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By C. Nate Swope

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By SSgt John E. Witt, USMC

Today's Corps requires Marines to respond immediately in battle, and the Corps' new seminar for junior Marines teaches them critical thinking well before deployment.

24 Vietnam: 50 Years Ago: Beachhead Da Nang

Compiled from official USMC releases

The war in Vietnam started innocuously enough. In this story from the *Leatherneck* archives, Marines sailed into Da Nang Harbor, made an unopposed landing at Red Beach just north of the airfield, and were greeted by pretty girls in traditional *ao dai* dresses who draped them with *leis* of fresh-cut flowers. Three days later the chatter of machine-gun fire on the perimeter and flares signaled the start of a war.

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Compiled by Nancy Lee White Hoffman

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By Maj Clinton A. Culp, USMC (Ret)

Ten years ago, Task Force 3/6 took on the deadly and dangerous mission of clearing insurgents and disrupting their lines of communication along the Euphrates River Valley.

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By Sara W. Bock

When old China hand Clifton P. Fox received birthday greetings in December from the Commandant of the Marine Corps, it sparked memories of football, shooting competitions, blue-dress parades and international tension in exotic Shanghai.

48 From Mailroom to Battlefield, Postal Warriors Get the Mail Delivered

By CWO-4 Randy Gaddo, USMC (Ret)

For a recruit in boot camp or a Marine overseas, mail ranks up there with pay and liberty. Meet the warriors who get the mail to their fellow Marines and how they never fail to deliver.

52 Sea Stories

Compiled by Sara W. Bock

Fairy tales start "Once upon a time ..." Sea stories begin: "This is a no ... !" We hope you will enjoy this new feature that lets you, the readers, tell your favorite sea stories.

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COVER: In 2005, leathernecks of the II Marine Expeditionary Force were locked in a bloody fight over the streets of Husaybah, Iraq. Second Marine Division Combat Camera photographer Cpl Neill A. Sevelius captured this image in November of Eric Prutzman, a squad automatic rifleman with 2d Platoon, "India" Company, 3d Battalion, Sixth Marine Regiment, keeping watch on one of the rooftops during Operation Steel Curtain. See related stories beginning on pages 36 and 40. 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.)

One day I was sitting under a shade tree talking to my neighbors. One was a Navy pilot during World War II, who was shot down twice in the Pacific, and the other was a sailor on a destroyer that was shot out from under him. Both suffered from what is now known as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, which was called "bad nightmares" back then and not treated like today.

A third neighbor was my next-door buddy, a Korea veteran who was at the Chosin Reservoir. All had stories to tell. They are all in heaven now. The talks are long over, but the memories are still fresh. I learned firsthand what they did during their wars and how they handled situations compared to what we did during Vietnam.

Now I mingle with Marines from Iraq and Afghanistan. I see Marines—staff noncommissioned officers and officers—who look like teenagers to me. But I am now 70 and I can say: "Why are we there?" and people look at me and say: "Who am I to disagree with our nation and our leaders?"

I guess I look back and see my uncle who was a "doughboy" in WW I and my father-in-law who was in North Africa and Sicily and who was blessed by the Pope in Rome as well. They returned to parades. We Marines who served in Vietnam were often ridiculed by our fellow Americans.

I don't know the answers anymore, but am an American and proud to be one. Once at a ball game I saw everyone stand and remove their caps during the national anthem. I knocked the cover off a wise guy after he told me he would not remove his cap. Security came and removed him. Now my daughter begs me to mind my own business at ball games, so I do not go anymore.

Sorry to rant, but where is the pride we once had in our flag and where is our patriotism? I will keep the esprit de corps and the pride of a Marine, albeit older and wiser, but will not be kept quiet.

Cpl Bruce Bender
USMC, 1963-67
Oakland Gardens, N.Y.

"The Few, the Proud ..."

As a Marine, a veteran of the Korean War and also a member of several senior centers, I recently was approached by an elderly lady. She asked me what qualities a Marine possesses that separates him from the other military branches of service. I started by saying, "The Few, The Proud, The Chosen Few" possess the following qualities instilled in every Marine: duty, honor, loyalty, valiant service to his country, leadership, discipline, dedication, strength, courage, integrity, team spirit, pride and honor to his Corps, consideration, courtesy, fearless commitment to overcome all obstacles to complete the missions successfully."

When I finished, I said as a Marine warrior, I shall be the last to pick up my weapon, but if the occasion should arise, I

will pick up my weapon to defend myself and my country against all enemies in battle. The lady commented, "Thank you, and God bless The Few, The Proud, and The Chosen Few." I further quoted this phrase to her, ending the conversation: "He or she that stand by me in battle and sheds their blood with me, shall be my brother or sister in the Marine Brotherhood and Sisterhood for all eternity."

Cpl John Messia Jr.
USMC, 1950-54
Brockton, Mass.

The Recruit Cheering Section Saves the Game

The story "Marine Football!" in the January issue intrigued me as I was able to watch the San Diego Marines play San Diego State University in 1956. I was in boot camp, and our company commander was an assistant coach for the team. In our first week he came to introduce himself. He took one look at a recruit who was about 6 feet, 4 inches, 250 pounds and asked if he had played any football. The answer was "Yes," and we never saw him again.

In our final weeks, the San Diego State University game took place, and as a reward, we were bused to the game and allowed to unbutton the top button on our utility blouse.

We were given programs, and I was shocked to see several of the Marine players had "property of" a number of National Football League teams next to their names.

In the first half, the college kids pushed our Marines all over the field. At halftime our captain came up to the stands and told our drill instructors to get us cheering. Two cheerleaders were appointed, and cheer we did. The Marine players turned around and looked up at us like they'd never been cheered before. Then they started to play football, and that was the end for San Diego State.

Cpl Ron Baker
USMC, 1956-59
Chehalis, Wash.

Calling All Sea Stories, Anecdotes and Tall Tales

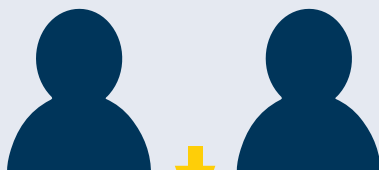
Do you have a great story from your time in the Corps that will give our readers a good chuckle? Maybe it's a boot camp tale or a good old sea story that will have us in stitches? We would love to hear your stories and possibly feature them in the magazine.

