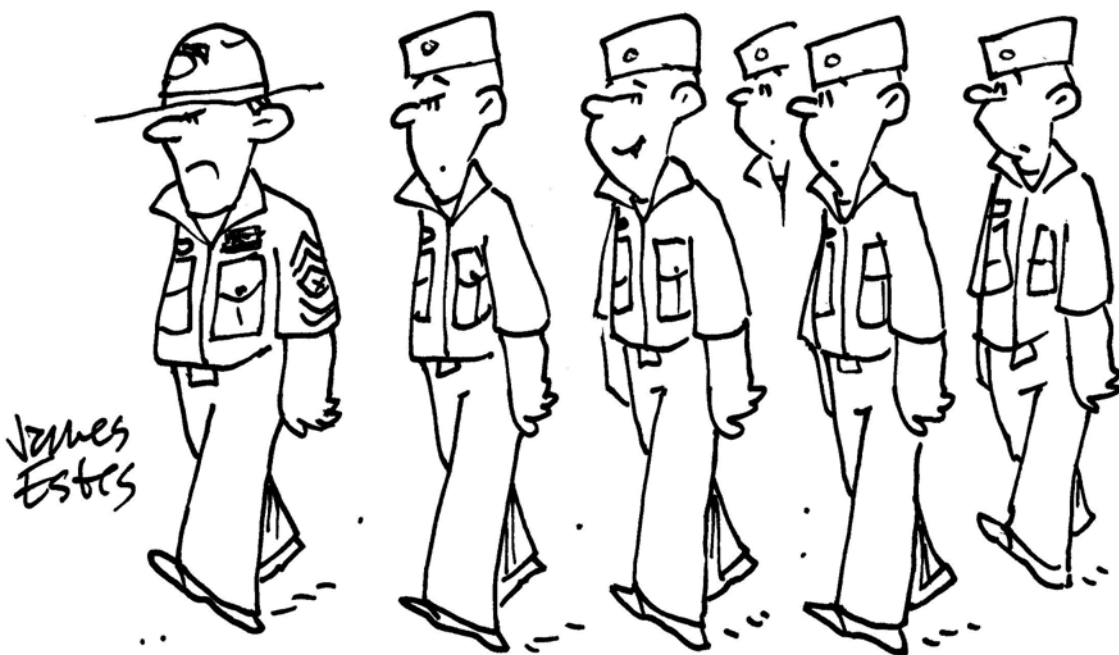
"You said, 'Fall out.' I fell out."

BOOT CAMP

S.J. Stout



"Freeze! Don't move! I forgot to turn my phone off."



"I love a parade, don't you?"

Desert Storm Marine Shoots Down MiG



COURTESY OF CHUCK MAGILL

Capt Chuck "Sly" Magill was on an exchange tour with an Air Force F-15 Eagle squadron when he led the first daylight raid of Operation Desert Storm.

By Mike Hoeflerlin

According to General Charles A. Horner, USAF (Ret), commander of all U.S. and allied air assets during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, the first daylight raid of the war was “a ‘lynchpin’ in the air campaign. ... We put up a ‘wall of Eagles’ out in front of the main force with the intention of overwhelming, demoralizing and destroying the Iraqi Air Force. We succeeded.” Marine Captain Chuck Magill led that mission.

“Splash Two”

In Saudi Arabia, on Jan. 17, 1991, the first day of the Gulf War, U.S. forces and allies prepared for the first massive daylight air raid of the conflict. Realizing that total air superiority was mandatory, coalition planners decided to send a “wall of Eagles,” U.S. Air Force F-15Cs, from the 58th Tactical Fighter Squadron (TFS) ahead of the main strike package of tankers, EF-111s, additional F-15 Eagles, plus numerous bomb- and missile-laden F-16s, which were to attack two important Iraqi airfields. In addition, Air Force F-4G Wild Weasels were assigned to neutralize Iraqi radar and surface-to-air missile (SAM) sites. If the Eagles were unable to control the skies, the entire mission would be aborted.

Marine Captain Chuck “Sly” Magill, on an exchange tour with the Air Force and flying the lead F-15, was the air-to-air mission commander responsible for the planning and execution of the entire air superiority mission. His recognized leadership and fighting skills were about to be tested. Years later he remembered his thoughts that day: “Here I am, a Marine captain, leading this massive strike.” Failure was not an option.

As the F-15s thundered north into Iraq ahead of the attacking force, their sole objective was to dominate the skies should the Iraqis send up interceptors. The well-trained American pilots were ready for anything.

“Zerex 71 [Magill’s call sign], you have two bandits south of the target ... cleared to kill,” radioed an Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) aircraft. “Roger that,” Magill responded, while thinking, “We’re 150 miles away, and I’m already cleared to kill. ... Is this for real?” The “bandits” were two of the most lethal, feared and sophisticated fighters in the world at that time: Soviet-made MiG-29 Fulcrums.

Splitting his eight-aircraft formation into two four-plane divisions, Magill ordered one division to continue to provide forward air cover, while his division



The aircraft flown by Capt Magill is now assigned to the 44th Fighter Squadron at Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, Japan. A green “kill” star below the canopy rail signifies Capt Magill’s air-to-air victory.

pursued the deadly Fulcrums. Just as his flight made radar contact with the MiGs, urgent SAM warnings caused them to take severe evasive action and employ immediate countermeasures. Instinctively, they jettisoned their wing tanks and deployed chaff to break the radar locks. “Then the missiles came,” Magill recounted, “and all hell broke loose. ... The radars were still locking us up.” After successful evasive maneuvering, the SAM threat dissipated. Magill regrouped the flight, and they resumed the hunt for the Fulcrums.

They located the MiGs, which at the time appeared to be fleeing. Then, inexplicably, the enemy aircraft turned and accelerated sharply. Magill thought, “They’re coming back [at us] ... doing about 580 to 600 knots.” He quickly deployed his No. 2 and No. 4 Eagles to provide cover while he and his No. 3, Capt Rhory “Hoser” Draeger, USAF, pushed ahead to engage the rapidly oncoming MiGs.

Capt Magill made Marine Corps history that day when he became the first, last and only Marine aviator since Vietnam to record an air-to-air kill. Even more impressive is that it came against one of the most formidable fighters on the planet.

Almost a quarter century later, Lieutenant Colonel Magill, USMCR (Ret) remembered: “My Number 3 locked up his target and fired [an AIM-7 Sparrow] right away, [but] I thought he might have fired on the MiG that I was targeting, so I decided to take the other guy. I locked and fired.

... The missile came off, and it went straight to the ground. ... It just didn’t fly right, so I came back and fired another one at much shorter range. The missile that went low came up and hit him in the right wing-root, and the second went right through the fuselage. My Number 3’s missile went right through the canopy of the other MiG-29.

“We were going real fast, real low, looking for any other adversaries that might be coming, and I noticed that the terrain was turning from desert to green. ... We flew right over the Euphrates River, heading right toward Baghdad, then probably the most heavily defended city in the world, so I called ‘Immelmann, now’ [a maneuver initiated by adding maximum power and pointing the aircraft’s nose straight up] ... and I got locked up by SAMs again. ... I saw them on radar and visually. ... I was going straight up to about 25,000 feet and rolled over on my back, and I could see the missiles coming up. ... I saw at least three of them. ... They [would] fly intercept paths trying to anticipate [where I would be]. Since I was the first to go up, they were locked on [only] to me ... so I had to do all of these [evasive] breaks. ... I went from 30,000 feet to about 10,000, trying to avoid the missiles.”

After successfully evading the SAMs, Sly Magill was “way past Bingo fuel which means it’s time to go home.” Just then he heard again and again the dreaded “Fuel Low” warning, “and all [his] gauges went to zero. ... It was disheartening,” he



Below left: Capt Magill and his crew chief from the 58th TFS prior to a training flight during Operation Desert Shield in 1990.

Below right: Capt Magill's wife, Lisa, pins on his wings at NAS Kingsville, Texas, in August 1983.



COURTESY OF CHUCK MAGILL



COURTESY OF CHUCK MAGILL

said. Fortunately, Magill and Draeger found a tanker, took on fuel and headed back to base. "On the tanker they could see that we'd expended ordnance," said Magill. "They called back so everyone at the base knew."

They continued south and climbed above some F-16s heading north. "That's the only time radio silence was broken as we reported back, 'Splash Two,' 'Splash Two' and the F-16 guys came back with a more descriptive 'Sierra Hotel.'"

As the victorious duo approached their base, Draeger said, "Sly, we gotta do an air show for the troops." Magill said, "No, let's just go back." A persistent Draeger said, "Sly, we just gotta do an air show. This is cool stuff."

"We came in smokin' hot into the overhead in combat formation," said Magill. "[We] came into the break pretty fast, pretty low, and I could see on the ground. ... There must have been about 150 people out on the ramp. ... They'd heard we got some kills, [and] everyone was pretty fired up. ... I came in at about 50 feet down center stage, full afterburner, and then just

snapped it back and did an aileron roll over the top of the troops. I remember looking upside down at the troops when the master caution light came on, and I thought, 'I'm going to kill myself right here in front of

God and country.' The commander was so mad about the air show that he wanted to ground us ... but to the troops it was a huge deal. ... It was a scene I'll never forget.

... We celebrated for about 10 minutes and then went into 'intel' to debrief and get ready for the next mission a few hours later."

So, how does a Marine captain/fighter pilot flying an Air Force jet get to lead one of the largest daylight air strikes of the war? Fate? Happenstance? A hockey injury?

The Beginning

Chuck Magill grew up in the Chicago suburbs. He loved hockey and played for two years at Western Illinois University. "I really thought I was going to be a professional hockey player ... then I blew out my knee," he explained. Hockey was over. "So I went out west to Arizona State University."

He made good grades, graduated with

a degree in business administration and took a job as an auditor with a Phoenix firm, "but something was missing," he admitted. "I was bored."

For amusement, Magill and some friends would sometimes go to nearby Luke Air Force Base. "We'd go out and sit at the end of the runway and watch the Phantoms come in and the F-15s doing closed patterns. ... They were coming in right over the tops of our heads, probably 20 feet above us. I was always enamored with fighters ... just seeing them fly, hearing the noise. ... I thought, 'This would be a good way to go.'"

In college Magill had contemplated becoming a Marine pilot, but never followed through. Then something happened at Luke AFB that changed the course of his life. "A Marine AV-8 [Harrier] came into the pattern. He was doing VSTOL [hovering and vertical, short takeoff and landing] stuff. I thought, 'This is awesome. This is absolutely incredible.' I started thinking seriously about the Marine Corps again."

Magill returned to his "boring" job, "but in the back of my mind, it was fighters, fighters, fighters," he said, with a smile. "I loved seeing them fly, hearing them. ... I was hooked, and I was determined to be a fighter pilot." He then began a journey that would eventually pit him in combat against some of the most feared and formidable aircraft and missile defenses in the world.

"I checked out all the services," he said,





COURTESY OF CHUCK MAGILL

Capt Chuck "Sly" Magill and Capt Ed "Wilber" Camp, USAF in front of an F-15 in Saudi Arabia before flying a mission during Operation Desert Storm.

"but I liked the idea of the Marine Corps' close air support and the chance that you could be a fighter pilot and at the same time drop bombs to protect troops on the ground." The decision was made. "To me it seemed like the best of both worlds. It was one of the best decisions of my life."

OCS and Beyond

In 1979 an enthusiastic, albeit somewhat naïve, Chuck Magill headed east for Marine Corps Officer Candidates School (OCS) at Quantico, Va. "OCS was the biggest culture shock of my life," he said. "This is really embarrassing. ... I showed up with my golf bag over my shoulder and a tennis racket ... and my hair was much longer than anyone else in line. I was way out of my comfort zone."

After that ignominious beginning, things got better. The Marine Corps was testing a new aircraft—the F/A-18 Hornet. "I stayed focused in OCS because I wanted to fly that airplane," he said. "I even kept a picture of it in my footlocker."

Successfully completing OCS, Second

Lieutenant Magill attended The Basic School where he learned ground warfare tactics that would serve him well as an aviator and a partner in the Corps' vaunted "Air-Ground Team." He continued to focus on his dream and goal of flying the Hornet.

He next reported to Naval Air Station Pensacola, Fla., for flight training and discovered that he was comfortable and competent flying airplanes. He was so good that he requested and was issued orders to fly jets. At NAS Kingsville, Texas, he continued to excel and was designated a naval aviator and awarded his wings of gold.

First Lieutenant Magill received orders to fly the F-4 Phantom. "It was big, loud and smoky. I was ready to go," he said. Then fate intervened. The senior Marine at Kingsville, Maj John "Caps" Capito, asked Magill if he would take a Selectively

Retained Graduate Instructor Pilot (SERGRAD) assignment, remain at Kingsville as a flight instructor and later fly the Marines' newest jet, the F/A-18 Hornet, the aircraft Chuck Magill desperately wanted to fly.

"There are those few students who have most of what it takes in place when you meet them. Chuck was one of

those people. He had drive, life experience and a maturity which was evident in flight training. He was an officer you could count upon to make the transition from student to instructor without worry. Going to the F-18 was a fair reward

for his hard work and efforts," recalled Capito, who retired as a lieutenant colonel.

Magill's next stop was the Replacement Air Group at NAS Lemoore, Calif., where he started flying the airplane of his dreams. The legend of Chuck Magill, consummate



Hornet driver, was about to begin. The hours were long; the flying was good. Once on a deployment to Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz., fate intervened again when, at the Officers Club, in a high-stakes game of dice, he beat the commanding officer of Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 531, Manfred “Fokker” Rietsch.

“Nobody beat him at dice or in the air ... but somehow that night I did,” Magill remembered. “He was the finest officer and the best Marine fighter pilot I’ve ever known. He became my mentor, and I learned a lot about flying and life from him.”

The legendary Rietsch, who commanded the largest Marine aircraft group ever during Operations Desert Shield/Storm and was the first Marine “Top Gun” instructor, flew more F-4 missions (653) in Vietnam than any other pilot. What did he see in 1stLt Magill?

“After I witnessed Chuck’s class act in the ‘big boy’ dice game at happy hour, I asked some of the instructors in the training squadron if this guy was as good in the air as in the bar. I was told that he had ‘golden hands.’ The guys in my squadron also gave him a ‘thumbs up’ based on bravado and personality. I then got ahold of the wing G-1 to get him assigned to our squadron,” said Colonel Rietsch, now retired from the Marine Corps.

Going to -531, where he honed his air-to-air combat skills and perfected his close-air-support capabilities, was a turning point in Magill’s career as a fighter pilot. He did the usual Marine deployments and training throughout the United States and around the world, including a deployment to Egypt in 1985, where he familiar-

ized himself with the language and customs of that region, knowledge that would serve him well some years later. He was selected to go to the Navy’s Fighter Weapons School, or “Top Gun,” and he subsequently completed the Marine Corps’ demanding Weapons and Tactics Instructor Course (WTI) at Yuma, making him a weapons expert. Sly Magill was getting his ticket punched, and his future as a Marine fighter pilot was assured.

Why “Sly”?

Magill acquired the call sign “Sly” because of his intensity, cunning and superior flying abilities in some hotly contested ACM (air combat maneuvering) duels. It was said that he would do just about anything to gain the upper hand in staged “dogfights” with “friendly” adversaries. He hated to lose. Feigning fatigue, he once convinced his soon-to-be opponent that he was too tired to put up much of a fight. He had, in fact, lured the other pilot into a false sense of security, and during the ensuing encounter, Magill thoroughly dominated. On the ground during the debriefing, the other pilot remarked, “You’re a sly b-----, aren’t you?” Part of the name stuck.

After mastering the F/A-18 and racking up more than a thousand hours of flight time, Magill looked for other challenges. He put in for and was granted a three-year exchange tour with one of the top F-15 Eagle fighter squadrons in the U.S. Air Force, the famed “Gorillas” of the 58th



Tactical Fighter Squadron, commanded by Lt Col Francis “Paco” Geisler, USAF.

“Colonel Geisler was an incredible fighter pilot ... a great teacher and a true legend in the F-15 community,” said Magill. “Flying the F-15,” he added, “was another dream come true. ... It’s a wonderful airplane, and I loved flying it.”

Magill quickly became very proficient in the Eagle. Along the way he became a weapons expert, an instructor pilot and a mission commander. Magill and his fellow Gorilla pilots became profoundly proficient in the air. While he completely

assimilated into the USAF squadron, it was clear that Chuck Magill was first, foremost and always a Marine.

In the summer of 1990, the Gorillas deployed to Saudi Arabia as part of Operation Desert Shield. Because he had extensive “over-water” experience as a result of previous deployments and because he had been to the Middle East before, Sly Magill was selected to lead the first element of 10 aircraft to Saudi Arabia, an almost 16-hour nonstop flight in complete radio silence.

Until hostilities erupted, Magill and the other pilots spent innumerable hours flying and planning. In addition to other training activities, “We [also] flew continuously against Navy fighters from the *JFK* [USS *John F. Kennedy* (CV-67)] and the ‘Sara’ [USS *Saratoga* (CV-60)],” Magill said. “We also trained with the Saudis and the British; we were ready.”

Although the Iraqis reportedly had the fifth largest air force and some of the best aircraft in the world, Magill and the other Gorillas were fully prepared. When “it” hit the fan” and the war began, the pilots of the 58th TFS accounted for more air-to-air kills (16) than any other squadron in the war. Capt Magill, the history-making Marine fighter pilot, was an integral part of the success of the 58th TFS and the overall coalition victory.

Editor’s note: Chuck Magill is a captain and vice president, operational coordination, for Southwest Airlines in Dallas. Utilizing leadership and management qualities he developed in the Marine Corps, Magill has been instrumental in taking Southwest Airlines to new heights.

Author’s bio: Mike Hoeflerlin, a former Marine Corps combat correspondent, commanded at the platoon and company levels in the First Marine Division and later flew helicopters in the Third Marine Aircraft Wing.



Chuck Magill Honored as Desert Storm Hero

In 2012 the Flying Leatherneck Historical Foundation celebrated “100 Years of Marine Corps Aviation” by honoring a hero from each war/conflict starting with World War II, through Korea, Vietnam, Desert Storm and the current “War on Terror.” Lieutenant Colonel Chuck Magill, USMCR (Ret) was its “Hero-Representative” for Desert Storm.

Major General Robert G. Butcher, USMC (Ret), chairman of the Flying Leatherneck Historical Foundation, summed up the decision to honor Magill. “Chuck Magill was clearly a superior fighter pilot! The fact that he shot down a MiG-29 could be attributed to a skilled fighter pilot being in the right place at the right time, but the additional fact that a Marine Corps pilot on exchange duty with the Air Force was selected to lead the first daylight mission of Desert Storm tells me that his ability to lead in the air and to manage rapidly changing combat situations was recognized and was exceptional.”

—Mike Hoeflerlin



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LCOR KEVIN L. KING, USN (RET)

MATSG-21: Changes Allow Student Aviators to Soar

By LtCol Gabriel “Fabs” Fabbri, USMC

How does a Marine officer become a naval aviator? It all starts with Marine Aviation Training Support Group (MATSG) 21, which has been the “Gateway to Marine Aviation” since 1969. After graduating from The Basic School at Quantico, Va., Marine student pilots and flight officers begin their path to earning their wings at MATSG-21 aboard Naval Air Station (NAS) Pensacola, Fla., the “cradle of naval aviation.”

MATSG-21 was recently divided into two separate commands: MATSG-21, commanded by Colonel Eric F. Buer, and MATSG-23, commanded by Col Russell A. Blauw. This was done in order to allow the commands to focus and effect change where needed, in the Marine Corps’ most expensive training pipeline—aviation. From introductory training at NAS Pensacola to earning wings, it costs about \$1.1 million to produce a strike pilot.

MATSG-21 is responsible for providing administrative support required and in-

structors for aviation training for pilots and flight officers. The command monitors the flow of students and provides Marine Corps discipline and Marine Corps-specific training input and modifications where needed. MATSG-21 also supports personnel at Fort Benning, Ga.; Panama

MATSG-21 has been able to focus on its production, significantly reducing time that future Marine aviators spend awaiting training.

City, Fla.; Eglin Air Force Base, Fla.; and other ancillary activities.

MATSG-23 is now responsible for providing all support required for Marine Corps aviation logistics entry-level training.

With this change, MATSG-21 has been able to focus on its production, significantly reducing time that future Marine aviators spend awaiting training. The days of waiting a year to start flight training

are gone—wait time has been reduced to a few days.

The grading system also has undergone recent changes. Students are no longer graded subjectively on an instructor’s perspective of their performance. The Chief of Naval Aviation Training (CNATRA) has defined flight performance parameters that must be maintained for a student to progress, and all students are held to this standard throughout training. When a student meets a standard, the student is required to perform at that standard for each specific maneuver for the rest of flight training. This ensures student learning, and more importantly, their retention is constantly evaluated.

Other changes include the addition of introductory flight screening (IFS) where a student pilot or flight officer will complete approximately 12 hours of flight time in a Cessna 172, a small general aviation airplane. This determines the student’s air adaptability and provides his or her first true exposure to aviation. If a student already has a private pilot’s certificate, he

The T6 Texan II, which recently replaced the T-34 Mentor, is used during primary flight training.



COURTESY OF MATSG-21

Student helicopter pilots remain in Pensacola for training in the TH-57 Sea Ranger.



COURTESY OF MATSG-21

In addition to being used for intermediate and advanced strike training, the T-45C also is used for advanced NFO training.



COURTESY OF MATSG-21

or she bypasses IFS and proceeds directly to aviation preflight indoctrination (API), which is an introduction to aviation principles and doctrine.

Primary flight training is the next step to becoming a Marine pilot or flight officer. The transition began in 2005 to replace the T-34 Mentor with the T-6 Texan II, providing a significant leap forward in performance. The T-34 had round-dial instruments and used ground-based navigation aids. The T-6 has a glass cockpit, an ejection seat and GPS-based navigation capability. This creates a common base platform shared by all USMC fleet aircraft.

Another advancement that student Marine aviators benefit from is enhanced flight simulation. In the past, simulators offered little more than cockpit familiarization and basic instrument flight training. Today's T-6 simulation provides full visual capability. This not only retains the functions of old simulators, but also is used for familiarization flying including training for aircraft start, taxiing, takeoff, aerobatics, formation flying, low-level visual navigation and landing.

The selection process for the next phase of training occurs after primary training has been completed, and while selection is based on a pilot's performance in the first phase, the needs of the Marine Corps also are taken into account. Students may select one of the following pipelines: helicopter, strike aircraft, multi-engine and tiltrotor.

If selected for helicopter training, students remain in Pensacola and fly the TH-57. The training is rigorous with some significant recent changes. For example, student helicopter pilots now train with night vision goggles and in tactical formation flying.

Students selected for strike training go to NAS Meridian, Miss., or NAS Kingsville, Texas. There, they fly all of their intermediate and advanced flight training in the T-45C, a glass cockpit, GPS-navigation-based aircraft. Advancements in the T-45C simulator mirror the previously mentioned T-6 simulators. The additions to their syllabus include close air support (CAS) training and the elimination of air-to-air gunnery. Students in strike training may be selected to fly the F-35B Lightning II; two entry-level students currently in training will be selected to fly the Joint Strike Fighter in October.

When students are selected for multi-engine training, they train in the T-44C aircraft at NAS Corpus Christi, Texas. The T-44C is an excellent stepping stone

to the KC-130J platform.

A major change for the next generation of pilots is the addition of the tiltrotor pipeline, which prepares future pilots to fly the MV-22 Osprey, the replacement for the CH-46. Tiltrotor selectees begin their training at NAS Whiting Field, Fla. There, they undergo a 10-week course that includes helicopter aerodynamics as well as 10 hours of flight training, to

and navigation training. Another change is the introduction of the T-45C, the replacement for the T-2C. A jet aircraft, the T-45C (like the T-6) has a full glass cockpit that allows for full synthetic radar training so that students can conduct air-to-air intercepts and much more.

The last of the EA-6B electronic countermeasure officers (ECMOs) are currently completing training. The only remain-



COURTESY OF COL ERIC BUER, USMC

The MATSG-21 commanding officer, Col Eric "Ferris" Buer, right, recently welcomed BGen Austin E. "Sparky" Renforth, Commanding General, Training Command, Quantico, Va., to NAS Pensacola with a flight in the T-6 Texan II.

include hovering and basic familiarization flights. At the completion of the helicopter portion of their flight training, students relocate to NAS Corpus Christi, where they go through the arduous CNATRA multi-engine training syllabus with an added focus on formation flight training.

Marine naval flight officer (NFO)

In the past, simulators offered little more than cockpit familiarization and basic instrument flight training. Today's T-6 simulation provides full visual capability.

training also has recently undergone changes. Not only are NFOs flying the newer T-6, but they are no longer flying the T-39 as the progression training platform for intermediate training. The T-39 has been replaced with a simulator that provides greater capability regarding radar usage and interpretation, instrument

ing platform for future Marine flight officers (NFOs or ECMOs) is the F/A-18D Hornet. The Marine Corps is scheduled to fly the Hornet until approximately 2025.

Marine aviators fly complex aircraft with extensive electronic capabilities. This requires today's naval aviators to be a seamlessly integrated part of the weapon system. Missions are conducted around the globe, in austere places, in all weather conditions, day or night. To maintain the Marine Corps' ability to do this, training continues to evolve through lessons learned and technological advances. The "Gateway to Marine Aviation" is still MATSG-21, and it is the command's responsibility to ensure that every Marine aviator has the proper training in order to be prepared to fight in every clime and place.

Author's bio: LtCol Gabriel Fabbri currently is assigned as the operations officer for MATSG-21. A former commander of MATSG-22, he has flown in VMFA-122, VMFA-533, VMFA-121 and VT-22.



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F-35B “Howls” Overhead

Marine Corps Conducts Flight Operations, Establishes Protocols for Joint Strike Fighter



Pilots ferry Lightning II aircraft in 2013 from Lockheed Martin's production facility in Fort Worth, Texas, to MCAS Yuma, Ariz., where VMFA-121 became the first operational F-35B squadron in the Corps. Training for the Corps' newest aircraft will be conducted by VMFAT-501 at MCAS Beaufort, S.C. (Photo courtesy of Lockheed Martin)

By CWO-4 Randy Gaddo, USMC (Ret)

The skies over Beaufort, S.C., have been filled with Marine Corps aircraft since the base first opened its doors as a naval air station in the midst of World War II.

So people there are used to the roar of jet engines overhead and generally accept that it's the "sound of freedom," as the sign at the front gate of Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort boldly announces.

Since July of 2014, however, there's been a new sound echoing off the salt marshes and mud flats of the Low Country.

"The F-35B makes more of a howl rather than a roar," said Marine Lieutenant Colonel Joseph T. Bachmann, commanding officer of Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron (VMFAT) 501. "It's not really louder than the F-18, just different."





CPL SARAH CHERRY, USMC

Above: From left, LtCol Joseph T. Bachmann, CO, VMFAT-501; MajGen Robert F. Hedelund, Commanding General, 2d MAW; and LtGen Jon M. Davis, Deputy Commandant for Aviation, discuss the Joint Strike Fighter, Aug. 15, 2014.

Below: MCAS Beaufort welcomed VMFAT-501 to Fightertown on July 11, 2014, and with it, a new era in Marine Corps aviation. After four years of training with the F-35B Lightning II at Eglin AFB, Fla., the squadron moved to MCAS Beaufort.



SGT JOHN WILKES, USMC

The F-35B Lightning II will replace and perform the roles of three venerable but aging “legacy” aircraft: the F/A-18 Hornet, the AV-8B Harrier II and the EA-6B Prowler. The F-35B is the only variant of the Joint Strike Fighter that features short takeoff and vertical landing (STOVL) capabilities.

The “A” model is going to the Air Force, and the “C” model is destined for carrier duty with the Navy, although some Marine Corps “B” models will serve on various Navy ships. U.S. allies also are purchasing

the Lockheed Martin aircraft.

The newest squadron calling the air station home isn’t really new to Beaufort. VMFAT-501 was formed in April 2010, assuming the lineage of Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 451, which was stationed in Beaufort for decades. Originally known as the “Blue Devils” in WW II, they became the “Warlords” in the mid-1950s, serving through Operation Desert Storm. The squadron was decommissioned in January 1997.

VMFAT-501 originally formed at Eglin

Air Force Base, Fla., to bring the F-35B into the Marine Corps aviation inventory in a joint program with the Air Force and the Navy. Squadron Marines literally wrote the book on flight training and maintenance operations for the F-35B.

“The plan was to move all our Marines and their families from Eglin to Beaufort in the summer of 2014 to get them settled in,” LtCol Bachmann explained. The move went as planned, and nearly 300 Marines and their families—as well as seven aircraft—arrived safely at their new home. But the squadron had one foot in Eglin and one in Beaufort during the transition.

“Once we got everyone settled in Beaufort, we temporarily assigned about half the squadron at a time back to Eglin because we still had to produce flight hours and maintenance there,” Bachmann said. “At the same time we had to set up an organic maintenance department here. That was a tall task.”

The commanding officer expressed great pride in the maintenance department for not only getting the job done, but doing it with honors, scoring 97 out of 100 on a “Safe For Flight” inspection.

“Our maintenance guys knocked it out of the park,” said Bachmann. “It is a very thorough and practical inspection where they go through literally every single element of the maintenance program.” Inspectors could ask virtually any question of any squadron member to see how they handled procedures in hundreds of categories. Squadron Marines knew all the possible categories but didn’t know exactly what would be asked; they had to be prepared in all of them.

“We worked weekends to make this happen,” said Bachmann.

There is an inherent challenge transitioning to a vastly new platform such as the F-35B as VMFAT-501 continues to write the book on flight operations and maintenance.

“It’s been a paradigm shift,” summarized Gunnery Sergeant Dean Burnell, staff noncommissioned officer in charge of the squadron’s maintenance control shop. “Maintenance on the F-35B is not the same as it’s ever been on any of the legacy aircraft.”

Speaking from experience gained during three years at the prime contractor Lockheed Martin’s Fort Worth plant when the aircraft was being built, Burnell noted that they are using performance-based logistics maintenance with the F-35B. This relatively new business model is being used by the Armed Forces to improve support for such components as aircraft engines and systems. The model provides incentives for parts suppliers to

First U.K. F-35B Contingent Begins Training at MCAS Beaufort

The first United Kingdom F-35B Lightning II contingent arrived at Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, S.C., in early 2015.

Led by Royal Air Force Squadron Leader Hugh Nichols, 14 RAF and Royal Navy personnel are embedded with Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron (VMFAT) 501. Nichols, who flew the first British-owned F-35B into Beaufort, is the U.K. senior national representative and currently the only British F-35 pilot in -501. There also is one Royal Navy officer who is the maintenance officer and 12 enlisted maintenance staff.

As of March, there was only one British aircraft there, but the British are slated to be flying more than 10 F-35Bs in Beaufort by 2019. By mid-2018, about 230 personnel will be in the British contingent, from pilots and maintainers to operations support, intelligence, logistics and administration.

"We appreciate the way the -501 Marines have accepted us into the program," said Nichols. "It's their house and their shop, and we're benefiting from it, but we hope they are too."

Nichols noted that the British aircraft are pooled with the other -501 aircraft, so the squadron benefits from having more F-35s available for training use. "The giveback is that they can fly ours while the program is developing," Nichols said.

The British contingent is essentially establishing its training footprint at Beaufort. "The plan is to take about three-quarters of our staff home to the U.K. in mid-2018, trained and ready to go so we can start our operations there," Nichols said. By then, he explained, they would have simulators and a facility similar to Beaufort's F-35 Pilot Training Center. Their first squadron will be an operational gun squadron.

The British contingent is under the operational control of VMFAT-501, but Nichols has responsibility for contingent members in items such as administration, logistics and disciplinary matters.

"The collateral duties mean I have more paperwork in addition to flying," said Nichols, who is no stranger to life in the United States. The 15-year RAF pilot did a tour flying F-16s with the U.S. Air Force at Shaw Air Force Base in South Carolina before he transferred to the Marine squadron while it was still flying out of Eglin AFB in Florida. His family is with him; in fact, his 2-year-old daughter was born in Manning, S.C., which makes her "a proper little Southern girl," he said jokingly. "We enjoy being here. ... My wife really loves it, and we definitely enjoy the weather."

Nichols has been flying the F-35B for more than 18 months. "It is definitely a step change from any other jet," he said. "There are challenges and frustrations being in the program at this early point in the development of the aircraft, but the days you get into the jet and it's all working for you, it's easy to see it's going to be something very special."

Flying the jet is seamless, Nichols said. "There are many systems to help the pilot with the actual flying, so you can focus on operational, combat issues."

Part of the challenge is adapting to the vast amounts of information the jet's systems show the pilot. "It shows you so

much, in a very clever way, that the weak link is the gray matter inside a human rather than the computer; the pure processing power of eyes and brain and knowing what to tell which person, when. You might be the guy in the fight who has the most awareness of what's going on around you, and you need to know how to best communicate that to others."