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.boat@mca-marines.org.

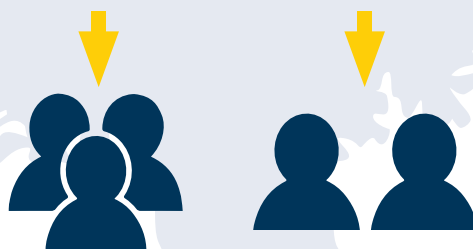
To get an idea of what we are looking for, go to "Sea Stories" on page 52.

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MajGen Smedley D. Butler (right) had two Medals of Honor. If Marine officers were eligible, he may have had a third awarded during the Boxer Rebellion. He was awarded instead the Brevet Medal (above), one of the rarest U.S. medals.



"Old Gimlet Eye's" Medals

I was enjoying my December 2014 issue and reading "Marine Football!" On page 37, I noticed then-Brigadier General Smedley D. Butler displaying what appears to be his Medal of Honor Ribbon, but only one, and he, by this time in his career, had two.

On closer examination I see what appears to be seven stars on the ribbon, with three stars grouped on both sides of the center star. On the Medal of Honor Ribbon there are five stars forming an "M." How does MajGen Butler's seven stars equate to two Medals of Honor? The star in the center of the ribbon appears to be slightly bigger than the two side groups.

Richard B. Ellenberger
Normandy Park, Wash.

• You have good eyes and an even better magnifying glass. Yes, the general is wearing two Medals of Honor.

He earned his first as a major on April 22, 1914, during the Mexican campaign at Vera Cruz. He was awarded a second for action Nov. 17, 1915, at Fort Riviere, Haiti. He and Sergeant Major Daniel J. Daly are the only two Marines to ever receive two Medals of Honor.

Butler might have been awarded a third Medal of Honor for valor at Tientsin, China, during the 1900 Boxer Rebellion, but Navy and Marine officers were not eligible to receive Medals of Honor at that time. He was, however, awarded the Brevet Medal in 1921 for his valor in China back in 1900. This is the medal you noticed.

It is one of the rarest U.S. awards and already was out of date by the time it was approved. The criteria stipulated "for distinguished conduct and public service in the presence of the enemy." It was awarded to seven Marine officers during the Boxer Rebellion. It followed the Medal of Honor in precedence (although in the photograph MajGen Butler has it following his Navy Distinguished and Army Distinguished Service Medals). The ribbon has seven stars on a red field.—Sound Off Ed.

Story on Promotions Long Overdue

"From the Halls of Harry Lee: How Does the Corps Conduct Promotion Boards?" in the January issue: Outstanding and long overdue.

I had some knowledge of the boards' organization and functioning (learned a little when I was at Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps from 1972 to 1977), but I'd like to know just how those selected are ranked in the order they will be promoted.

I still have Marine Corps Bulletin 1430 of Sept. 7, 1976, selecting me for first sergeant. I was No. 198.

1stSgt Ron Maxson, USMC (Ret)
1958-79
Pittsburgh

• You were 198th on the promotion list based on your date of rank. There were 197 gunnery sergeants senior to you. You know that there are only so many allocations for promotions each month. Depending on how many were on the promotion list probably gave you an idea

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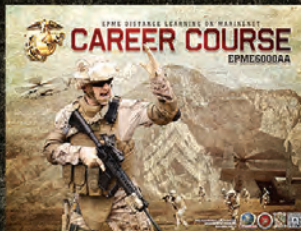
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of when you could expect to be presented your promotion warrant.

Sometimes we become confused in the difference between rank and grade. While often used interchangeably, grade refers to pay grade (E-4, O-3, etc.) and rank is used as an order of precedence based on numerous factors.—Sound Off Ed.

The Honorable Leon Panetta's Book

Retired Colonel Walt Ford's January review of former Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta's book "Worthy Fights" provoked me to "Sound Off." The review commends Panetta in several respects, but fails to mention the Benghazi fiasco.

In a press conference sometime after the Benghazi attack, Secretary Panetta, accompanied by a stoic Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, stated that there was insufficient information available during the night of the attack to justify any response by our military. This response turned my stomach. As a platoon commander in 1st Battalion, Fourth Marine Regiment in 1968, I experienced situations where we had incomplete information about friendly units in jeopardy, yet we responded and advanced to help our Marines.

Marines, and I think our brethren in the Army, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard, are all instilled with the ethos to "run to

the sound of the guns," especially when Americans are in harm's way.

While the ambassador and his assistant were probably dead shortly after the attack started, it was several hours later that the two former Navy SEALs were killed at the Central Intelligence Agency annex. The former SEALs are heroes, and Panetta and several other so-called leaders failed in their duty.

Col Gordon "Jake" Jacobson, USMCR (Ret)
Port Orchard, Wash.

• In a Fox interview with Bill O'Reilly on Oct. 7, 2014, SecDef Panetta claimed he immediately told President Barack Obama that the Sept. 11, 2012, Benghazi attack was a terrorist attack. Later, on Oct. 14, he told National Public Radio's Diane Rehm that "nobody is to blame for Benghazi." Keep in mind this is not a history book, but memoirs of a man in government. It is his story, and he can tell it however he wants, and we are free to believe what we want.—Sound Off Ed.

That War in Vietnam: It Really Was a Long Time Ago

John Klosinski's January "Sound Off" letter regarding how smaller conflicts are often either forgotten or unknown by

[continued on page 64]

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In Every Clime and Place

Edited by Sara W. Bock

■ RAS AL KHAIR, SAUDI ARABIA Red Reef 15 Closes With Combined Demonstration

U.S. Marines and sailors with the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit, along with members of the Royal Saudi Naval Forces, officially concluded Exercise Red Reef 15 with a combined demonstration in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Dec. 16, 2014.