Part of the value in having international partners train at Beaufort is the shared knowledge and experience of working with different systems. "It has been interesting working with the Air Force and now the Marine Corps. The Marine Corps is more aligned with the RAF and Royal Navy in terms of the way we do business and the fights we've been in," Nichols said. "A standard



Royal Air Force Cpl Gareth Lewis, an aircraft maintainer with 617th Squadron, guides Squadron Leader Hugh Nichols, senior U.K. national representative, into a hangar at MCAS Beaufort on Feb. 4. The 617th Squadron is working with the Marines of VMFAT-501 in preparation for the arrival of personnel from the U.K. to train in the F-35B. (Photo by Cpl Patrick J. McMahon, USMC)

Marine Corps squadron is more like an RAF squadron; it's just learning new lingo and different people doing different jobs."

Looking back on his introduction to the F-35B, Nichols remembers his first flight. "The very first experience in the jet after all the simulator work is actually just a taxi around the airfield, handling the jet for about an hour, which is an excellent idea," he recalled. The F-35 has no two-seat version, so the first flight is a solo.

"The first flight is chased by another F-35 with an instructor in communication with you, but it's almost a non-event, thanks to the excellent simulator training," he said. "But as I was taxiing for that first flight, in the back of my mind I was conscious that this is a multi-million-dollar aircraft; it's a real piece of metal. That focuses your mind. But once you're in the air and you do a few patterns and touch-and-goes, you become very comfortable with it."

A normal tour is about three years, and Nichols is slated to be in Beaufort until mid-2017. "But I'm going to be flexible with that because it will be important to maintain continuity here," he said.

—CWO-4 Randy Gaddo, USMC (Ret)

make equipment more reliable so that it spends less time at the shop for repairs.

The military already has seen a rise in readiness rates under these types of contracts, according to Navy Captain John Spicer, who oversees the program at the Defense Logistics Agency. These contracts comply with legislation mandating that at least 50 percent of repair work is done at military maintenance facilities.

Burnell has been with -501 since 2013, and while he has seen some growing pains, he noted, “We are getting much more comfortable with this system and with the aircraft and are flying more sorties per day.” He also credited the highly skilled maintenance Marines assigned to the squadron. “I’ve been in 18 years and I have yet to see the level of professionalism and dedication that I’ve seen here.”

Bachmann said that they learn something new every day. For example, he described a recent bird strike: a bird went into the air intake on one of the aircraft. The pilot landed safely, and the maintenance crew went to the book to see what the standard procedure is for a bird strike on the F-35B.

“We went to the page on bird strike, and it is blank,” said Bachmann, noting that this was the first bird strike on an F-35B.



CPL JOHN WILKES, USMC

LtCol Joseph T. Bachmann
CO, VMFAT-501 “Warlords”

“If this had been an F-18, we’d have an off-the-shelf solution.”

The -501 crew had to go back to the aircraft engineers at prime contractor Lockheed Martin and together they developed a standard procedure to properly complete maintenance after a bird strike. One more page has been filled in the living document

that is the maintenance operations manual for the F-35B.

Operating in this dual “development and operational” mode requires special handling by very experienced Marines who know their business. On the one hand, it is exciting to write the book; on the other hand, it is time-consuming and sometimes frustrating.

Bringing any new aircraft into the operating forces is a transition, and the F-35B is no exception. For example, the squadron is experiencing the “projected versus actual” maintenance life of various components and parts on the aircraft. Bachmann explained that some parts are lasting longer than expected, some not as long, so keeping the right parts in stock is a challenge.

“Sometimes we’ll end up with too many of one part and not enough of another,” he said, adding that before long this will level out. “I think senior Marines who have been doing this awhile understand the double-edge sword of working in this mode,” Bachmann said. “The younger Marines get frustrated quicker because they want to see airplanes fly. It’s why they work so hard and go home tired at night. All in all, solving these problems together will be a positive thing.”



USMC

The Marine Corps re-designated Marine All-Weather Fighter Attack Squadron 121 as the first operational F-35B squadron at MCAS Yuma, Ariz., Nov. 20, 2012. It is now VMFA-121 “Green Knights.”

VMFAT-501 Marines will be the only F-35B fleet replacement squadron (FRS) until -502 is opened for business in Beaufort in 2019. An FRS is responsible for preparing pilots to serve in the operating forces.

For now they are only training experienced transition/conversion pilots coming from other platforms such as F/A-18 Hornets or AV-8B Harriers. Bachmann noted that they won't see their first batch of new pilots, or "nuggets," coming straight from flight school until fiscal year 2016.

"That may sound like a long way off, but it's right around the corner, and there is a lot to do," Bachmann said.

At this point, pilots are not only being trained to fill billets at the Corps' sole operational F-35B squadron, VMFA-121 in Yuma, but they are also developing future instructors.

"I have three new instructors in the pipeline now and two others soon after," Bachmann said. That pipeline includes academic and simulator training at the Pilot Training Center (PTC), also located at MCAS Beaufort. The 103,000-square-foot facility contains state-of-the-art classrooms and a total of eight flight simulators; two are actively being used now. Working in conjunction with -501, the center is the first step in training.

There is not a two-seated version of the F-35, so the first actual flight for a pilot in this aircraft is a solo flight. "Training for an F-35B pilot is more than 50 percent simulation-based," said LtCol Luis E. Villalobos, officer in charge of the center. Both the center and -501 are assets of Beaufort-based Marine Aircraft Group 31. "The PTC is here to support the FRS, in accordance with guidelines and standardization provided by -501," Villalobos added.

Simplifying a fairly involved relationship, Bachmann explained that Training and Education Command gives him requirements for the number of pilots he needs to qualify, known as the pilot training requirement. He then coordinates with the PTC on details such as the number of instructors needed, the type of academics, when the simulators will be needed and what the total syllabus will look like.

"The F-35 syllabus framework was developed by Lockheed Martin using an Instructional Systems Design that generated the curriculum and flow, utilizing a combination of classroom, simulation and aircraft events," said Villalobos, noting that it is the same approach used in Harrier and Hornet training. "The notable differences with the F-35 are in preparing pilots for a single-seated aircraft and the extensive reliance on advanced simulators, virtual linking techniques and brief/de-



LOCKHEED MARTIN

Thirsty jets from the U.S. Marine and Royal Air Force (in trace) take in needed fuel during one of many training missions.



LOCKHEED MARTIN

F-35B test aircraft BF-3 completed the first aerial weapons release of an inert 500-pound Guided Bomb Unit-12 over a test range in 2012. This was the first GBU-12 Paveway II Laser Guided Bomb release for any variant of the Joint Strike Fighter.



LOCKHEED MARTIN

An F-35B test jet takes off from the amphibious assault ship USS Wasp (LHD-1) in August 2013. The takeoff was part of developmental test phase two for the Joint Strike Fighter short takeoff and vertical landing variant.



LIZ KASZYNSKI, LOCKHEED MARTIN

An F-35B of VMFAT-501 prepares to land at its home base in the Low Country, MCAS Beaufort, S.C.

brief capabilities that digitally evaluate the pilot-vehicle interface with the aircraft and systems.”

While the pilot’s first flight in an actual aircraft is a solo, it is a “chased event,” meaning that the pilot will be in communication with an experienced F-35 pilot flying another F-35 as the wingman. Still, the anticipation is high.

“I’d be lying if I said I wasn’t apprehensive on that first flight,” said Royal Air Force Squadron Leader Hugh Nichols, the senior national representative for the United Kingdom, assigned to -501 since they were at Eglin and flying the F-35B for about 18 months. “But it’s way less of an issue than people think because of the great training and all the time we get in the simulators.”

One of the aspects of the F-35B that makes pilot training challenging is that the aircraft is constantly evolving as new capabilities are added, requiring the aircraft to go in for refitting.

For example, in February 2015, of the squadron’s 16 aircraft, four were in a modification cycle at MCAS Cherry Point,

N.C. Having 25 percent of the fleet out of circulation makes it a challenge to meet flight requirements. The trade-off is improved capabilities. “When they come out of modification, we have advanced capabilities that must then be added to the training syllabus,” said Bachmann.

This is a phenomenon related to training systems called concurrency, which is the effort to maintain training systems that match the current state of the actual weapon systems they emulate. Instructional materials and systems must be in sync with operational training requirements.

By the time “nuggets” arrive to begin new pilot training in October, Bachmann explained that a new set of software must be installed in the training systems, new courseware developed and produced and embedded at the training center. In addition, instructors must get their practice in and fly the syllabus at least once to be prepared for students. “We have our work cut out for us,” Bachmann said. “The window is shrinking. We also support other requirements such as operational tests, tactics development and responsi-

bilities with our U.K. partners.”

A pilot instructor, Major Paul Holst, flew the F-35B on its first night flight at Beaufort in March. “All the systems and lighting in the airplane are different at night,” he recently remarked to a Marine combat correspondent at MCAS Beaufort. “There are fewer outside references, and things happen a little faster so you have to pay more attention to your sensors.”

The major said the F-35B “performed perfectly. It demonstrates that the aircraft is maturing in the way we’re expecting it to. We’re on our way to where we need to go.”

Editor’s note: Cpl Sarah Cherry, USMC contributed to this story.

Author’s bio: CWO-4 Randy Gaddo, USMC (Ret) was a combat correspondent as an enlisted Marine. He retired from active duty in 1996 and now operates his own writing-based business, RGCommunications. He is a contributing editor for Leatherneck magazine and a freelance photojournalist.



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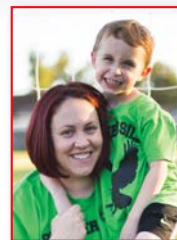
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We—the Marines

Compiled by Sara W. Bock

MCAS Yuma Air Show Takes Community, Supporters by Storm

■ The only military air show scheduled to take place in Arizona during 2015 started with an evening “twilight show” at Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Feb. 27. The event, which was open to the public, included a concert, aerial pyrotechnics and performances by civilian and military aircraft.

Major John Gibson, director of the Yuma Air Show, remarked that the twilight show was brought back for another year after its acclaimed reception in 2014.

This year, a highlight of the event was an extraction demonstration by MCAS Yuma’s search and rescue (SAR) unit.

“With this SAR demonstration, what we’re trying to do is show the community what we do out in the wilderness, on an actual rescue,” explained Captain Wes Urquhart, an HH-1N pilot with the SAR unit. “We get a lot of our rescues at night, when it’s dark and hard to see, so we utilize the skills that we’ve trained in the fleet and showcase them to the community here.”

On the morning of Feb. 28, the air show

provided thousands of attendees with the opportunity to see Marine Corps aircraft and tactical equipment, civilian air acts and aerial performances.

Civilian entertainers and military performers demonstrated a broad range of aerial capabilities to the public. The acts included the Circus School of Arizona; Chris Darnell’s “Shockwave” jet-truck; freestyle stunt motorcycles; the Misty Blues, an all-female skydiving team; and many others.

Red Bull helicopter pilot Chuck “Malibu” Aaron, a prominent aerial stunt performer, also entertained thousands of spectators.

“My mantra, so to speak, is that I want to get young kids excited about aviation,” said Aaron. “I want somebody to see me and what I do, start thinking outside of the box, hopefully get inspired to get passionate about aviation and dream up new instruments, aircraft or air dynamic designs. Something that will help us expand our world.”

Military aircraft demonstrations included the MV-22B Osprey, F-5N Tiger II, AV-8B Harrier and F-35B Lightning II.

The F-35B showcase attracted a large

audience. All attendees fixed their eyes on the Marine Corps’ Joint Strike Fighter and its vertical landing capability.

“The opportunity to take the newest tactical jet in the Department of Defense’s inventory and showcase that in front of the home crowd here in Yuma is exciting,” said Lieutenant Colonel Steve Gillette, the commanding officer of Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 121.

In addition to providing an educational and entertaining opportunity for attendees, the air show served as an opportunity for the air station to thank the local community for its continued support. According to Maj Gibson, the partnership between the Marine Corps and the local community is what makes the air show such an important event for the station.

“This is a large opportunity for us to give back to our supporters, far and wide, so our staff really makes it a point to provide the best of the best,” said Gibson. “It’s been successful for years. We keep capitalizing on our successes, and it keeps growing, so there’s no reason to think it’s going to slow down anytime soon.”

Cpl James Marchetti, USMC



CPL LURIEL AVENDANO, USMC



USMC

Above left: Aerobatic pilot Gene Soucy offers a pyrotechnic display from his “Showcat” biplane at the Yuma Air Show, MCAS Yuma, Ariz., Feb. 27. His performance concluded the popular evening twilight show.

Above right: Standing in front of an AH-1W Super Cobra, a Marine from Marine Light Helicopter Squadron 369 talks with attendees at the Yuma Air Show, Feb. 28.

Marines Arrive by Sea, March Into Boston Tradition

■ More than 100 leathernecks from II Marine Expeditionary Force, Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., and U.S. Marine Forces Command, Naval Station Norfolk, Va., jointly formed a special-purpose Marine air-ground task force (SP-MAGTF) and arrived in Boston aboard USS *Arlington* (LPD-24), an amphibious transport dock ship, March 13.

From March 13-17, they participated in various community events, including marching in the South Boston St. Patrick's Day Parade.

The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan saw a shift in the Corps' focus from amphibious operations to primarily land-based operations, and Marines are just beginning to shift back to their naval roots. While the trip to Boston was meant to give the local community a glimpse of the Corps' mission and capabilities, the voyage also gave Marines who had never been on board a ship the chance to experience life at sea.

Staff Sergeant Donald Vaughn, a weapons platoon sergeant with Company A, 1st Battalion, Eighth Marine Regiment, said the trip, while fun, was a time to learn about where the Marine Corps is going, even for those who have been around for a long time.

"My Marines and I have had a good time so far," said Vaughn during the trip. "It gives them a chance to learn about Navy traditions such as boarding the ship, going ashore and just basically the way ship life is."

"I tell the Marines it's not just about going to the field week in and week out," added Vaughn. "We are more so moving back to amphibious operations, and just this short amount of time on the ship gives the Marine a glimpse of what is to come very soon."

While underway for three days, the Marines spent time learning about the ship while engaging with sailors during their daily activities. They also spent time conducting physical training and training on various weapons systems.

Once the ship arrived in Boston, the Marines assisted during ship-tour hours and were able to educate visitors from the local community about Marine capabilities and assets and explain what a SP-MAGTF is—a uniquely structured organization of air, ground, logistical and command elements, capable of deploying within 72 hours and operating independently of local infrastructure.

Corporal Justin Baldwin, a supply administration and operations clerk with 2d Supply Battalion, Combat Logistics Regiment 25, Second Marine Logistics Group, experienced his first time aboard a Navy



Leathernecks from MARFORCOM and II MEF march in the South Boston St. Patrick's Day Parade on March 15. They sailed to Boston aboard USS *Arlington* (LPD-24) to participate in the parade and other community events, as well as to experience life in a ship. (Photo by LCpl Calvin Shamoon, USMC)

ship. He especially enjoyed getting to know his peers in a different environment.

"Being on the ship built camaraderie; it just brought us more together," said Baldwin. "Going from Camp Lejeune to Boston, you get to bond with other Marines and learn about what the sailors do and how we work together."

After two days of getting to know the city and interacting with the public, the Marines made their way to the South Boston St. Patrick's Day Parade.

The day began with chilling temperatures and strong winds; however, this didn't faze the Marines. They marched in unison in a sharp, crisp fashion. After a quarter of a mile, with nearly two miles to go, the rain came, then the snow and the sleet—and the Marines kept marching. Undaunted by Mother Nature's cruelty, they kept their bearing as they were cheered on by tens of thousands of spectators.

While in Boston, the Marines spent time volunteering with two charities: the Greater Boston Food Bank and Cradles to Crayons, which provides essential items to children in need.

LCpl Calvin Shamoon, USMC

3d LAR Tests New LAV-ATWS

■ A gunner takes position in a light armored vehicle (LAV) and spots an enemy. He engages the target, firing a tube-launched, optically tracked, wire-guided (TOW) missile. As it propels through the air, the gunner maintains a steady aim, guiding the TOW missile until it impacts the target: confirmed hit.

Marine Corps Operational Test and

Evaluation Activity (MCOTEA) began operational testing of the light armored vehicle anti-tank weapons system (LAV-ATWS) at Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif., in early February and continued until March 8.

The demonstration highlighted the versatility of the system, which can carry communications equipment as well as Mobile Electronic Warfare Support Systems and provides a self-contained and highly mobile combined-arms force. An LAV detachment conducts security, reconnaissance and screening operations for a larger force, as well as limited independent operations.

The LAV-ATWS is a development by Marine Corps Systems Command that addresses issues with the legacy Emerson 901 turret by replacing the turret system with a modern launcher. The program manager for the LAV-ATWS, Colonel Mark T. Brinkman, is confident that the system provides the Marine Corps with substantial improvements over the previous anti-tank system.

Brinkman said the ATWS concurrently addresses obsolescence and maintenance issues while keeping the LAV anti-tank capability relevant for future conflicts. "We have just upgraded the Marine's capability, making us more efficient, effective and lethal," he added.

The modernized LAV-ATWS will give the Marines additional capabilities to acquire targets and will feature a far-target capability. It also will include an advanced thermal sight in addition to an advanced

Operating an LAV equipped with a new anti-tank weapons system, Marines from 3d LAR head toward their next objective during operational testing at Range 500, MCAGCC Twentynine Palms, Calif., Feb. 16.

guidance control system. The program was in the systems demonstration phase when the operational test was conducted at MCAGCC Twentynine Palms.

Marines with 3d Light Armored Reconnaissance (LAR) Battalion were among the first to operate the LAV-ATWS, which allowed MCOTEA to evaluate the use of the new system and gather feedback.

“We are currently in operational testing, which allows us to see how the system performs in training,” said Captain Zachary Stanley, operational test project officer, LAV-ATWS modernization program, MCOTEA. “We gave it to the Marines and units it’s going to be fielded in, for them to operate side by side with platoons using the previous model, the Emerson 901. We can compare times and accuracy through these trial runs.”

Through the new anti-tank weapons system and optics, the vehicle will be able to engage armored targets on the move while providing another vantage point for commanders on the battlefield.

“It gives commanders another set of eyes as opposed to the old system, which has to wait for another vehicle to spot



LOPL MEDINA AYALA-LO, USMC

the threat before anti-tank vehicles can respond,” Stanley said. “The gunner is located inside the LAV with a bi-optical screen he constantly looks at to analyze the battlefield and engage targets.”

During that stage of testing, LAR Marines received a firsthand look at what the new system will add to the Marine Corps’ arsenal and state of combat readiness. New capabilities include mobility while firing TOW missiles, allowing for shooting on the move, and improved optic mag-

nification for enhanced target acquisition.

“The turret doesn’t have to be stowed for us to move, and the optics allow for an enhanced view of the area,” said Corporal Brandon Jones, vehicle commander, TOW missile section, 3d LAR. “These new systems and capabilities would make us more of an asset to the LAR community.”

The 3d LAR Bn trained alongside 1st Tank Bn and 1st LAR during the testing of the new anti-tank system. The operational testing gave the Marines using the new system an opportunity to provide their input and help shape the future of the Marine Corps’ anti-tank light armored reconnaissance capability.

“Our Marines really enjoyed giving input on the system,” said Capt Charlie Richardson, Company B, 3d LAR. “MCOTEA has done a great job of collecting the [feedback] by giving Marines an opportunity to tell what does and does not work. Through these tests, the Marines are making a direct [impact] on the future.”

Successful completion of the testing phase would support a decision to begin production of the new anti-tank weapon system for the LAV. The fielding of the system to the operating forces is projected for 2017.

Cpl Charles Santamaria, USMC



SGT MELISSA LEE, USMC

CONNECTING ACROSS CULTURES—The first female fixed-wing pilot in the Afghan air force, Capt Niloofar Rahmani, visits with female pilots from Third Marine Aircraft Wing at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., March 9. Rahmani received a 2015 International Women of Courage Award from the U.S. Department of State for her courage in advocating women’s rights despite personal risk. Rahmani encourages women around the world to chase their dreams and fight for their rights. During her visit to MCAS Miramar, she had the opportunity to share her personal story with female pilots and 3d MAW leaders as well as see some of the 3d MAW aircraft.

Marine’s Quick Action, Training Saves Fellow Leatherneck’s Life

■ A lot ran through Sergeant Michael Joseph’s mind when he saw a lance corporal lying on the pavement outside the movie theater at Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Feb. 17.

He recognized the signs because his own brother suffered from a fatal cardiac arrest. He knew if he didn’t conduct cardiovascular resuscitation immediately, the

Marine would probably die. Joseph began to perform CPR, and the lance corporal recovered.

Less than a month later, Joseph received the Emergency Cardiovascular Care Heart Saver Hero Award from the American Heart Association during a ceremony at the Naval Health Clinic Hawaii, Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, March 13.

"It is interesting to me that we have young men and women who step up and take action when action is needed," said Lieutenant General John A. Toolan, Commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Pacific, at the award ceremony. "It's the epitome of who we are as Marines."

The morning of the incident, the 25-year-old sergeant from Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 367 attended annual training with his squadron at the base theater. Feeling tired and not wanting to fall asleep, Joseph headed out to his car to grab an energy drink.

That's when he heard a thud, a car alarm and noticed a Marine roll on the ground and suddenly stop. He rushed over and realized that the Marine had stopped breathing.

"I called 911 and saw two sailors and told them to start CPR," Joseph said.

"They said they weren't trained, and I knew I had to."

For cardiac arrest victims, chances of survival dramatically drop to less than 25 percent if CPR is not started within four minutes, according to Petty Officer Second Class Aaron Hepps, Human Resources, Naval Health Clinic Hawaii.

When Joseph's brother, Robert, suffered a heart attack, no one around him knew CPR. He passed away at the age of 18. Joseph has made a point of becoming CPR certified. "I wanted to know why he died," Joseph said. "Everyone should know CPR. I am familiar with what could happen without it."

The Ritchie County, W.Va., native said he was amazed at the timing of the incident, because he had completed a CPR refresher course just days before. He recalled that the lance corporal's mother told him, "God sent you to my son."

"To me, it's just what Marines do," Sgt Joseph said. "It's a big deal to everyone else, but to me, it's just what we do. It means a lot more that he is a Marine, after the fact, because of the brotherhood, but I would have done the same thing if he were anyone else."

Sgt Sarah Dietz, USMC

Quick Shots Around the Corps

1stMarDiv Puts the Future on Display At AFCEA WEST 2015

■ Leathernecks from First Marine Division participated in the Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association's Western Conference and Exposition at the San Diego Convention Center, Feb. 11.

The conference is considered the premier sea services event focusing on operations in Asia and the Pacific.

Major General Lawrence D. Nicholson, Commanding General, 1stMarDiv, was a panelist on the topic "Lower Budgets and Higher Demands: How Do the Sea Services Strike the Right Balance?" He discussed interoperability and the importance of relaying commander's intent.

According to MajGen Nicholson, "For me, it's all about power down, power down, power down. Let's get the information we need on a reliable network into the hands of the warfighter, who is actually going to be on the ground and doing those missions."

PFC Alvin Pujols, USMC



Crazy Caption Contest

Winner



CPL KEVIN ZELAZOSKI, USMC

"Hey! When you finish scratching him, scratch me!"

**Submitted by
Sgt Peter P. Joulis
South San Francisco, Calif.**

This Month's Photo



CPL JONATHAN R. WALDMAN, USMC

(Caption) _____

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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.

AMPHIBIOUS READINESS:

15th MEU Tests the Waters During COMPTUEX

By Cpl Anna Albrecht, USMC

In late March, the Marines and sailors of 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit participated in the Composite Training Unit Exercise (COMPTUEX), designed to evaluate a deployable asset's mission readiness. Based aboard the three ships of the Essex Amphibious Ready Group—USS Essex (LHD-2), USS Anchorage (LPD-23) and

USS Rushmore (LSD-47), the 15th MEU had the opportunity to complete a wide variety of training scenarios that encompassed both air and amphibious operations. From the Marines conducting vertical raids to those who stay on board to ensure smooth operations behind the scenes, COMPTUEX allowed all assets of the 15th MEU to prepare for future operations and build unit cohesiveness.

Mission: Airfield Seizure

Three MV-22B Ospreys landed simultaneously on San Clemente Island off the coast of Southern California. Dust swirled around the Marines as they ran out of the aircraft and set up a 360-degree perimeter of security waiting for their next move.

As the Ospreys departed, squads broke away to their designated objectives to secure two towns on the island. Each Marine with “Lima” Company, Battalion Landing Team, 3d Bn, First Marine Regiment knew the scheme of maneuver—where they were supposed to be, what to do if they had a casualty and when they were to provide cover for their fellow Marines.

Several moving parts went into each raid, and the plan constantly changed throughout the mission.

This was the scene on March 22, as Marines with BLT 3/1 executed an airfield seizure mission on San Clemente Island during the 15th MEU's COMPTUEX.

According to Corporal Aaron Telles, a machine-gun squad leader with 2d Platoon, Lima Co, BLT 3/1, when the company receives a warning order, the Marines jump right in, immediately making sure they have all the proper gear and determining the details to ensure the successful seizure of the objective.

“Typically, the squad leaders will get together with the platoon commander, and he will say what we have to do and generally the direction he wants us to do it,” Telles said. “From there, the [squad leaders] say how they are going to implement that plan.”

After the initial plan is laid out, rehearsals are conducted by the entire company.

“When we do rehearsals, we look at the mission, see what we're going to have to do, such as room clearing, and we'll practice everything from basic two-man clearing of an open door to more complex things such as stairwells, multiple rooms and multiple entries,” Telles added. “We go from ‘A to Z’ in the most thorough manner possible based on the mission set.”

In the final hours before they leave for the mission, each Marine is prepared with all the proper gear, knowledge and training.

Cpl Telles explained that at that point, his focus moves to the safety of the Ma-



CPL ANNA ALBRECHT, USMC

Above: Leathernecks with Lima Co, BLT 3/1, 15th MEU provide over-watch on their objective during an airfield seizure mission on San Clemente Island, Calif., as part of COMPTUEX, March 22. The Marines inserted onto the island from USS Essex to execute a raid and practice their urban combat skills.

Below: LCpl Zachery Johnson, a crew chief with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 161, prepares to engage targets from a UH-1Y Super Huey during 15th MEU predeployment training Feb. 28.



SGT JAMEN BERRY, USMC



SGT JAMEAN BERRY, USMC

LCAC 82, Navy Assault Craft Unit 5, heads into the well deck of USS *Anchorage* off the coast of San Diego during COMPTUEX, May 23. During the exercise, LCACs were used to transport vehicles, personnel and cargo between the ships of the *Essex* Amphibious Ready Group and the shore.



SGT JAMEAN BERRY, USMC

A sailor directs LCAC 65, Navy Assault Craft Unit 5, into the well deck of USS *Anchorage* during COMPTUEX, March 23. The exercise allowed the Marines and sailors of the 15th MEU to work together in preparation for their upcoming deployment.



CPL ANNA ALBRECHT, USMC

Marines with Lima Co, BLT 3/1, 15th MEU wait to depart USS *Essex*. The company inserted onto San Clemente Island for a simulated airfield seizure mission March 22.

rines in his squad and how he will adapt and employ them in the mission.

“In my mind, I just think about how I’m no longer that trigger-puller; I have to fight [for] my squad,” Telles said.

The hours, days and months the Marines of BLT 3/1—and all the Marines and sailors of the 15th MEU—will spend together both before and during their deployment guarantee that they know each other inside and out. They can predict each other’s moves and thoughts, Telles said.

The bond the Marines form while living and training together gives them a different mindset when implementing a plan of attack.

“I don’t care how much ammo these guys can carry; I don’t care how good they are behind the machine gun,” Telles said. “The ‘good enough’ is when they can keep each other safe and I don’t have to call anyone’s mom [with bad news].”

When the Marines were back in *Essex*, their training still wasn’t over. While the

mission was fresh in their minds, they shared their experiences during a debrief session. The lessons learned during the exercise will help them improve and better prepare for the next mission.

Behind the Scenes: Combat Cargo

Wearing their flaks and Kevlars and carrying their weapons along with packs filled with everything they would need to sustain them for a few days in the field, an entire company of Marines squeezed

Below: Marines with the 15th MEU Maritime Raid Force fire M1911 .45-caliber pistols aboard USS *Anchorage* off the coast of San Diego as part of COMPTUEX, March 23. The MRF Marines constantly sharpen their skills with different weapon systems to maintain a high level of readiness.



SGT JAMEAN BERRY, USMC



SGT JAMEAN BERRY, USMC

Above: LCpl Michael Littrell, an LAV driver with BLT 3/1, 15th MEU, performs maintenance on an LAV-25 aboard USS *Anchorage* during COMPTUEX, March 20.

through the passageways of USS *Essex*.

As they walked into the hangar bay, cones were lined up telling the Marines exactly where they needed to go. Gear was staged in its designated place as the Marines waited to make their way off the ship.

A few hours later, a new set of cones would be placed in the hangar bay to guide another group of personnel departing the ship.

During the 15th MEU's predeployment workups, hundreds of personnel arrive and depart the ship every day. Wherever their destination, and whether they are traveling by landing craft, air cushion (LCAC); landing craft utility; or an MV-22B Osprey,

each person is accounted for and manifested by the Marines of the combat cargo department. They make sure everything and everyone are where they need to be in order for the MEU to maintain its combat readiness.

Gunnery Sergeant Frankie Torres, a combat cargo assistant aboard *Essex*, explained the mission of the combat cargo section and why it is essential to each movement aboard ship.

"In order for Marines to go ashore, they have to go through combat cargo," Torres said. "Whether it is an amphibious landing out of the well deck or a [vertical raid] from the flight deck, they go through us.



"Whether it's a civilian contractor, Navy or Marine Corps, we have to manifest everyone. We are responsible for accountability and report to the ship and the MEU to make sure everyone is on the same page."

A combat cargo Marine's workday can start or end at any hour. When there are amphibious assaults; vertical raids; visit, board, search and seizure missions; or simply personnel moving from one ship to another, they are playing a part in the movement.

"I have a finger on everything that's going on operations-wise," said Torres. "Nothing happens unless we're involved."

Combat cargo musters everyone to keep them updated on what is going on either on the flight deck or in the well deck.

"Word changes regularly," Torres said. "I always know the latest information, and I get to pass along that information to



CPL ANNA ALBRECHT, USMC

the Marines on the ramp, hangar bay or wherever they're staged to get off the ship."

Combat cargo first accounts for all the Marines, provides them with manifests and stages them on the ramp, ready to load up and leave. When the group takes off, combat cargo moves onto the next wave of people they are receiving or sending out.

Combat cargo helps maintain organization during busy days of moving personnel and gear. Lance Corporal Arabia Thomas, a combat cargo Marine aboard *Essex*, explained how essential that organization is to the mission.

"When we set up our LCACs and our flights, we have manifests for everything," Thomas said. "We have every name of every Marine, sailor or civilian that's leaving the ship. We make sure they're accounted for and good to go so we can get them where they need to be."

Each unit within the 15th MEU gave up some of their Marines to combat cargo to ensure accountability is maintained while they are embarked. These Marines come from different fields and are assigned to the ship to take on the job of tracking each individual arriving and leaving the ship.

"I think it's really unique," Torres said. "There are so many Marines, and they all have different [military occupational specialties]. Some are communications, a lot come from the [aviation combat element], or some are actually infantrymen. It's really cool that we have a little bit of everybody. It makes us really diverse," he added.

Having a group of Marines from different backgrounds helps them all learn new things, provide new perspectives and use different methods to complete a task.

The combat cargo Marines' hard work will continue throughout the MEU's work-

Leathernecks with the 15th MEU Maritime Raid Force fast-rope from a UH-1Y Super Huey onto ATLS-9701 during COMPTUEX, March 18. This was the first time these Marines had executed a visit, board, search and seizure mission while working with the air and naval team aboard USS Anchorage.

ups and deployment. Their job is essential in managing the mail and cargo that enter the ship.

After completing COMPTUEX, the 15th MEU was scheduled to begin Certification Exercise (CERTX), designed to test them in even more challenging scenarios. By the time the Marines and sailors of 15th MEU deploy, they will be ready for any and all challenges that come their way.

Author's bio: Cpl Anna Albrecht is a combat correspondent with 15th MEU.



Passing the Word

Compiled by Sara W. Bock

Hiring Our Heroes Seminar Addresses Transition Assistance

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation recently held a seminar to inform servicemembers and their spouses of the opportunities available to them through its Hiring Our Heroes program. The seminar took place at the Pacific Views Event Center, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., Feb. 25.

Lieutenant General David H. Berger, Commanding General, I Marine Expeditionary Force, spoke during the seminar about the importance of successfully transitioning Marines and sailors into the civilian world.

“There are about 50,000 Marines and sailors [in I MEF] when you count up everyone from Pendleton, Twentynine Palms, Miramar and Yuma,” LtGen Berger said.

“You are helping them, and you are helping our families, so I think my job here is to tell you thanks.”

Representatives from the Hiring Our Heroes program explained their operating procedures and the benefits they provide to servicemembers and their spouses, including apprenticeships, job opportunities and transition aid.