Red Reef 15 is a biennial, bilateral exercise between the United States and Saudi Arabia, designed to increase proficiency, expand levels of military-to-military cooperation and promote long-term regional stability, interoperability and freedom of navigation.

Over the nine-day span, 11th MEU personnel worked, trained and lived alongside Marines from the 1st, 3d and 5th Saudi Marine battalions and the Saudi Naval Special Forces.

Supporting the Marines of the landing force were U.S. Navy assets from Amphibious Squadron (PHIBRON) Five, including the amphibious transport dock ship USS *San Diego* (LPD-22) and the dock landing ship USS *Comstock* (LSD-45). Both ships provided ship-to-shore connectors and landing platforms for aircraft in support of the training.

“Exercises like this are great for our two countries, but what’s really important

is coming together as [U.S. and Saudi] Marines, sharing this training and our cultures,” said First Lieutenant Cory Moyer, 81 mm mortar platoon commander, Battalion Landing Team, 2d Bn, First Marine Regiment, 11th MEU.

From mortar ranges and simulated assaults through urban environments, to medical training and casualty evacuations, U.S. and Saudi Marines honed their interoperability and demonstrated commitment to regional partnership.

Speaking after the closing ceremony, Lieutenant Colonel Eddy I. Hansen, Executive Officer, 11th MEU, lauded the performance by the participants from both nations.

“We are both better for having trained together. The important thing is we learn how to work together, learn how the other does business, because we may have to work together in the future,” said LtCol Hansen.

During the combined demonstration, as helicopters roared overhead and waved off, U.S. and Saudi Marines rushed to their objectives. The assembled crowd, which included distinguished visitors and members of the media, marveled at the precision of the demonstrators.

“It was impressive to watch—it looked like it was well-rehearsed and a lot of work

was put into it,” said Sergeant Gabriel Valencia, team leader with the Signals Support Team, 11th MEU.

With Exercise Red Reef 15 complete, Marines from the 11th MEU returned to their ships and continued to operate as a sea-based, quick-reaction force in the 5th Fleet’s area of responsibility.

Capt Josh Diddams, USMC

■ OKINAWA, JAPAN Recon Marines Prepare for Parachute Missions in Pacific

“Five minutes!” yelled the jumpmaster as he signaled the Marines to get out of their seats. They stood up and made their way to the rear of the aircraft. They were almost at the drop zone. It was “go time.”

This scene played out several times as leathernecks with 3d Reconnaissance Battalion, Third Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force conducted parachute training Nov. 20, 2014, over Ie Shima Training Facility, off the northwest coast of Okinawa, Japan.

As recon Marines in the Pacific area of operations, they are some of the first responders to any potential crisis if called upon by the U.S. government. With current events in the Pacific, maintaining readiness is crucial.

Reconnaissance Marines and air delivery specialists with the battalion jumped from a KC-130J Super Hercules aircraft, giving them added experience with air-drop operations while also maintaining their jump proficiency.

“The main focus of this training is to keep a currency in each jumper,” said Master Sergeant Raul Argumedo, an air delivery specialist and jumpmaster with 3d Recon Bn. “Every six months they have to do at least one jump to keep up with their qualifications and stay up to speed.”

The Marines conducted two different types of jumps for the training based on their individual jump qualifications.

The majority of the Marines involved conducted low-level static-line jumps, where the jumper is released from the aircraft at a low altitude and their chute, attached to the aircraft, is automatically pulled as they exit. For this training exercise, the Marines did their static-line jumps from an altitude of 1,500 feet.



CPL EVAN R. WHITE, USMC

Marines with Weapons Company, BLT 2/1, 11th MEU fire an 81 mm mortar system during the closing demonstration of Exercise Red Reef 15 in Ras Al Khair, Saudi Arabia, Dec. 16, 2014. During the nine-day exercise, the Marines worked closely with the Royal Saudi Naval Forces.



CPL DREW TECH, USMC

Above: From left, GySgt Gabriel Machado, MSgt Raul Argumedo and GySgt Matthew Bateman freefall jump in tandem from a KC-130J Super Hercules over Ie Shima Training Facility, Okinawa, Japan, Nov. 20, 2014.



CPL DREW TECH, USMC

Recon Marines load onto a KC-130J for parachute training, in preparation for insert missions in the Pacific area of operations.



CPL DREW TECH, USMC

Leathernecks get ready to jump from a KC-130J Nov. 20, 2014, in order to gain experience with airdrops and maintain their jump proficiency.

Those with higher qualifications conducted freefall jumps, where the jumper exits the aircraft at high altitudes—anywhere from 4,500 feet to 25,000 feet—and pulls his chute manually. The freefall jumps took place from 10,000 feet for this training exercise, according to Argumedo.

Both jump methods are valuable to recon Marines and give them the ability to make a stealthy approach on the enemy

during real-world missions.

“Being able to jump out of a plane, whether it is static-line or freefall, is just another insert capability that we have as recon Marines,” said Corporal Gregory H. Steiner. “If we aren’t diving or humping it in, this is another way we can get to where we need to be to conduct our surveillance.”

Each Marine jumped twice during the training. They did the first jump “Holly-

wood-style,” equipped with only their parachutes. For the second jump, they strapped on combat packs weighing more than 50 pounds each.

The training was a great opportunity for the Marines who participated, one that they don’t get as often as they would like, said Steiner.

“Being out in Okinawa we actually don’t get a lot of time to practice our jump

capability,” said Steiner, a reconnaissance man with the battalion. “There are limitations with the weather, and this kind of training gets canceled a lot.”

Argumedo said the training was an important learning opportunity for many of the Marines. About three-quarters of them were conducting their first jumps since their initial parachute training.

“The major thing the Marines got today was more experience,” said Argumedo. “Most of the guys we’ve got here today did their first jump in the fleet. As everybody knows, being in a school scenario is totally different than how things work in the fleet. I think these guys got a lot out of that.”

“I thought the training was good,” said Cpl Christian M. Garcia, a reconnaissance man with the battalion. “Everyone hit the drop zone and nobody was injured, which is a big thing. It’s always good to get up there and refresh yourself on this stuff. It makes you more comfortable.”