Dr. Susan S. Kelly, director of the Department of Defense’s Transition to Veterans Program Office, said that many of the jobs servicemembers do in the Armed Forces correlate directly with jobs in the civilian sector.

“Every commander needs to ensure that their servicemembers are meeting the career manual standards and that they have a viable individual transition plan—and if they don’t, there is a warm handover to our interagency partners in the area that the servicemember will be relocating [to],” Kelly said. “We have deliberately created a bridge between the services and our interagency partners in the community in which they are moving.”

The abilities that military personnel have gained and the lifestyle they have adapted to during their time in the Armed Forces help greatly when they are ready to transition from the military into the civilian work force, LtGen Berger said.

“In a four-year term, officers or enlisted—it doesn’t matter—they are most likely

going to make at least two deployments to different parts of the world in different capacities,” said LtGen Berger. “Our servicemembers need to be that flexible to go to the Middle East, the Pacific or South America, and that ability to adapt produces the kind of person that can literally fit in anywhere because we make them fit in anywhere.”

Kelly said they are close to completing a circuit that would bring capable military personnel into the civilian workforce successfully.

“We have all of the pieces that we’ve never had in place before,” said Kelly. “Now we just need to join hands and put this puzzle together, and I invite all of you to please do that with us.”

Hiring Our Heroes is a nationwide initiative to help veterans, transitioning servicemembers and military spouses find meaningful employment opportunities. For more information, visit www.hiringourheroes.org.

Cpl Joshua Murray, USMC

College Students Benefit From Corps’ Leadership Skills

Approximately 35 National University students gathered at the Sanford Education Center in San Diego to take part in a

Marine Corps Leadership Seminar on Feb. 19.

The leadership seminar imparts Marine Corps leadership skills to forward-thinking college students and college faculty and staff.

“We visit approximately five colleges each year across the United States to reach out to mainstream America talking about Marine Corps leadership,” said seminar director Dr. Kenneth D. Dunn, a retired Marine colonel.

“We are informing students of what it means to be a Marine Corps leader. While we are happy to help the participants who show interest in joining, our main goal is to help students and staff develop leadership skills and learn about the Marine Corps,” he added.

Students in attendance were from both graduate and undergraduate business and leadership programs, and many were encouraged by their professors to attend.

“I wanted my students to come to this evening’s event because I always encourage them to get various points of view on leadership,” said Dawn Overton, professor of organizational leadership at NU. “Our students will graduate and oftentimes deal with the military through business relationships, so it is beneficial for them to



1stLt Chris Rose, a research monitor with Amphibious Assault Vehicle School, explains the rules of a critical-thinking event to seminar participants at the Sanford Education Center in San Diego, Feb. 19. During each event, Marines critiqued team leaders on their performance, communication and item completion.

SGT ERICA KIRSOP, USMC

understand the military perspective when working together.”

Each event during the four-hour seminar required participants to focus on a different aspect of being a well-rounded leader. Events included a lecture on leadership qualities and tactics, problem-solving obstacles conducted in small groups and ethical case-study debates.

“Listening to the Marine Corps’ ethical teaching scenarios was a nice experience because attendees were able to see the contrast in how civilians would approach situations vice the active-duty Marines in attendance,” said Daniel Langford, a graduate student at NU.

The workshop’s interactive style of teaching, with hands-on tasks and open discussions, had attendees engaged throughout the evening and provided students with multiple opportunities to either fill a leadership role among their peers or to put themselves in a leadership mindset in which they would be forced to make tough ethical decisions.

“In all the years I worked with this program, I noticed the students who come to our free seminars are people who genuinely want to help others,” said Dunn. “They put forward the effort that makes us work harder to create a better program. I think it’s why we have been so successful.”

For more information regarding the Marine Corps Leadership Seminar or to request a seminar at your academic institution or business, visit www.manpower.usmc.mil/mcls.

Sgt Erica Kirsop, USMC

Health Plan Will Provide Coverage During Transition From Active Duty

Transitioning from active duty can be a stressful time for many servicemembers and their families. An important part of that transition is choosing a new health care provider in the civilian world.

The Continued Health Care Benefit Program (CHCBP) is designed to act as a bridge between military health benefits and a new civilian health plan by providing short-term continued coverage after losing military health benefits. The program is available to military personnel, their families, former spouses who are not remarried and adult children.

“It’s an option, not a requirement,” said Kaylyn Dynbar, the manage care support liaison at Naval Hospital Beaufort, S.C.

The CHCBP provides similar benefits to those offered by TRICARE but is not the same program. Premium payments are required, and only civilian hospitals and health care providers may be used. The program offers both an individual coverage plan and a family coverage plan. Servicemembers, spouses and other



During the October 2014 Warrior Games at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colo., Sgt Anthony McDaniel Jr., USMC, left, evades a player from the Army team during the gold-medal basketball round, which was won by the Marine Corps team. This year, the DOD will sponsor the Warrior Games, which will be held at MCB Quantico, Va., June 19-28. (Photo by EJ Hersom)

eligible adults qualify for the individual coverage, which costs approximately \$1,275 per quarter. The family coverage is reserved for former servicemembers and their families and costs approximately \$2,898 per quarter. The coverage is purchased in 90-day increments.

When looking for civilian health care providers, it helps to have a support system in place. The CHCBP, designed to help servicemembers transition into the next stage in their lives, can provide that support if needed.

For additional information about the program and what length of coverage you may qualify for, visit www.tricare.mil/chcbp.

PFC Jonah Lovy, USMC

Quantico to Host 2015 Warrior Games

The Department of Defense Warrior Games 2015 will take place at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., June 19-28. This will be the first year the DOD will organize the games, which were run previously by the United States Olympic Committee and held at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colo.

The Warrior Games is an annual sporting competition that brings together wounded, ill and injured servicemembers and veterans from across the country. This year’s games will feature eight sporting events with about 200 athletes representing teams from the Marine Corps, Army, Navy, Air Force and U.S. Special Operations Command. Each military service

hosts trials in the months leading up to the games to determine their teams.

Adaptive sports and athletic reconditioning activities play a fundamental role in recovery, rehabilitation and reintegration of military personnel back to their units, or as they transition into the civilian environment.

“The courage, strength and skill of our warrior-athletes and their families inspire their fellow servicemen and women, and Americans everywhere,” said Jessica Wright, former undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness. “Everyone in the Department of Defense looks forward to celebrating the athletes’ accomplishments before, during and after June’s competition.”

In 2011, the DOD created the Military Adaptive Sports Program to enhance warrior recovery by engaging wounded, ill and injured servicemembers in ongoing, daily adaptive activities based on their interests and abilities.

Since its inception, the program has assisted more than 158,000 servicemembers at 325 structured camps and clinics for activities including basketball, cycling, track and field, swimming, golf and sitting volleyball.

Updates on the DOD Warrior Games will be available at www.defense.mil/warriorgames.

Department of Defense



Tools or Toys?

The SHOT Show Showcases the Latest In Outdoor Gear and Gadgets

By Scott Dinkel

I recently attended the SHOT Show, a trade show and conference highlighting the latest in the innovations, accessories and other items of interest in the firearms, ammunition, hunting and shooting industry. The show was held in January at the Sands Expo and Convention Center in Las Vegas, where more than 1,600 exhibitors set up displays.

Attendance at the SHOT Show is restricted to the shooting, hunting and outdoor trade and commercial buyers and sellers of military, law enforcement and tactical products and services only. Since the show is not open to the public, we thought *Leatherneck* readers would enjoy a firsthand account of some of the items.

MacGyver himself would be envious of the newest tool from Leatherman. The **Tread** is a multi-tool that is worn on the wrist. Corrosion-resistant, it has hardy 17-4 stainless-steel or black finish links that include two to three functional tools each, making a total of 25 usable features like box wrenches and screwdrivers available at a moment's notice.

The bracelet was crafted to be fully customizable with slotted fasteners so the user could rearrange links, add new ones or adjust for wrist size. Even the clasp is functional with a bottle opener and #2 square drive. Other link tools include a cutting hook, hex drives, screwdrivers,

box wrenches and a carbide glass breaker.

The Tread will be available this summer, and Leatherman (www.leatherman.com) will include a watch on the Tread in the fall.

Other tools introduced by Leatherman included the **Signal**, the **Rev** and the **Leap**. All have great new functions, but I am still hoping they produce a "Leatherneck Leatherman." What Marine would not want to have this?

Zippo (www.zippo.com), known for their iconic lighters, is another company with which most Marines are familiar. The company's latest product is a portable gas grill that would be great for tailgating. The Zippo **All-Terrain Grill** has legs that fold in so the grill can be stored in a trunk or the bed of a pick-up truck and fold out with rugged wheels in case it needs to be moved.

The company also has a new **4-in-1 Woodsman** tool. This new multi-tool has a mallet, a stake puller, a hatchet with a 5-inch blade and a bow saw that cuts oak up to 4 inches in diameter. The saw blade stores in the handle until needed. This could be the right tool to take on a camping trip.

Zippo also owns Case Knives (www.wrcase.com), which offers a line of **Marine Corps knives**. Each folding knife in the Marine series carries the eagle,



Tread, by Leatherman

globe and anchor. A great display piece, the limited-numbered presentation plaque with the **Bowie Commemorative Knife** has a mirror-polished blade etched with "Marines. The Few. The Proud."

Zippo also just released a copy of the **World War II V-42 Stiletto**, first issued to the First Special Service Force, aka The Devil's Brigade. The V-42 has since been considered by many as one of the finest WW II fighting knives.

All of these tools should be available for purchase at military exchanges as well as local tool stores or hardware stores this year.



Case Folding Knife



Zippo All-Terrain Grill



Case Bowie Commemorative Knife



Zippo 4-in-1 Woodsman

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SEA STORY OF THE MONTH

Old Habits

A couple of years ago, I felt it was time for me to revisit Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego. I was sitting in the stands watching the drill instructors handling recruits. Apparently one of them had violated the sensitivities of the DI—whereupon the DI commenced to educate the lad in a loud, clear voice and said, “When you speak to me, you stand up!” Whereupon I did, without thinking, stand up at attention.

Feeling a bit sheepish, I looked around to see if anyone noticed. There were three of us standing, at which time we got a round of applause from those around us. Some things last forever.

Sgt Darwinn B. Rutz
USMC, 1957-64
Greeley, Colo.

“Give Me a Hand!”

North Vietnamese mortar crews and their Viet Cong friends had been regularly lobbing a few rounds each night into the USMC helicopter compound near Dong Ha during the autumn of 1967, then hurrying back into the brush before Marines could locate them. As flight crews, we very quickly learned the most direct route from each hooch to the nearest bunker. In the middle of one terribly black night, the first incoming whistle sent us rushing to sand-bagged safety. In the fracas, a couple of guys collided—one falling to the ground with a painful temporary injury that hampered his ability to move.

Lying on the red clay, he

shouted toward the bunker, “Hey! Somebody give me a hand, will you?”

One salty lieutenant, perhaps too long in country, emerged from the shelter, stood in the entrance and began clapping his hands energetically. “Way to go, Captain! Come on, guys. Let’s give the captain a round of applause!”

Former Capt Rusty Sachs
Norwich, Vt.

An Inspection Gone Overboard

While en route to Korea aboard a troopship in 1953, we were called out for a rifle inspection. Given the limited deck space on the ship, we lined up along the rail and, when ordered to do so, leapt up onto the forward hatch cover where we stood at attention and presented our weapons for inspection.

Aboard ship with us was one of the most unkempt Marines I had seen during my enlistment. We later learned that he had not bothered to clean his weapon after firing it at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., more than two weeks before. Needless to say, the entire weapon had

immediately started chewing the Marine out. Snatching the rifle from the Marine, the inspecting officer loudly shouted, “What in the hell do you call that?” In response, the Marine said very simply, “That’s my rifle, sir.” The inspector shouted, “That’s not a rifle. No Marine would ever let his rifle get that way. You should be ashamed of yourself.”

With that remark, the Marine grabbed the rifle from the officer and tossed it overboard. The officer, in a mild state of shock, quickly asked, “What did you do that for?” The Marine quickly replied, “Sir, I am just as ashamed of it as you are.” We later learned that he had been fined about 180 bucks to pay for the rifle. They couldn’t reduce his rank since he was already a private.

SSgt Art Snell
USMC, 1951-59
Appleton, Wis.

Marines Learn Something New

In early 1972, a few other second lieutenants and I attended the U.S. Army Artillery School at

maneuvers in Europe. He kept using the term “retrograde operations.” I had no idea what that term meant. I whispered to the two Marine officers sitting next to me and asked if they knew the term. They were equally befuddled.

When we got to the “Q&A” part of the class, I sheepishly raised my hand and asked the colonel to explain what he meant by “retrograde operations.” With the exception of the Marine officers, everyone else in the room erupted into laughter. The colonel kindly replied that Marines were probably not familiar with that term because it meant “retreat,” and it was not something that Marines like to do.

Capt Bob Canepa
USMC, 1971-74
Mill Valley, Calif.

“Spread Your Cheeks!”

In the 1950s I found myself in a long line of Marine recruits at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C., awaiting a more comprehensive physical examination and the first of many shots to come. With our heads freshly shaved, all 75 of us were stripped down to our skivvies, and the smell of sweat, new clothes and the institutional smell of an old wooden medical building made for an almost nauseating situation. We were all uptight and nervous.

First in line was a fellow from an indigenous Florida tribe who had obviously never had contact with medical people. A Navy doctor and a corpsman stood at the front of the line and told the recruit, “Drop your skivvies, bend over and spread your cheeks!” The recruit dropped his skivvies;

We quickly learned that there were many differences between the Army and the Marine Corps.

a light coating both inside and out.

When the Marine presented his weapon for inspection, the inspecting officer started to reach for it, but at the last second, recoiled in horror at the condition of the Marine’s rifle. The officer

Fort Sill, Okla. We quickly learned that there were many differences between the Army and the Marine Corps. One of the biggest differences became clear during one of our classes. An Army colonel was teaching a class about military operations and

bent over and with both hands grabbed his facial cheeks and pulled hard, displaying a mouth full of huge teeth. The tremendous roar of laughter almost blew the roof off the old wooden building.

For about five seconds we all had a good laugh, but that suddenly came to a screeching halt when the senior drill instructor—a serious man with no sense of humor—appeared on the scene.

Edward R. Hagler
USMC, 1954-58
Orlando, Fla.

The Punishment Fits the Crime

After our first run to the PX in boot camp, we were informed that candy was contraband. We were then afforded the opportunity to surrender any contraband we may have, and most did. The drill instructors then began a search and found one private with a bag of M&M's. They made him do push-ups, and each time he went into the down position, he had to eat one M&M.

Suddenly, another private started sobbing. The drill instructors quickly converged on that private and on him they found a 1-pound bag of M&M's. It was very hard not to feel sorry for him, but it was harder not to laugh.

Marcus Whitehead
Via e-mail

Parris Island Fly Traps

At the end of the month our platoon was about ready to go to the rifle range. We were billeted in three-man tents located between the parade ground and the base PX. After noon chow, the drill instructors left us for a short period—unusual.

Being so close to the PX, we could see people coming out with soft drinks and ice cream cones. Being a little salty by now, another recruit and I decided to make a run on said PX. We took our laundry bags, bought

several blocks of ice cream and were leaving the PX just as the senior DI entered. He was not a happy man.

He ordered us back to the platoon area to wait for him as he dragged our ill-gotten goods. As soon as he arrived, he had the platoon muster. Then he had the pair of us take off our pith helmets, after asking us if we liked ice cream. The only answer had to be, "Yes, sir."

He peeled the container back and placed the ice

my handy-dandy military issue flashlight without the red lens. Here comes our noncommissioned officer in charge, Staff Sergeant "Bunny" Morton. He jumps my case big time for not having the red lens cover on. I explain how you can't see a hydraulic fluid leak with a red lens.

He didn't want to hear that—he told me the enemy could see the white light for miles at sea. I responded saying, "The last time I

"The last time I checked, the Viet Cong didn't have any submarines." He really didn't want to hear that and continued with intense instruction of the proper use of lights in a combat zone.

cream into the helmets, then placed the helmets back on our heads—firmly. The whole platoon then marched to the parade ground for close-order drill.

Within minutes, every fly on Parris Island was on us as the ice cream slowly melted, running down our utilities. Even our friends didn't want to be near us. Showing a little mercy, our DI cut short the drill and allowed us to clean up. Not one of our best days!

Some three years later I returned to Parris Island as a senior drill instructor.

SgtMaj Francis X. Riley, USMC (Ret)
1942-77
Milton, Mass.

The Flashlight

So, it's zero dark 30, Jan. 6, 1967, and I am performing the preflight inspection of my "bird." It's the first day of [Operation] Deckhouse V; we are operating off of USS *Iwo Jima* (LPH-2). My Huey slick is assigned command and control duty that day, controlling naval gunfire, air support and the like. I am using

checked, the Viet Cong didn't have any submarines." He really didn't want to hear that and continued with intense instruction of the proper use of lights in a combat zone. I brought his attention to the top of *Iwo's* mast, at least 200 feet up, lit up with the brightest white light in the area.

"Bunny" informed me in a very enthusiastic manner that if the Navy screwed up and got the ship sunk that was their problem. But I was his problem, and he wouldn't allow me to cause the ship to take a torpedo. The logic was inescapable. I turned off my light (until he left).

George A. "Buster" Finch
Santa Rosa, Calif.

An Experienced Translator

In the late 1970s, I was the fuel officer on a deployment to Germany (Operation Northern Wedding/Bold Guard). My unit had the mission of supplying various types of fuel to Marine units. The German army would truck our fuel into the fuel farms. My troops

issued aviation gas to the air wing units and "mogas" to the ground units. Since the German soldiers were our supply source, I had a little language barrier while trying to tally and maintain records and receive the various types of fuel.

One day I was getting pretty low on JP fuel. When the German fuel truck arrived, I tried asking the German driver what type of fuel he had and how much he could supply us. I tried my best, but we both could not understand each other. One of my lance corporals approached me and said, "Gunner, I have a friend across the road in the amtrac unit who speaks perfect German, and he will translate." I told my lance corporal to go and get him. The Marine from the other unit arrived, and I asked him, "Can you speak German?" He said he could and had studied the language in school. I said, "Good, please ask this German soldier how much fuel and what type of fuel he has."

The Marine turned to the German and using his arms and hands said, "Hooowww muuucch fueeeel doooo you haaaveee, and whaaatt typpee issst itt?" I had to walk away pulling at my hair and chuckling!

CWO-3 Jack Wing, USMC (Ret)
Apopka, Fla.

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

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 6 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.

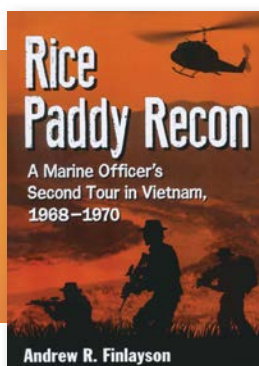


SERVICE POEMS. By Bruce Lack. Published by Texas Tech University Press. 128 pages. Softcover. Stock #0896729206. \$17.06 MCA Members. \$18.95 Regular Price.

It was a coincidence that I saw the movie “American Sniper” and read Bruce Lack’s poems about his service as a Marine in Fallujah during the same weekend. And another coincidence that poems from World War II and Vietnam vets had reached my desk at the National Museum of the Marine Corps the previous week. The WW II Marine was remembering those who fell beside him on a beach filled with violence, while the Marine who fought in Vietnam had written his poem while in the field to the children he didn’t think he would see again. Warriors turn to verse for the same reasons others who have never worn the uniform do: to share, to heal, to persuade, to vent, to remember.

This slim but powerful volume, “Service Poems,” is introduced by Robert Fink, who was a Marine lieutenant in Vietnam and now directs creative writing at Hardin-Simmons University—and he writes poetry. The author, Bruce Lack, graduated from another creative writing course at the graduate-degree level, the Helen Zell Writer’s Program at the University of Michigan. There, students prepare themselves for a lifetime of writing, and it may take a very long life for Corporal Lack to tell it all.

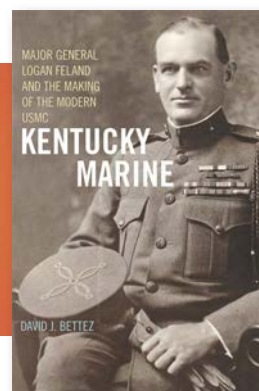
The conversational poems of his service are divided into three groups. In raw voice, using the rough words and color of



Marines in combat, Lack takes the reader into Iraq as the new guy, the “FNG,” to be exact. This FNG is a rifleman, who gets told how it’s going to be: “I walk, I talk, you listen and soak up this hip-pocket class, oorah?” “The War According to Master Sergeant Marsh” goes on: “You know what, if you didn’t put it there, don’t pick it up—goes for anything on the ground. ... [All] you need to know how to say is ‘stop’ and ‘open the trunk.’ ” “... incoming happens all the time.” The selections in the first group bring us close to the death, terror and ugliness that surrounded Marines in Fallujah in 2004.

Part two is composed of 15 snapshot nightmares of “Our War,” each 14 lines long. “They haven’t legally bought a beer, and yet they’ve seen friends die, known survivor’s rage, teeth cracked from grinding, the guilt, the desire to kill everyone everywhere, leave this desert clean.”

The final part contains 14 “after” poems: after so much death, after funerals, after coming back home, after so much remembering. Fighting men and women return from battle changed, sometimes damaged, weary. In “Scanning,” the poet remembers the intensity of taking in his surroundings when not noticing something askew could mean death or worse: “... a large, headless carcass but there aren’t any wires coming out of it, Coke can, mysteriously upright, mangled soccer ball, folding chair. . . .” He remembers Iraq, but he’s behind the wheel of the family car: “My wheels churn up the opposite shoulder and my wife



looks up from her book and asks ‘What’s the matter?’ I take her hand, shake my head, ‘Nothing love. Just something in our road.’ ”

Not every warrior has the skills required for creative outlets like writing poetry or making art. But all warriors—and those of us who never fought—can experience the power and realism of the warrior’s world through his or her works. In the final poem of the volume, called “Mission Statement,” the poet wants “to write a poem that won’t make my wife cry.” I hope he does.

I’m done with “Service Poems,” but they are not done with me.

Lin Ezell

Author’s bio: Lin Ezell is the director of the National Museum of the Marine Corps, Triangle, Va.

RICE PADDY RECON: A Marine Officer’s Second Tour in Vietnam, 1968-1970. By Andrew R. Finlayson. Published by McFarland. 310 pages. Stock #0786496231. \$31.50 MCA Members. \$35 Regular Price.

To complement his first excellent book, “Killer Kane,” retired Colonel Andrew R. Finlayson has written the fascinating account of his second tour in the Republic of Vietnam.

After returning from his first tour with the 1st Force Reconnaissance Battalion, the lieutenant served briefly at the Marine Barracks at “8th and I.” Learning that his reconnaissance team had been decimated

during the 1968 Tet offensive, he volunteered and returned to the fight. On his arrival in country, he was again assigned to 1st Force Recon at Camp Reasoner, west of Da Nang, and because of his first, highly successful tour, he assumed the responsibility of S-3, operations, for the company.

Soon, the company detached from the battalion and began operations in the infamous Base Area 112 in Arizona Territory. This area, located in the Ong Thu Slope Mountains, was the headquarters of the 2nd NVA Division and was dangerous since there were few easily accessible landing zones. Operating in an overhead canopy jungle, Finlayson's Marines tested and perfected innovative insertion and extraction methods supported by Marine helicopters.

The time Finlayson spent during his two tours in the mountain regions of Arizona Territory served him well when he was transferred to the Fifth Marine Division. Now a first lieutenant, he was assigned as the company commander of Company G, 2d Bn. The battalion was operating in many of the same areas he had patrolled during his time with Force Recon.

In a colorful description about an infantry company moving to the attack, he writes: "Like a living, amoeba-like organism, Company G moved elastically, ebbing and flowing in and around tree lines, paddy dikes, and clusters of huts as it moved west with its right flank anchored on the river." He clearly loved and admired the hard-charging "grunts" he commanded.

During his second tour, he experienced the first rumblings and corrosive effects of racial tension among the troops. After the Tet offensive, and following the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., the lieutenant believed that most racially inspired outbreaks were promoted by rear area support troops and usually did not involve his front-line infantry Marines.

It was also during this tour that he had a unique experience for a young officer of the times. He was tapped to join the clandestine ranks of the CIA. Chosen primarily due to his successful infantry background and for his vast understanding of both the Vietnamese people and their culture, he was assigned to support and advise popular forces operating in III Corps, west of Saigon.

Operating near the Cambodia border, the CIA teams were active and invaluable. The CIA section that Finlayson was attached to collected information and endeavored to turn disaffected Viet Cong followers into U.S. spies and eliminate critical local VC cadre. The lieutenant's job was to lead teams of the Provincial

Rice Paddy Recon

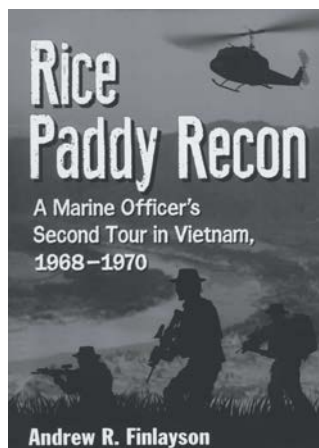
A Marine Officer's Second Tour in Vietnam, 1968-1970

by Andrew R. Finlayson

Join a young U.S. Marine officer as he spends 19 months in combat fighting Vietnamese communist military and political units. He graphically describes what it was like to perform three distinct combat missions: 1) long-range ground reconnaissance in the Annamite Mountains of I Corps, 2) infantry operations in the rice paddies and mountains of Quang Nam Province and 3) special police operations for the CIA in Tay Ninh Province.

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Reconnaissance Units to disrupt and eliminate the enemy operating in the province. He thrived in the complex world of the spy and became involved with some of the workings of the highly controversial Phoenix Program.

Referring to one of his triumphant missions, he writes: "The Phoenix apparatus did not always work as smoothly as it did on this operation, but when it did, the results were usually just as successful and productive."

He believed that the program was effective in putting increased pressure on the local VC operations and severely degraded their efforts. He notes: "During the eight months I was the PRU advisor in Tay Ninh Province, I never once received an order to assassinate anyone and neither did the PRU." His team always preferred to capture these enemy agents.

Taken together, Col Finlayson's informative books detail his two tours in the Republic of Vietnam, which covered 32 months in country. Both of his books are exciting to read and thought-provoking. Now, after a 40-year career in the Corps, he commands our respect and interest as he successfully endeavors to explain his views on how very close we did come to winning one of America's most complex and mystifying wars.

His Vietnamese comrades nicknamed him, "The Superior Monk," and unlike many American returning veterans, he also held great affection for these patriotic Vietnamese. He writes: [They were] "the bravest, toughest, and most devoted fighting men I have ever served with." With his complex service not typical of the period in which the officer served in Vietnam, it's time for us to consider Col Finlayson's view of this turbulent American conflict.

In the final chapter, he takes on many of the armchair cynics of the war. Here he confronts many long-held fallacies; i.e., the Tet offensive was a resounding defeat for America, and the Phoenix Program somehow was an extra-legal affair. He believes that many myths and misconceptions held by the public were driven by propaganda articulated by a hostile and poorly informed press.

He ends the book with a short overview of the 20th-century history of this intriguing Far East region, noting that we did, in fact, have a chance for the war's successful outcome, but we managed to blow it. He concludes that our enemy viewed the struggle as a regional conflict while politicians directed that the fight be fought within the set boundaries of Vietnam. "In sum," as he concludes, "the American failure to cut the Ho Chi Minh Trail *on the ground* was the key to our failure to win the war."

Col Finlayson's books, "Killer Kane" and "Rice Paddy Recon," are both important and fascinating to read. His extended experience in country and his 40-year study of the conflict are well worth considering. As a veteran of the war, he has spent time reading and analyzing the facts

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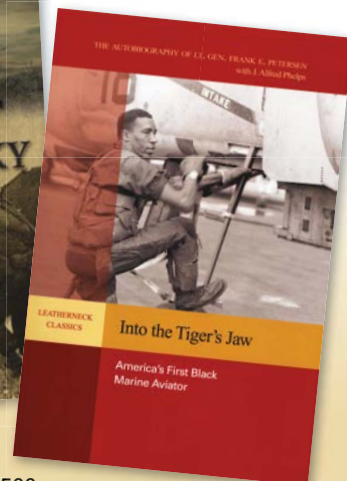
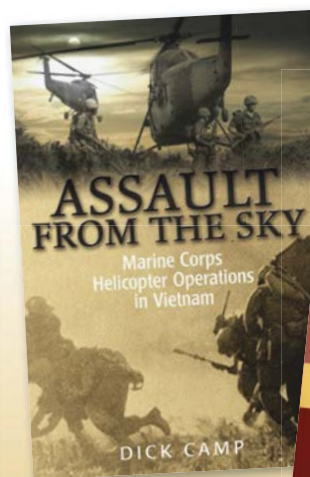
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as they emerged. Taken together with his unique contact with many of his Vietnamese counterparts and his discussions with some of his enemy opponents, his views deserve our full and undivided attention.

Robert B. Loring

Author's bio: Readers will recognize Marine veteran "Red Bob" Loring as a frequent Leatherneck reviewer, who has had more than 100 book reviews published in the magazine. A tireless worker for the Marine Corps and his local community, he volunteers for various charities, including helping to run a very successful Toys for Tots program in Pasco County, Fla.

KENTUCKY MARINE: Major General Logan Feland and the Making of the Modern USMC. By David J. Bettez. Published by University Press of Kentucky. 367 pages. Stock #0813144574. \$35.96 MCA Members. \$39.95 Regular Price.

The University of Kentucky's director of international affairs, David Bettez, brings us the fascinating story of Major General Logan Feland (1869-1936). Military scholars and Marines interested in their Corps' history seemed to have overlooked the magnificent career of this intriguing Marine officer. A World War I hero of

Belleau Wood, the low-key, intelligent and ambitious Feland lacked but one key component of achieving his ultimate goal of becoming the Commandant of the Marine Corps. He had not graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy.

The general was born in Hopkinsville, Ky., shortly after the American Civil War. Being from a prominent Kentucky family, his early role models included men who had fought on both sides of that war. A true intellect, Feland graduated from Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1892. When the Spanish-American War broke out, he quit his job as an architect in New York and returned to Kentucky to serve as an officer with the Third Kentucky Regiment. The regiment did not see action, but he learned much about the administration and organization of military units; these skills would serve him well throughout his career.

In 1899, Feland was appointed a first lieutenant in the Marine Corps. He served with many of the legends of the early Corps in the Philippines, and due to his background, he was selected to oversee the construction of new Marine Corps buildings and installations. By 1903, he was promoted to captain and served in Panama. In 1910, Feland was assigned as an instructor at the innovative Advanced

Base School. His abilities and vision would help set the stage for our modern Marine Corps. The author writes: "[G]iven this experience, Feland recognized that the Marine Corps had to adapt to an evolving situation with regard to amphibious warfare."

Marine officers of the day served in U.S. warships, but were also involved in many low-level conflicts throughout the Caribbean. As such, he saw action in Colombia, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Mexico and, later, in Nicaragua. Married to Katherine Heath in 1907, the young captain served in both USS *Massachusetts* (BB-2) and USS *Minnesota* (BB-22), a grand warship which circled the world with President Theodore Roosevelt's "Great White Fleet."

As World War I was declared, Major Feland was quickly promoted to lieutenant colonel. He sailed with the first contingent of American officers dispatched to Europe in May 1917. Feland set sail to France with General John J. "Black Jack" Pershing, George S. Patton and future flying ace Eddie Rickenbacker.

During the first major Marine advance of the war, Feland served as the second in command of the storied Fifth Marine Regiment. There, he participated in the touchstone Marine battle, Belleau Wood. Under Colonel "Buck" Neville, Fifth

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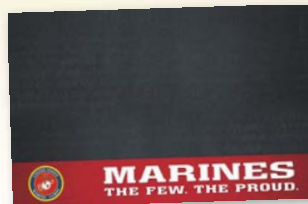


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Regiment helped blunt the German's 1918 spring offensive. For their ferocious fighting skills and sharpshooting abilities, Marines earned their everlasting nickname, "Devil Dogs."

Serving as Col Neville's eyes and ears, LtCol Feland roamed the battlefield, helping the regiment plug holes, and where needed, he made many critical tactical decisions. In one horrific day, June 6, the Marine Corps suffered more casualties than it had all its previous history.

Of the desperate two-week battle for control of the wooded hunting preserve, a regimental historian commented on Feland's energetic actions: "Almost every day he [Feland] might be seen along the lines encouraging the officers and men and improving the situation by wise suggestions."

The author continues, "Feland would be the highest-ranking Marine Corps officer to win the Distinguished Service Cross during the war."

Rightfully so, the Battle of Belleau Wood made Feland a war hero and underscored his reputation for the remainder of his long and distinguished career. He was in command of the Fifth Regiment through many of the war's other famed battles: Soissons, Saint-Mihiel and Blanc Mont. The Kentucky colonel ended the war as

one of the Marine Corps' most highly decorated leathernecks.