Cpl Drew Tech, USMC

■ AL ASAD, IRAQ

Marines and Soldiers Partner; Search for Impact Sites

Leathernecks with Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force–Crisis Response–Central Command (SPMAGTF–CR–CC), Task Force Al Asad, conducted a patrol aboard Al Asad Air Base, Iraq, Jan. 4, to help find remnants of 122 mm rockets that were fired at coalition forces.

Marines escorted members of U.S. Army Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Company, Task Force Al Asad around the base to find and examine the impact sites.

“We’re looking at the [fragmentation] pattern that was left, and that can tell us the direction that it came in from and give us a back azimuth so that they can track that back and find where they think it launched from,” said Army Staff Sergeant Steve Fitzpatrick, EOD Co, Task Force Al Asad.

Fitzpatrick said this has its uses, but due to the inaccuracy of the rockets, it’s not an exact science. They have other ways, however, of finding the launch sites.

Aside from finding the launch site directly, coalition forces have to consider finding out where the rockets were manufactured, said Corporal Joshua Whitley, a team leader with SPMAGTF–CR–CC.

“The EOD guys will take [the rocket back] and analyze anything that needs to be analyzed that might show who they come from,” said Whitley.

Fortunately, none of the rockets have caused any major damage or casualties to coalition forces, but safety remains a concern even after the impacts have happened because not all the rockets explode on impact, said Fitzpatrick.

Aside from finding and analyzing the fired rockets, they also conduct controlled detonations for any unexploded ordnance they find, according to Whitley. He added

that EOD does a good job coordinating to find where the rockets are coming from, helping to keep the coalition forces safe.

“This whole base is a unified base. We have the Army, Marines, [partnering nations]; the Air Force is here with their fire trucks, so we’re all working together for one common goal,” said Whitley.

Soldiers and Marines are taking prudent measures to protect the members of Task Force Al Asad from the threat of indirect fire. The Marines of SPMAGTF–CR–CC continue to act as an expeditionary force in support of operations in Marine Corps Forces Central Command.

Cpl Carson A. Gramley, USMC

■ PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA

Royal Preah Khan Prepares Marines, Cambodians for Humanitarian Missions

U.S. Marines and the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF) began Exercise Royal Preah Khan in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, Jan. 12.

Royal Preah Khan is a simulated humanitarian assistance and disaster-relief exercise focused on enhancing response capabilities through staff training, crisis action planning and a command post exercise. These elements also enhance cooperation between the RCAF and the U.S. Marines.

The Marines participating in Royal Preah Khan were with Headquarters Regiment, Third Marine Logistics Group, III

Marines with SPMAGTF–CR–CC, Task Force Al Asad post security for the U.S. Army EOD Co at Al Asad Air Base, Iraq, Jan. 4. Marines and soldiers worked together to protect the members of Task Force Al Asad from the threat of indirect fire.



CPL CARSON A. GRAMLEY, USMC



Sgt Anthony J. Clement, left, discusses the upcoming Royal Preah Khan exercise with Royal Cambodian Gendarmerie Col Lun Scumnang and LtCol Sam Sovathana in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, Jan. 12.

allowed for even more knowledge and experience that could help expand the exercise in future iterations.

“This exercise is growing, and I would like to see a practical application in the field sometime in the future,” Bowen said.

Cpl Thor J. Larson, USMC

■ CAMP PENDLETON, CALIF. 3/7 Trains for Crisis Response, Riot Scenarios

“Death to America” is spelled out in large black and red lettering on a poster board held by a “protestor.”

The man was one of a group of role players who simulated a riot outside the gates of a combat simulation town at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., Jan. 7. Inside the town, leathernecks with 3d Battalion, Seventh Marine Regiment, First Marine Division secured the area by providing security and keeping the rioters outside. The simulation was designed to help them train for efficient crisis response without the use of lethal force.

Numerous role players dressed as Arabs and spoke the Arabic language to create realistic cultural and language barriers during the exercise.

“This training is extremely important because 3/7 has had an illustrious combat history in the past 13 years,” said Staff Sergeant Thomas Ferguson, an Expeditionary Operations Training Group instructor with I Marine Expeditionary Force.

“Doing a combat deployment is very aggressive in nature. Crisis response isn’t

Marine Expeditionary Force. The RCAF servicemembers came from multiple units, including the Royal Gendarmerie of Cambodia.

“In this scenario, we are exercising the capabilities of the Gendarmerie and ourselves to support a disaster in this region,” said U.S. Marine Colonel Edmund J. Bowen, the deputy commander of Combined Task Force–Cambodia for the exercise. “During any type of humanitarian assistance or disaster response, it’s important that we understand our capabilities.”

Because III MEF Marines are among the first responders to crises in the Pacific, building a strong relationship with the RCAF could help save additional lives in the future, according to Corporal Jonathan Cabrera.

“Royal Preah Khan is important because

[it allows us to] expand our relationship with the Royal Cambodian Gendarmerie,” said Cabrera. “This will help us, and them, be prepared for a humanitarian aid and direct support mission that could happen.”

The exercise provides a great experience and helps the Royal Cambodian Gendarmerie learn how the U.S. Marines work, and vice versa, according to Royal Cambodian Gendarmerie Warrant Officer Na Nie.

“Every time the Marines have come, I have put my name on the list to work with them,” said Nie. “I like working with and experiencing how the Marines operate.”

Royal Preah Khan is an expanding exercise, according to Col Bowen. Last year a lieutenant colonel was the officer in charge for the Gendarmerie, but this year a brigadier general participated, which



Above left: Role-playing “protestors” riot outside the gates of a combat simulation town at MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif., Jan. 7, which provided a realistic setting for the Marines of 3/7 to train for crisis response scenarios.

Above right: Cpl Benny Carithers, a squad leader with Co I, 3/7, provides security for the combat simulation town during the unit’s crisis response training.





LCPL MATT S. MYERS, USMC

LCpl Ivan Mendoza, a field radio operator with Headquarters Regiment, 3d MLG, sends location coordinates to the command-and-control post during MCR Guam near Andersen AFB, Guam, Dec. 18, 2014.

about attacking the enemy. Crisis response is about responding to an incident which has already happened and being able to control your actions in that situation, and understanding how a unit's actions in the environment translate into public perception."