In 1921 he was promoted to brigadier general and by 1923 he became Assistant to the Commandant.

In 1927 there was an uprising in Nicaragua. The Sandinistas, under Augusto Sandino, threatened to disrupt American-owned businesses and the impending free election process. An expert problem solver, BGen Feland was sent to ensure the success of these free elections. The general, well-versed in both diplomacy and war, managed to calm the situation, and his Marines ensured a safe and fair election process while they fought and marginalized the rebels. To his officers, the general directed: "If violence is attempted, strike hard at those guilty while doing all in your power to protect and reassure the innocent." Please note that this enthralling statement foreshadowed the present-day phrase: "No greater friend, no worse enemy."

By 1930, Feland lost his bid to become the Commandant of the Marine Corps. The author suggests that a major factor in Feland not becoming Commandant was that he was not a Naval Academy graduate.

David J. Bettez's intriguing book, "Kentucky Marine," provides valuable insight

to the important period of our country's flirtation with the "age of empire." Additionally, the book tells the saga of an unsung hero of our Corps. In researching this fine biography, the author's challenge was immense. The historical archives relating to Feland's life were limited. However, Bettez undertook this great task and has produced a swift, concise and vivid narrative. Using the general's correspondence, and selected biographies of the period, he has succeeded.

In the acknowledgment section of the book, the author notes his appreciation of *Leatherneck's* own Master Gunnery Sergeant Ron Keene, USMC (Ret) and the magazine's former editor, Col Walt Ford, USMC (Ret). Additionally, Mr. Bettez's excellent biography was nominated for the distinguished Marine Corps Heritage Foundation's Colonel Joseph Alexander Book Award.

"Kentucky Marine: Major General Logan Feland and the Making of the Modern USMC" will, unquestionably, be of great service to many future Marine Corps historians, Kentuckians, and all of us who value the growth and evolution of our Corps.

Robert B. Loring



In Memoriam

Compiled by Nancy S. Lichtman

"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.

MARSOC Marines Die In Blackhawk Crash

Seven Marines assigned to U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command died in the crash of a Louisiana Army National Guard UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter that was conducting a training mission near Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., March 10, 2015. Four Louisiana National Guard soldiers also died in the crash.

"We are deeply saddened by this training mishap that took the lives of seven of our MARSOC Marines and four Louisiana National Guard soldiers. Our thoughts and prayers are with the Marines, soldiers and their families and friends as we all mourn this tragic loss of life," said Major General Joseph L. Osterman, MARSOC commanding general.

The cause of the crash is under investigation.

The Marines who died are:

Staff Sergeant Marcus S. Bawol, 26, of Warren, Mich., who was a MARSOC critical skills operator. His personal awards include the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal and the Combat Action Ribbon.

SSgt Trevor P. Blaylock, 29, of Lake Orion, Mich., who served as a MARSOC element member. His personal awards include the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with combat "V," the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal and the Combat Action Ribbon.

SSgt Liam A. Flynn, 33, a native of Ireland, who was an assistant element member within MARSOC. His personal awards include the Bronze Star with combat "V," three Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medals with combat "V" and the Combat Action Ribbon.

SSgt Kerry M. Kemp, 27, of Port Washington, Wis., who served as a critical skills operator. His personal awards include the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal with combat "V" and the Combat Action Ribbon.

Master Sergeant Thomas A. Saunders, 33, of Williamsburg, Va., who was a

MARSOC team chief. His personal awards include the Joint Service Commendation Medal, two Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medals and five Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medals.

SSgt Andrew C. Seif, 26, of Holland, Mich., who was a MARSOC element member. His personal awards include the Silver Star and the Combat Action Ribbon.

Captain Stanford H. Shaw III, 31, of Basking Ridge, N.J., who was a MARSOC team commander. His personal awards include the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal and the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal.

Compiled from MARSOC media releases

Civilian Aircraft Crash Results in Marine Fatality

Lance Corporal Anthony T. DuBeau died as a result of injuries sustained when a T-59 Hawk, a civilian aircraft, crashed and impacted the government vehicle that he was in at Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz., on March 11, 2015. He was assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron aboard MCAS Yuma.

"Our hearts and prayers go out to the family and friends of the Marine we lost in this tragic accident," said Colonel Ricardo Martinez, MCAS Yuma commanding officer.

LCpl DuBeau, 23, a native of Kenosha, Wis., enlisted in the Marine Corps in 2013. He served within H&HS as an aviation operations specialist.

The incident is currently under investigation.

Capt Jose M. Negrete, USMC

MSgt Joseph F. Assenmacher Sr., 83, of Philadelphia. He fought with the 1stMarDiv in Korea and was awarded the Purple Heart twice. Upon his return from Korea, he enlisted in the Marine Corps Reserve and retired in 1976. He was a member of the Marine Corps League.

Sgt Merritt Ballew, 94, in Garland, Texas. He saw action in the South Pacific during WW II, including combat

on Bougainville and Iwo Jima. He was wounded and received the Purple Heart. After his discharge from the Marine Corps, he went to work as a letter carrier for the U.S. Postal Service.

Capt Benjamin W. Beck, 81, in Albuquerque, N.M. He enlisted in 1951 and served 20 years. From 1952 to 1953 he served as a tank commander in Korea. Upon his return from Korea, he was a drill instructor at MCRD San Diego. While he was on recruiting duty in Las Vegas, he volunteered at a local high school and helped students prepare for rifle and drill competitions.

In 1965 he attended Officer Candidates School at Quantico, Va., and later served in Vietnam as a tank platoon commander.

Cpl Cecil R. Blowers, 67, of Northville, N.Y. He served with the 1stMarDiv in Da Nang, RVN, in 1967, where he was wounded, and later in Con Thien. He was awarded the Purple Heart.

Later, he was the highway superintendent for the town of Benson, N.Y.

Philip C. Booty, 87, in Chesterfield, Va. He attended the Illinois Institute of Technology before serving in the Marine Corps during WW II. After the war, he attended the Capital Radio Engineering Institute. He was a mechanical engineer who designed military airborne and underwater equipment for various firms.

1stLt Harry B. "Britt" Brown Jr., 87, of Wichita, Kan. He enlisted in 1944, and after his discharge from active duty, he attended the University of Southern California where he played football and was a starting halfback in a Rose Bowl game. He transferred to the University of Kansas for his senior year. Upon graduation, he was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps Reserve. He was called up during the Korean War.

He became an owner of Eagle & Beacon Publishing Company Inc. and retired in 1979 as chairman of the board. He was an accomplished journalist whose coverage of the Vietnam War won him awards. An avid pilot, he flew helicopters as well as single and multi-engine airplanes.

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- 3 - 13 Dec - 50th Anniv of Helicopter Ops - 1965
- 27 Feb - 11 Mar '16 - Tet Offensive & Battle of Hue City plus Khe Sanh
- 9 - 21 Apr '16 - 50th Anniversary of Search & Destroy Ops - 1966



*Group in the Citadel,
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- 1 - 12 Aug - Guadalcanal "Turning the Tide"



*Bloody Ridge
Guadalcanal*

- 12 - 25 Oct - 70th Anniversary of "China Marines - 1945"
- 29 Jan - 8 Feb '16 - WWII - 75th Anniv of Invasion of the Philippines
- 14 - 21 Mar '16 - Iwo Jima Reunion of Honor - Guam & Charter to Iwo Jima

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- 19 - 27 Apr '16 - Turkey WWI Gallipoli & Istanbul
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Capt James L. Chapman, 79, of Fredericksburg, Va. He was a Mustang officer who served in the Korean War and the Vietnam War. He later became the president of the Fredericksburg Board of Realtors.

SgtMaj Thomas B. "Tom" Crump, 93, of Louisville, Ky. He enlisted in 1940 and was assigned to the Navy Yard police at Pearl Harbor. He was standing guard on the dock next to USS *Pennsylvania* (BB-38) on Battleship Row when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. He later saw action on Guadalcanal, Bougainville, Peleliu and Okinawa.

Following WW II, he had assignments in Kodiak and Adak, Alaska; Norfolk, Va.; Parris Island, S.C.; and MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif. In 1953 he fought in Korea.

In 1967, he helped establish the Marine Corps JROTC program at Seneca High School. He was a member of MCL Kentuckiana Det. #729 as well as the VFW.

MSgt Leo N. Dick, 85, of Auburn, Maine. He enlisted in 1948 and served for 24 years. He was with 1stMarDiv at the Inchon Landing in Korea. He also fought at the Chosin Reservoir. He was a lifetime member of the VFW and the American Legion.

Keene Hepburn, 96, of Fredericksburg,

Va. He was a Marine who served in the Pacific during WW II.

John "Jack" Himpler, 93, of Port Washington, N.Y. When he was 20 years old, he joined the Marine Corps and served three years in the South Pacific with the 4thMarDiv during WW II. He was a pressman for the *New York Post* and got his start in the business as an apprentice for the *Daily Mirror* when he was 16.

Gerald "Jerry" Hobbs, 71, of Azusa, Calif. After his service in the Marine Corps, he became involved in keeping public lands open.

Duwayne L. Humphrey, 74, of Colleyville, Texas. He served in the Marine Corps for eight years. Later he spent more than 30 years working for Delta Airlines.

Irwin "Duke" Klareich, 89, of Frederick, Md. He was a Marine who served in WW II. Later, he was the owner of Duke's Smoke Shop in Elmont, N.Y.

Jacques J. LaFave, 89, of Woodruff, Wis. He served in the Marine Corps during WW II.

Sgt Hugh J. "Mac" McAvinue, 84, of Suffern, N.Y. He was with the 1stMarDiv in Korea. His personal decorations include the Korean Defense Service Medal. He was a member of the VFW and the MCA&F.

Arthur J. "Mac" McCormick, 82, of

Huntington, N.Y. He was a proud veteran of the Marine Corps. He was actively involved with his MCL Det. #792, serving as senior commandant and chairman of the Toys for Tots committee. He also was selected as his detachment's Marine of the Year.

James A. McGuigan Sr., 89, of Drexel Hill, Pa. He enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1942. He was a Browning Automatic Rifleman who fought on Guadalcanal, Saipan and Okinawa. During the fighting on Sugar Loaf Hill on Okinawa, he was wounded by an enemy bullet. He spent the next 90 days recovering on a hospital ship and then rejoined his unit in China.

Returning to civilian life in 1946, he attended Drexel University. He worked for C.J. Rainier & Company in Philadelphia for 32 years. He was the commandant of the Smedley Butler and Tun Tavern detachments of the MCL.

SSgt F. David Millett Jr., 84, of Moline, Ill. He enlisted in 1948 and served four years in the Marine Corps. He was a member of the Moline Police Department for 28 years and retired as police chief.

MGySgt James R. White, 83, of Floresville, Texas. He served 21 years in the Marine Corps.



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SOUND OFF

[continued from page 7]

a campaign. After Mass, he would invite me to have a few snorts of booze. He did not want to drink alone. Oo-rah!

I wonder what became of our chaplains. I heard some were awarded many medals.

Sgt Earl E. Chloupek

USMC, 1942-45

Lake Wales, Fla.

Being a Marine: It Never Gets Old

I do not write letters, but I must tell you how I feel about the blessing I've had for more than 63 years: being able to just say "I am a Marine."

It has allowed me to shape my life. I received my draft notice in 1951 when I graduated from high school in Philadelphia. It said two years in the Army, and the Korean War needed men.

Being Irish and a smart-ass teenager, nobody was going to put me into the Army for two years against my will, so I joined the Corps for four years. Intelligence has never been my strong suit.

Twelve weeks at Parris Island did two things for me: I was no longer a smart-ass, and it made me a man who belonged to a brotherhood with my fellow Marines.

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Fourteen months in Korea made the brotherhood deeper.

I often think back to the best of times: graduation in khakis, three months of advanced infantry training ...

To this day my shoes are shined, my clothes are pressed. While working I do the best I can. I accept any job assigned and treat my fellow workers as equals, work together. I've had 22 men under my control, and the Marine Corps taught me how to think before acting, make decisions and follow through, speak clearly and try to never belittle anyone.

My wife and I have been married 59 years. My daughters and granddaughters and wife put up with this proud Marine for a lot of years. My house is full of trophies from 50 years of Marine Corps League activities. I read my *Leatherneck* every month. In my 83 years, I have never forgotten that I am a Marine.

Former SSgt John J. Wilson
King of Prussia, Pa.

Editorial Irish Pennant

In the *Leatherneck* April issue, we mistakenly identified the barracks at Wounded Warrior Battalion East (WWBn-E), Camp Lejeune as Maxwell Hall. The lounge within the barracks is actually named for Lieutenant Colonel Tim Maxwell. In the same

issue, we misspelled the name of the command advisor for WWBn-E. LtCol Craig Stephens serves in that important billet. *Leatherneck* regrets these errors.

Reunions

• **3dMarDiv Assn. (all eras)**, Aug. 11-16, Orlando, Fla. Contact Don H. Gee, P.O. Box 254, Chalfont, PA 18914-0254,

(215) 822-9094, gygee@aol.com, www.caltrap.com.

• **Montford Point Marine Assn. (50th Annual Convention)**, Aug. 12-16, Mobile, Ala. Contact Rodney Lee, (251) 776-2424, or Ron Johnson, (504) 270-5426, www.montfordpointmarines.org.

• **Marine Corps Mustang Assn. (30th Reunion)**, Sept. 15-18, Jacksonville, Fla.

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- **USMC Combat Correspondents Assn.**, Aug. 16-20, New Bern, N.C. Contact Jack Paxton, (352) 748-4698, usmccca@cfl.rr.com.

- **USMC Vietnam Tankers Assn.**, Oct. 28-Nov. 2, Arlington, Va. Contact John Wear, (215) 794-9052, johnwear@yahoo.com.

- **2d Recon Bn Assn. (all eras)**, June 25-28, Knoxville, Tenn. Contact Bob Moody, c/o 2d Recon Bn Assn., P.O. Box 1679, Westminster, MD 21158, (443) 375-7562, sgtrecon73@gmail.com, www.2dreconbn.org.

- **1st MAW Assn. (RVN)**, May 28-30, Pensacola, Fla. Contact Al Frater, (201) 906-1197, teanal@optonline.net.

- **USMC Hawk Assn. (50th Anniversary)**, Aug. 19-23, Palm Springs/Rancho Mirage, Calif. Contact Stan Buliszyn, (352) 509-2043, sb353@usmchawkassociation.com.

- **USMC A-4 Skyhawk Assn.**, Oct. 8-11, San Diego. Contact Mark Williams, 400 Howell Way, #102, Edmonds, WA 98020, (425) 771-2030, roger.wilco@comcast.net.

- **Moroccan Reunion Assn. (all eras)**, Sept. 9-13, Branson, Mo. Contact Robert

Sieborg, 2717 N. 120th Ave., Omaha, NE 68164, (402) 496-1498.

- **USMC Postal 0160/0161**, Sept. 13-18, Savannah, Ga. Contact Harold Wilson, (740) 385-6204, handk.lucerne06@gmail.com.

- **1st, 2d and 3d Amtracs**, June 24-26, Biloxi, Miss. Contact Robert Glausier, (301) 432-5289, rglausier@myactv.net (subject line: Amtrac Reunion), or Vic Ciullo, (941) 496-8119.

- **3d and 4th Defense Battalions (members of other defense battalions welcome)**, May 20-26, Fredericksburg, Texas. Contact Charles Buckley, (510) 794-7280, ceb39reunion@gmail.com, or Sharon Heideman, (512) 738-2075, sharon_heideman@yahoo.com.

- **BLT 3/9 (50-Year Reunion)**, Sept. 8-12, San Diego. Contact Charles Saltaformaggio, (504) 812-7369, csaltaformaggio@yahoo.com.

- **1/1 (RVN, 1965-71)**, Aug. 26-31, Washington, D.C. Contact Rick Bazaco, 14727 Mountain Rd., Purcellville, VA 20132, (843) 324-2734, info@1stbn1stmarines.com, www.1stbn1stmarines.com.

- **1/3 (WW II, Korea, RVN, Gulf War)**, Aug. 11-16, Orlando, Fla. Contact Richard Cleary, P.O. Box 128, Mammoth, AZ 85618, (520) 487-0327, clearyrp@msn.com.

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• **2/4 ("The Magnificent Bastards," all eras, honoring Gold Star families)**, July 23-26, Quantico, Va. Contact Jim Rogers, (703) 887-6238, jwr@verizon.net, or Dave Jones, (410) 310-4571, oystercove@gmail.com.