The basic training Marines receive at the School of Infantry sets them up for success in this type of training. They learn how to use force, how to use weapons systems, and how to be attentive for long periods of time in miserable conditions.

"The use of role players enhances training by providing the most realistic environment that you can create here on Camp Pendleton prior to deploying to a foreign area," said Kevin Armentrout, operations manager for Glacier Technical Solutions. "When you're utilizing Marines from your own unit for role-playing, you don't get the same desired training effect or a realistic escalation of force.

"By bringing civilians here, there's a cultural barrier. There's a language barrier; there's an aspect that becomes realistic," Armentrout added.

During the exercise, Marines practiced how to go from an aggressive mindset to a more relaxed mindset, said Ferguson. They had to keep themselves from responding as they normally would in a combat deployment.

"What I think the Marines are going to take away from this is a better idea of the unique relationship between the State Department and the Marine Corps," said Ferguson. "Now, the infantry is starting to get integrated into the mission of the State

Department. The support that Marines provide can be the future of a United States diplomatic mission overseas."

The Marine Corps' relationship with the State Department enhances the Marine Corps mission by creating greater security at U.S. Embassies and overseas Consulates during any crisis. This protection gives confidence and stability to the U.S. presence worldwide and starts with training scenarios like this one.

LCpl Danielle Rodrigues, USMC

■ ANDERSEN AIR FORCE BASE, GUAM

Leathernecks With 3d MLG Establish Expeditionary Command Post

When a natural disaster occurs, it is crucial to unravel the unknowns to form a response plan. Military planners must use the most up-to-date information for the best chance of success. Gathering this information is not a simple task and requires a special task force—the survey liaison and reconnaissance party (SLRP).

The role of the SLRP is to be a forward-deployed, information-gathering entity that provides a commander with crucial knowledge.

Leathernecks with Third Marine Logistics Group, III Marine Expeditionary Force participated in Exercise Marine Logistics Group Crisis Action Module Rehearsal Guam (MCR Guam) across multiple locations within Guam on Dec. 18, 2014.

MCR Guam is a scenario-run exercise that utilizes members of a SLRP, as well as an expeditionary command-and-con-

trol center, to teach the basics of a humanitarian aid and disaster-response mission in addition to providing experience for future training or real-world operations.

"In this scenario there was a large-scale earthquake in Nepal, so we utilized Guam to replicate that," said Major Marco D. Serna, a plans officer with 3d MLG and the officer in charge of the exercise. "What we needed to do was replicate ship and air points of debarkation. This allows the Marine air-ground task force that's going to be executing Maritime Prepositioning Force operations to facilitate the humanitarian aid and disaster-relief response effectively."

To accomplish its information-gathering goals, the SLRP communicates with local officials and civilians and gathers relevant information. To find shipping ports and expeditionary runways during the exercise, the SLRP contacts authorities at U.S. Naval Base Guam.

"The SLRP might have upwards of 100 people [in a real-world scenario] representing not only the command element of the MAGTF executing the operation, but also other supporting elements," said Serna. "They break up into small teams and go work with entities—that could be the U.S. Embassy and additional supporting groups."

As the SLRP investigated the area of Guam during the exercise, maintaining communications with the command element was paramount.

"Our main priority is to confirm the research we have done in prior planning before a major force steps into a new or affected area," said First Lieutenant Erik T. Gjording, a counter-intelligence officer with 3d Intelligence Battalion, III MEF Headquarters Group. "We go out and answer all the requests for information and radio back to the COC [combat operations center]. Then the COC will plan further and send us back out again to answer additional RFIs [requests for information]. In a perfect world, it's a four-to five-day process."

One significant benefit of the exercise was the experience the Marines gained while executing the COC setup and SLRP movements.

"This really was a great learning experience for all of us here," said Lance Corporal James H. Lovett, a logistics clerk with Headquarters Regiment, 3d MLG. "You get to see how all the training plays out, see what works, what you need to work more on, and through that, everyone becomes more effective."

LCpl Matt S. Myers, USMC



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The Tradition of Continuous Process Improvement

By C. Nate Swope

After 13 years, the end of the war in Afghanistan is in sight. Nevertheless, Marines continue to prepare for rapid deployment and forceful action upon the land, seas and skies of our nation's most prevailing enemies.

In spite of budget cuts, sequestration and the resurgence of opposition forces in Iraq, the U.S. Marine Corps is embracing a method of ongoing engineering and management activities to advance current tactics, techniques and procedures. Through the Continuous Process Improvement (CPI) program, Marines train to do more with less, just as they have for more than 239 years.

Is CPI Relevant to Warfare?

Instructed by Susan Stuffle, certified industrial engineer for the Deputy Commandant Programs & Resources, Regional Team West, CPI students in Southern California study methods for redesigning their workplaces to increase warfighter support. Regardless of any impending challenges, she believes their training will strengthen the combat force's capabilities.

"Our mission," said Stuffle, "is to enhance warfighting excellence through a commitment to drive better and more cost-effective business processes. We give Marines tools to adapt and overcome, regardless of the situation."

Course participants range from administrative clerks to recon Marines. They study various methodologies including "Lean," "Theory of Constraints" and "Six Sigma." All are intended to support the warfighter through faster service, improved reliability, safety and affordable solutions.

"Marine Corps culture and tradition is one of innovation and constant improvement," said Stuffle. "By studying Lean, we focus on speeding up the process. In Theory of Constraints, we remove bottlenecks, what Marines call 'hurry up and wait.' And in Six Sigma, we concentrate on eliminating defects to increase quality."

Throughout fiscal year 2014, an estimated 1,100 Marines completed novice and intermediate CPI training and documented 235 worldwide projects. While the



COURTESY OF C. NATE SWOPE

CWO-3 Michael R. Marshall transitioned from the Marine Corps in 2012 to pursue a career in operations, logistics and supply chain. According to Marshall, "Our entire lineage is built upon continuously improving our Corps."

exact monetary amount saved as a result of those improvements is nearly impossible to calculate, it is probably several million dollars.