• **A/1/7 (Korea, 1950-53)**, Sept. 29-Oct. 1, Virginia Beach, Va. Contact Leonard R. "Shifty" Shifflette, 25 Emery St., Harrisonburg, VA 22801-2705, (540) 434-2066, (540) 746-2066, captshifty@comcast.net.

• **B/1/5 and C/1/5 (RVN, 1966-67)** are planning a reunion. Contact SSgt Jim Proulx, USMC (Ret), (904) 343-4850, bertojoto1@gmail.com.

• **"Bravo" Co, 4th CEB, 4thMarDiv (Desert Storm, 25th Anniversary)**, May 13-14, 2016, Roanoke, Va. Contact Steve Garman, stevegarman7@gmail.com.

• **G/3/1 (Korea, 1951-55)**, Sept. 28-Oct. 1, Kansas City, Mo. Contact J.R. Camarillo, 19 Stanislaus Ave., Ventura, CA 93004, (805) 377-7840, or Carleton "Bing" Bingham, 1453 Patricia Dr., Gardnerville, NV 89460, (775) 265-3596, (775) 781-2726.

• **H/2/7 (RVN, 1965-70)**, June 5-7, Buffalo, N.Y. Contact Ralph Sirianni, (716) 903-9640, trippr19@aol.com.

• **I/3/1 (Korea, 1950-55)**, Aug. 19-23, Branson, Mo. Contact Suzi Woodward,

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• **L/3/5 (RVN, 1966-71)**, June 9-14, Myrtle Beach, S.C. Contact Dan Nordmann, 11702 Avery Ln., Bridgeton, MO 63044, (314) 291-1725, dmnordmann@att.net.

• **1st Plt, I/3/1 (RVN, 1968-69)**, Sept. 10-13, Traverse City, Mich. Contact George Butterworth, (248) 627-9336,

gbbutterworth@aol.com, or "Reb" Bienvenu, (636) 398-8779, dickbienvendu@yahoo.com.

• **3d Plt, H/2/3 (RVN, 1967-68)**, Oct. 8-11, Stafford, Va. Contact Chuck Gaede, (512) 750-9265, csgaede@gmail.com.

• **Marine Security Guards, 1st, 2d and 3d Plts (Marine Barracks, Naval Gun Factory, Washington, D.C.)**, May

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8-10, Quantico, Va. Contact Don Green, dgreen@donaldegreen.com, or Dale Wilson, (617) 755-5745, wzeke35@aol.com.

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

• **2d Force Recon Co**, May 14-17, Camp Lejeune, N.C. Contact Rick Gallagher, 1466 Evans Creek Rd., Brodnax, VA

23920, (434) 865-3251, capt.rgallagher@yahoo.com.

• **3d Force Recon Co (50th Anniversary, 1965-70)**, May 6-10, Quantico, Va. Contact Maj B.H. "Doc" Norton, USMC (Ret), (843) 819-5149, recondoc123@gmail.com.

• **American Embassy Saigon, RVN (all military and civilian personnel stationed pre-April 30, 1975)**, May 17-21, Louisville, Ky. Contact MSgt Gus Tomuschat, USMC (Ret), (804) 693-3007, saigongunny@yahoo.com, www.saiгонmac.org.

• **Marine Barracks, Great Lakes, Ill.**, is planning a potential reunion. Contact Gene Spanos, (847) 770-9049, genethemarine@gmail.com.

• **Ontos Crewmen (all eras)**, May 5-9, San Diego. Contact Louis Najfus, (678) 546-1444, najfus@hotmail.com.

• **TBS, Co A, 1-70**, June 25-28, Quantico, Va. Contact Bob Del Grosso, (908) 334-3496, robdelgr@aol.com.

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

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

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

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

• **Plt 342, Parris Island, 1965**, Sept. 4-6, Parris Island, S.C. Contact Charles Harmon, (702) 458-3132, (702) 335-1304, chickster48@live.com.


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

• **HMM-265 (1962-present)**, Nov. 8-15, Fort Lauderdale, Fla. (Marine Corps Birthday Ball cruise, Holland America cruise line). Contact Tim Bastyr, (770) 304-2290, tmb2sdb@numail.org.

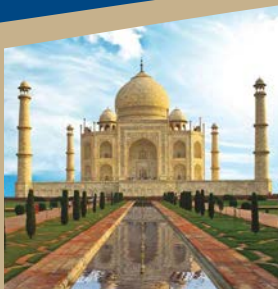
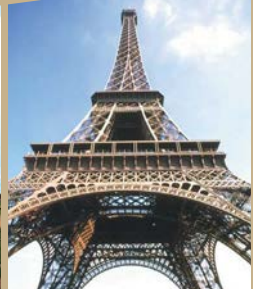
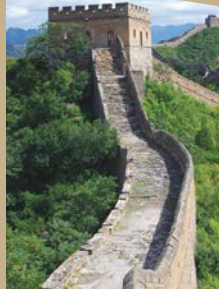
• **HMR/HMM/HMH-361 (all eras)**, Sept. 30-Oct. 4, Pensacola, Fla. Contact John Ruffini, (850) 291-6438, jruffini5@gmail.com.

• **HMM-364 (LTA 2 RVN, 50th Anniversary)**, Aug. 6-9, Long Beach, Calif. Contact Walt Wise, 1618 Hemlock Way, Broomfield, CO 80020, (720) 340-9534, wwwise364@comcast.net, www.hmm-364.org.

• **VMFA-232 "Red Devils" (1968-70, El Toro, Chu Lai, Iwakuni)**, Aug. 3-5,



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Fredericksburg, Texas. Contact Gus Fitch, (803) 649-6466, pncfzfn@gmail.com.

• **VMFA-333**, June 17-21, Charleston, S.C. Contact Connie Gause, (202) 306-0848, vmfa333reunion@yahoo.com.

Ships and Others

• **USS Bremerton (CA-130/SSN-698)**, Sept. 13-18, Louisville, Ky. Contact Jerry Adams, 106 Ashley Dr., Winchester, KY 40391, (859) 771-5651, jeradams106@gmail.com.

• **USS Canberra (CA-70/CAG-2)**, Oct. 14-18, Mobile, Ala. 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. 9-13, Lexington, Ky. Contact Carl and Sandy Burket, P.O. Box 108, Roaring Spring, PA 16673-9817, (814) 224-5063, hornetcva@aol.com, www.usshornetassn.com.

• **USS Houston (CL-81)**, Aug. 18-23, Green Bay, Wis. Contact Barbara Hillebrand, (608) 424-6095, bjhillebrand@charter.net.

• **USS Iwo Jima (LPH-2/LHD-7)**, Sept. 13-16, Baton Rouge, La. Contact Robert G. McAnally, 152 Frissell St., Hampton, VA 23663, (757) 723-0317, yujack46709@gmail.com.

• **USS John R. Craig (DD-885)**, Sept.

16-20, Atlanta. Contact Jerry Chwalek, 9307 Louisiana St., Livonia, MI 48150, (734) 525-1469, jermail@ameritech.net.

• **USS Lake Champlain (CV/CVA/ CVS-39)**, "Champ Marines," June 21-25, Beaufort, S.C. Contact H. Wells "Red" French, (941) 697-1870, wellsholm@aol.com (subject line: "Champ Marines").

• **USS Mount McKinley (AGC-7/LCC-7)**,

Sept. 16-20, Milwaukee. Contact Dave Long, (440) 292-7839, davidlong1944@msn.com.

• **U.S. Naval School, Underwater Swimmers (Marine divers trained from recon and force recon)**, May 14-17, Panama City, Fla. Contact Aaron Farrior, (850) 240-7417, bare4@cox.net.



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Reader Assistance

Edited by Sara W. Bock

Entries for "Reader Assistance," including "Mail Call," are free and printed on a space-available basis. *Leatherneck* reserves the right to edit or reject any submission. Allow two to three months for publication. Send your e-mail to leatherneck@mca-marines.org, or write to Reader Assistance Editor, *Leatherneck* Magazine, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134.

Mail Call

- Michael L.R. Meade, 8723 Westbrook Dr., Boise, ID 83704, marinemikel@juno.com, to hear from or about **Marines who served as Little League coaches for 12th Marines, 3dMarDiv Rockets baseball teams, in the 3dMarDiv Little League program, on Okinawa, 1961-65.**

- Marine veteran John C. Miller Jr., (318) 487-5401, ext. 12, john@rapc.info, to hear from anyone who can help him identify his platoon number, **Parris Island, graduation date September 1967.** He would like a **platoon photo, roster and recruit graduation book.**

- Former Cpl Richard Kirchoff, 134B Daleview Dr., Vincennes, IN 47591, rkirchoff@gmail.com, to hear from members of **Plt 3014, San Diego, 1972**, as well as any Marines who served in **supply** with him in **Nam Phong, Thailand, 1972-73.**



COURTESY OF MSGT DAVE LEWIS, USAF (RET)

MSgt Dave Lewis, USAF (Ret) would like to hear from or about **J.L. Tucker, USMC**, whose dog tag was found in Okinawa, Japan, recently. He would like to return it to its rightful owner or to the Marine's family.

- **MSgt Dave Lewis, USAF (Ret)**, (623) 535-0439, dave67@cox.net, to hear from or about **Marine J.L. TUCKER**, whose dog tag (above) was found on a beach in

Okinawa, Japan. He believes it to be a Vietnam-era tag.

- **R. Garza**, 301 County Rd. 242, Orange Grove, TX 78372, to hear from anyone who served with **L/3/9, the "Widow-Makers," 3dMarDiv, Okinawa, Japan, 1971-72.**

- **Edelina V. Rose**, Office of Marine Corps Communication, (703) 692-1436, edelina.rose.ctr@usmc.mil, to hear from **veterans of Operation Starlite (RVN, 1965)**, who are interested in being interviewed for a **50th anniversary video.**

Wanted

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

- **R. Garza**, 301 County Rd. 242, Orange Grove, TX 78372, wants a **company photo of Co O, Infantry Training Regiment, Camp Pendleton, Calif., November-December 1970.**

- Former PFC Richard Battagliola, (516) 496-2426, rbattagliola@gmail.com, wants a **recruit graduation book for Plt 228, Parris Island, 1954.**

- Marine veteran David Cupples, (210) 601-8384, davidc8010@msn.com, wants a **recruit graduation book for Plt 1145, San Diego, 1973.**

- Former SSgt Jack M. Witter, 3629 U.S. 23, Oscoda, MI 48750-9567, (989) 739-5494, jmdl54@charter.net, wants a **platoon photo and roster for Plt 181, Parris Island, 1948.**

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- **John Wilson**, (610) 265-1838, devil.dog52@comcast.com, has **Leatherneck** magazines, **1975-80 and 2000-14**, and **Semper Fi** magazines, which he will give in exchange for donations to the Marine Corps League's Valley Forge Detachment #312 scholarship fund.



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Step 2. Write another letter in which you state that you would like to have the enclosed letter forwarded to the Marine whom you are trying to locate. Include as much information about the person as possible, i.e., full name, last known

grade, year of retirement or separation, and units in which they may have served.

Step 3. Package the letter and your return addressed, stamped letter in another envelope. Address the envelope to:

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3280 Russell Rd.
Quantico, VA 22134-5103

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The Separations and Retirement Branch will use Defense Finance and Accounting Service records and other military

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Once the letter is forwarded, it will be up to the individual you are looking for to decide if he or she wishes to respond. There is no guarantee that the Separations and Retirement Branch will be able to honor your request or that the address available will be correct. It is important that you provide adequate information about the individual you are looking for to ensure that in cases of Marines with common names, the letter is forwarded to the right person.

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Edited by Sara W. Bock



FIRST AMERICAN IN SPACE—On May 5, 1961, a Sikorsky HUS-1D Seahorse, flown by Marines 1stLt Wayne Koons and co-pilot 1stLt George Cox, of Marine Transport Squadron (Light) 262, hovered over the Atlantic Ocean to pick up Mercury astronaut and naval aviator Alan Shepard and his Freedom 7 capsule. Following the 15-minute, 30-second flight that took him 116 miles away from Earth and brought him back down, Shepard earned the distinction of being the first American in space. The mission was a success, and the Marines were on hand to pull him out of the water and transport him to USS

Lake Champlain (CVS-39). While aboard, Shepard received a congratulatory phone call from President John F. Kennedy. On his next mission, Shepard traveled to the moon as the commander of Apollo 14.

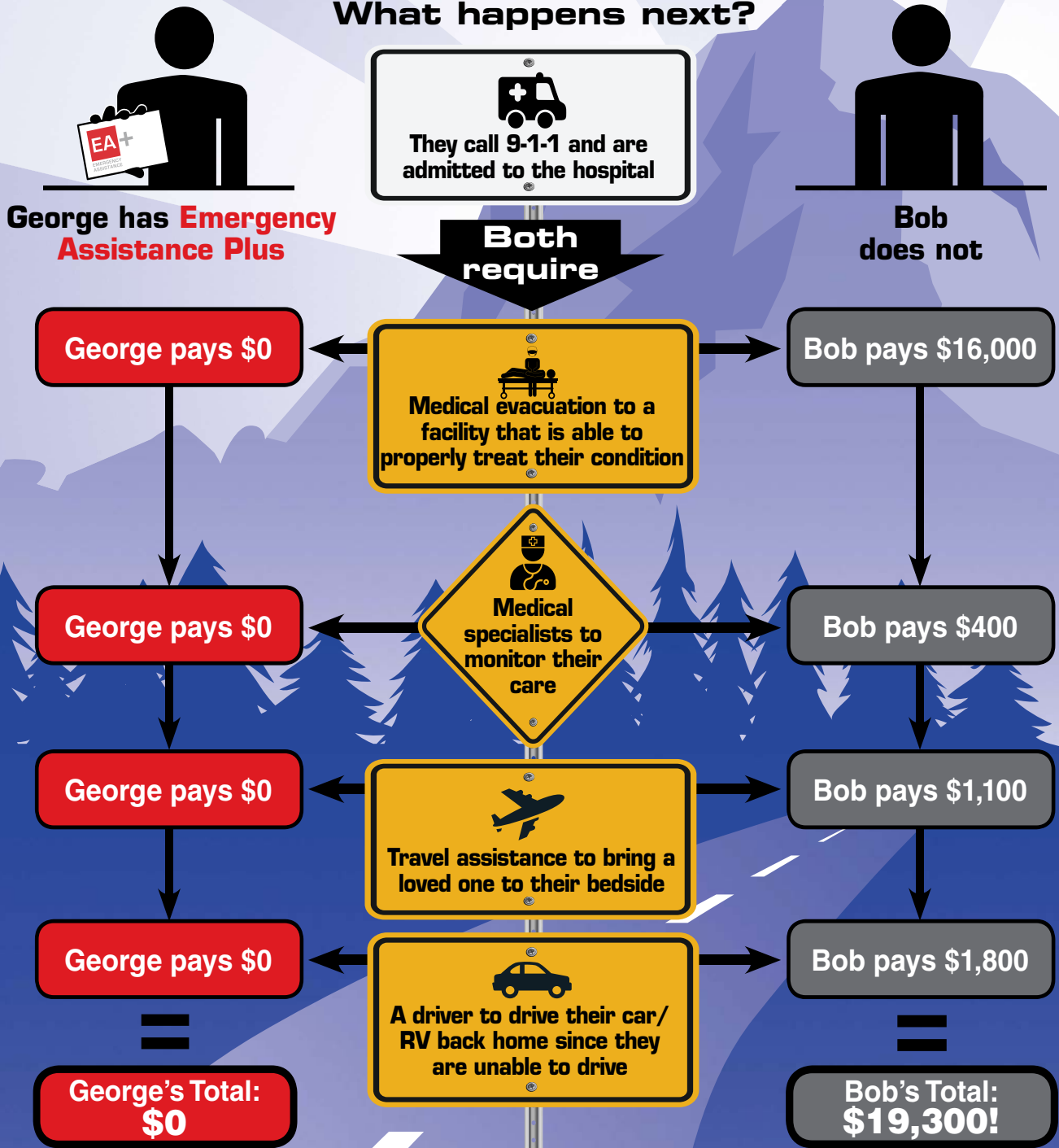
Affectionately nicknamed the “Dog” by its Marine operators, the Seahorse was the Corps’ primary assault helicopter during the Vietnam War until it was replaced by the CH-46 Sea Knight. In addition to its combat service in Vietnam, the Seahorse was used for presidential transport and for the recovery of Mercury astronauts.



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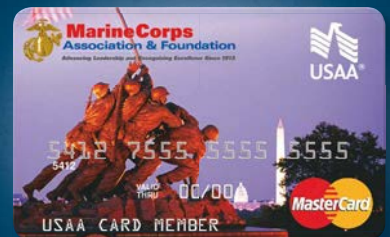
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