Certification and Widespread Application

Marine Corps CPI courses are separated into levels of experience and aptitude named for colored belts, similar to martial arts training.

"White belt" is offered through Navy

Knowledge Online and provides beginners with an overview of the program. "Yellow belt" is a two-day resident course designed to equip students with the knowledge to participate actively at their current organizations. "Green belt" students design and implement projects, while those at the "black belt" level focus on leading the CPI/LSS (Lean Six Sigma) program at their units.

Eliminating unnecessary costs is cer-

tainly an upshot of the program and the Navy's main priority in using CPI. Stuffle insisted, however, that Marine Corps focus is on increasing combat readiness and leveraging support to those directly in the fight.

"We've had some great projects recently," she said. One student reduced the amount of time it took his transportation unit to fix vehicles by 35 percent and the number of mechanic hours required by 68 percent. Another Marine lessened the customer check-in cycle time at his administrative office by 67 percent and 40 percent for check out.

Some units discovered the value of CPI long before the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development & Acquisition instated its formal use across the entire service in 2005.

In 1998, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 12 at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan, first applied Theory of Constraints to its work centers. The results captured the interest of logistics and industrial operations officers at Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR). Three years later, the precursor to the U.S. Navy's formal CPI program was born and completely transformed Navy and Marine Corps aviation culture into one of streamlined support and cost-effectiveness.

Other organizations are just beginning their experimentation with the methodology as the threat of budget restrictions loom over the horizon. Of those, 1st Reconnaissance Battalion, First Marine Division is proving that even special operations capable forces can benefit from the applications of CPI. In early 2014, more than a dozen noncommissioned officers, staff noncommissioned officers and officers attended yellow- and green-belt training, and their subsequent efforts resulted in a multitude of projects which streamlined their vast spectrum of capabilities.

Improvement Throughout the Marine Corps

Staff Sergeant Kyle White of 1st Recon Bn said he gained valuable experience working with raw data and using statistical tools to identify areas for improvement.

White, a graduate of the CPI green-belt course, currently is supervising a project at his unit's electronic-key management system vault. As the initiative's leader, White is responsible for conducting meetings, establishing deadlines and briefing his command on milestones and metrics. His "deployment" team consists of another green belt, two subject-matter experts and a mentor with dozens of ventures under her belt.

"Continuous improvement of our Corps is the obligation of every Marine," said



Above: Students in a CPI green-belt class work as a team to discuss the statistics of a process and to identify problems and solutions associated with it at Wounded Warrior Battalion-West, Camp Pendleton, Calif., June 1, 2012.

Below: Susan Stuffle shows the class at Wounded Warrior Battalion-West a comparison of the data they gathered. Stuffle is a CPI black-belt instructor at Camp Pendleton.



SSgt White. "We should seek opportunities to enhance the support of the warfighter ... and make every effort to improve our workplace, safety and quality of life."

First Lieutenant Renardo White of 1st Recon Bn finds CPI to be of immense value as a logistics officer. For his green-belt certification, White teamed up with the unit's substance-abuse control officer and sought to reduce the inconvenient waiting lines associated with randomized drug screenings.

Battalion-wide tests, which typically ran more than six hours and required 18 support personnel, were the focus of the lieutenant's concern. He and his partner collaborated with Lean Six Sigma master black belt Susan Stuffle, subject-matter experts, the company first sergeant, and other policymakers to improve and control the overall process.

After one intense week of defining, measuring and analyzing recent trends in previously recorded data, the team out-

CPI Has Corporate Application

Since graduating from the green-belt course in February 2014, I have seen the value of Continuous Process Improvement (CPI) in both my former unit and the public company I now serve. My first encounter with Marine Corps CPI came in late 2013, while serving with 1st Reconnaissance Battalion. After three combat deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan, I was able to observe areas for improvement in all sections of the battalion. Responsible for organizing training events, I sought an opportunity for leaders within Headquarters and Service Company to train together in an environment that championed better warfighter support.

While studying various management practices including "Theory of Constraints" and "Lean Six Sigma," I realized the potential benefit those systems could provide to 1st Recon Bn. I set out to find a way to tie everything together.

I connected with Susan Stuffle. Stuffle, who is writing a book on Lean Six Sigma in the Marine Corps, explained that the CPI courses available gave leaders additional tools to provide faster and more quality service to the warfighter. With her help I organized training events for more than a dozen noncommissioned officers, staff NCOs and officers of the battalion.

With senior leadership from almost every shop and office of H&S Co involved, we were able to collaborate and solve problems as a team: something we did every day, yet rarely in the same room. As we dove into statistics and analytics, the instruction grew more intense and so did our discussions regarding future operations and standardizing new procedures.

For "green belt," we were tasked with leading a process improvement project at our unit and left the course feeling motivated to make a difference in our own workplaces.

The results of our independent labor were significant. Old processes that no one ever questioned because "that's just the way we've always done it" were radically changed. And,

navigating the battalion for operational support became much simpler.

I was involved in several process improvements, including a successful collaboration with the logistics and substance-abuse teams. We identified and eliminated several constraints, reducing time required to conduct drug screenings and condensing the number of required support personnel. We even modified the process to accommodate operational training and preparation for deployment, all the while adhering to the program's strict legal parameters.

A few months later, I began the process of separating from the Marine Corps. I immediately went to work at a relatively new company, zulily.com, as area manager for a fast-paced department that sometimes exceeds 300 direct reports.

At zulily, I use various CPI methods to identify and solve problems to increase the department's overall performance every day. Using Six Sigma's DMAIC improvement cycle (define, measure, analyze, improve, control) taught in the green-belt course, I work with other managers to fix the issues identified by our greatest asset: our associates.

Often, our aim is to remove or rework a step in the business process that causes waste. I use the acronym TIMWOOD (transportation, inventory, motion, waiting, over production, over processing, defects), explained in CPI curriculum as part of Lean, to examine activities and to identify areas for improvement closely. To keep everything organized and in good order, there is the 5S model (sort, straighten, shine, standardize, sustain).

I use this knowledge now just as I did at 1st Recon Bn after taking the green-belt course. Guided by industry-recognized principles and techniques, I assess situations from a production and budget standpoint and know that my choice is the most efficient and economical.

—C. Nate Swope

lined an improved process map. The new method successfully reduced testing time by 50 percent while eliminating 66 percent of the required support staff.

Gunnery Sergeant Nick Brown, radio chief at 2d Bn, Eighth Marine Regiment, also attended the yellow-belt-level training in early 2014.

"The Marine Corps Continuous Process Improvement program gave me tools to help influence my current workplace's tactics, techniques and procedures," said Brown, who oversees the dissemination of hundreds of communication devices.

According to Brown, the skills taught throughout the CPI program are applicable to any unit or individual regardless of grade, billet or certification level.

"It's not necessarily the one who expends the most rounds that wins the fight," said Gunny Brown, as he recalled his experience with 1st Marine Special Operations Bn. "Marines win battles with speed and accuracy. We only want steps that add value to the mission."

Benefit to Transitioning Veterans

Thousands of Marines will leave the service this year and transition into civilian roles where they can exercise combat-tested leadership acquired in the service. For those seeking positions in operations, logistics or supply-chain management, experience in CPI/LSS carries significant weight.

Just as the philosophies of companies like Motorola, General Electric and Toyota laid the foundation for the Navy and Marine Corps CPI strategy, veterans encompass the pillars that promote corporate America's success.

According to Chief Warrant Officer 3 Michael R. Marshall, USMC (Ret), transitioning Marines offer the ability to thrive in unpredictable environments and improvise to produce intended outcomes. When coupled with CPI/LSS, Marines are equipped to solve problems in business operations with the same passion they had on the battlefield.

"We [Marines] inherently possess the

attributes needed to succeed in environments where everyone else accepts defeat," said Marshall. "We are meticulous planners. We create innovative solutions. And, we have a fanatical obsession with quality and attention to detail. Our entire lineage is built upon continuously improving our Corps."

Marshall, an operations executive of the online retailer zulily.com, transitioned in 2011 after a 25-year career in the Marine Corps into a management role at Amazon.com. He worked for three different Fortune 500 companies before assuming his current position at one of the fastest growing e-commerce companies in history.

"Solving problems is the greatest attribute you can bring to an organization," said Marshall, who, after receiving his MBA on active duty in 2008, attended a Lean Six Sigma green-belt program at Coastal Carolina Community College. "Being adaptable and innovative makes us competitive, but having the skills to



COURTESY OF C. NATE SWOPE

According to Susan Stuffle, who is shown here working with a class, the mission of Marine Corps CPI is to “enhance warfighting excellence through a commitment to drive better and more cost-effective business processes.”



COURTESY OF C. NATE SWOPE

Wounded Warrior Battalion-West Marines design a process map during a green-belt course at Camp Pendleton, March 21, 2013. CPI helps Marines enhance their workplaces as well as prepare them to transition into leadership roles in operations, distribution, logistics and supply chain.

analyze data and build metrics-based solutions is what turns raw ideas into million-dollar machines.”

The Marine Corps’ investment in CPI paid dividends through cost-reducing improvements to the organization, faster warfighter support and solid preparation for a warfighter transitioning into corporate America.

The skills Marines acquire during their military service through combat deployments, training and CPI involvement make a powerful combination for the Marine Corps and in the civilian business world.

Author’s bio: C. Nate Swope is an area manager with zulily.com and student at Harvard University Extension School. He



CPL NICHOLAS RANUM, USMC

Marines and civilians work to assemble “widgets” during a yellow-belt course Aug. 22, 2013, at Camp Foster, Okinawa, Japan. The “widgets” represented building a product from start to finish as part of a learning exercise during the course.

is a Marine veteran who served with 1st Recon Bn. He transitioned into the civilian sector in May 2014 and has an MBA from Northeastern University and a B.S. in management from the University of Phoenix. He also served as an infantry rifleman with 2d Bn, 8th Marines and deployed three times to Iraq and Afghanistan.



Lance Corporal Leadership and Ethics Seminar

Marines Develop Critical Analysis Skills

By SSgt John E. Witt, USMC

In an effort to encourage younger Marines to think, question and conclude for themselves why they should live by the institutional values of honor, courage and commitment, the Marine Corps developed and introduced the Lance Corporal Leadership and Ethics Seminar in 2014. The seminar is designed to provide a forum for junior Marines to discuss, question and develop answers for the issues they will face throughout their time in the Marine Corps as well as long after they transition to civilian life.

The 17th Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, Sergeant Major Micheal Barrett, a strong proponent of enlisted professional military education (PME), said the Corps is “investing in our most precious asset—

the physical, cognitive and moral fitness and character of our Marines.”

The Lance Corporal Leadership and Ethics Seminar is one way of doing that.

According to the seminar guide, “The intent of this seminar is to bridge the gap between initial training and resident PME.” In accordance with MARADMIN 521/14, in order for lance corporals to be considered PME complete for promotion purposes, starting Oct. 1, 2015, they must have completed the seminar, in addition

Information is not provided directly to the students; rather, the students are encouraged to think critically by asking and answering questions.

to completing “Leading Marines” Distance Education Program on MarineNet.

The same MARADMIN gives individual units the authority to begin running command-sponsored seminars. Unlike most enlisted PME, the seminars are facilitated by seminar leaders using the Socratic method, in which information is not provided directly to the students; rather, the students are encouraged to think critically by asking and answering questions. The seminar leaders attend a “Teach the Teacher” course prior to conducting command-sponsored seminars in order to give the leaders the tools and guidance to conduct each seminar properly and effectively. Each “Teach the Teacher” session is composed of four days of education and training.

Marine Corps University has tasked the



Valuable experience is gained as Marines give presentations in a classroom environment during the Lance Corporal Leadership and Ethics Seminar held at Marine Corps Air Station Camp Pendleton, Calif., July 25, 2014.

Staff Noncommissioned Officer Academies (SNCOAs) with supporting the “Teach the Teacher” sessions throughout the Marine Corps in preparation of local units beginning their individual unit seminars.

Each SNCOA has been conducting “Teach the Teacher” classes since last October, but attendance has been very low. At the SNCOA at Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif., three sessions have been held, but only two sergeants major, four E-8s, 10 gunnery sergeants and staff sergeants, and 45 sergeants have attended. A total of 120 seats were available, but only 61 were filled. Each unit is required to have a director (E-9), a chief (E-8) and up to five sergeants as seminar leaders. Units are authorized to conduct seminars with leaders who have not attended the “Teach the Teacher” course, but those who have completed the seminar have a better understanding of what the lance corporal seminar will require overall.

Gunnery Sergeant Adam York, the staff noncommissioned officer in charge of the SNCOA at Twentynine Palms, described the “Teach the Teacher” course as “a great opportunity for not only sergeants of Marines, but also senior leadership to come and learn some new teaching styles and also to refine what our definitions of ethics and leadership are.”

Seminars

Each seminar comprises up to a maximum of 50 lance corporals with one seminar leader per 10 Marines. Each leader is the main facilitator for all five modules of the seminar.

The first module covers the Corps’ ethos and includes a discussion on core values, professionalism, ethics and core competencies. The second module focuses on leadership and is composed of the foundations of Marine Corps leadership; traits; principles; and customs, courtesies and traditions, as well as the leader/follower relationship. The third module consists of coaching, counseling and mentoring, and the fourth discusses the physical, moral, mental and social aspects of total fitness. The fifth and final module is on societal concerns that include disregarding orders and standards, physical fitness, personal appearance, substance abuse, self-destructive behavior, sexual assault and hazing.

Many lance corporals want to know why they need to attend these seminars.

Leathernecks from 8th Engineer Support Battalion, Second Marine Logistics Group engage in a group discussion with their seminar leader during the Lance Corporal Leadership and Ethics Seminar at MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C., Oct. 7, 2014.



A Marine reads the Medal of Honor citation of GySgt John Basilone during a physical fitness session at the Lance Corporal Leadership and Ethics Seminar at Camp Pendleton, July 25, 2014. (Photo by LCpl Orrin G. Farmer, USMC)

Ironically, the course is designed to have lance corporals ask, “Why?” but instead of having lance corporals start questioning orders or asking, “Why?” every time another Marine tells them to do something, the goal is to have the individual ask questions prior to making decisions. It is that process that will have Marines thinking about why it is wrong to haze or be hazed; about why sexual assault is wrong; about why one should uphold Marine Corps values.

The seminar builds on the foundation that Marines have received since they stepped on the yellow footprints in boot camp. They may have forgotten some of

those basics, but the seminar will reintroduce and refresh those concepts. In addition, Marines sometimes don’t realize they are not educated on certain aspects of the Marine Corps. These seminars fill such gaps.

SgtMaj Scott Hamm, the director of the SNCOA at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., described the benefits the Lance Corporal Leadership and Ethics Seminar provides to Marines and their commands, saying, “Both the lance corporals and the units receive the benefit of the dialogue starting from the course. It is an opportunity to talk about values, ethics and leadership before a ‘teachable moment’



LCPL MICHELLE M. REIF, USMC



SSGT JOHN E. WITT, USMC

Above: Marines work on an exercise during a “Teach the Teacher” training course at the Staff Academy at Twentynine Palms, Calif., in early November 2014. The course is mandated for all seminar directors (unit sergeants major), chiefs (first sergeants and master sergeants) and leaders (sergeants) of Lance Corporal Leadership and Ethics seminars.

Below: Marine Wing Communications Squadron 28 Marines read “Our Ethos” during the Lance Corporal Leadership and Ethics Seminar at MCAS Cherry Point, N.C., Nov. 3, 2014.



CPL UNIQUE B. ROBERTS, USMC

occurs. The units’ leaders will get back lance corporals who have had the opportunity to analyze the Corps’ values critically, to talk about how tough choices get made and learn about methods and tools available to solve problems. The lance corporals are shown the Marine Corps feels a commitment to developing them as ethical leaders and arming them with as much knowledge as possible from the beginning of their career.”

Even though some of the topics sound

like the annual training lectures Marines already receive, there is a big difference. Unlike annual training, these are discussions amongst junior Marines in a small group led by a sergeant. The discussion format ensures leaders are not simply telling Marines what they should feel or believe when it comes to these topics. The sergeant leader will be listening, prompting, encouraging and re-enforcing the institutional values when needed during each module.

These are discussions amongst junior Marines in a small group led by a sergeant. The discussion format ensures leaders are not simply telling Marines what they should feel or believe.

If the group is talking about a specific topic and some of the lance corporals don’t personally agree, there will be discussion. If they don’t agree with the institutional values, the leader is not going to criticize, but simply ask why. The lance corporals are free to debate with the sergeant facilitating. This type of peer-to-peer interaction often has a larger impact on the lance corporals than the leader does.

Sergeant Christopher Harjo, a seminar leader attending a recent “Teach the Teacher” course, described the benefits of small-group discussions versus large-scale annual training events. He said that in a small group, people become comfortable with one another faster, and there are fewer distractions. “The instructor can have more one-on-one time if Marines have questions about a certain topic, so they can leave the course with a full understanding of topics covered.”

Although the Lance Corporal Leadership and Ethics Seminar is only five days, the schedule is full—including homework, in-class activities, articles, games and even challenges. Lance corporals are tasked with facilitating a part of an individual lesson through a “teach back.” They are required to do research and present what they have learned. “Leading Marines” (MCWP 6-11) is re-read and discussed in detail. The leaders discover what the lance corporals know, what they think and even what they would do in different situations.

The seminars have the potential to make smarter and more powerful thinkers within the Marine Corps, especially among our more junior Marines. Lance corporals who understand critical thinking can make better decisions for themselves and our institution.

Author’s bio: SSgt John E. Witt is the chief faculty advisor of the Sergeants Course, Staff Noncommissioned Officer Academy (SNCOA) Twentynine Palms, Calif. He is tasked with overseeing the “Teach the Teacher” course for the Lance Corporal Leadership and Ethics Seminar at the SNCOA Twentynine Palms.



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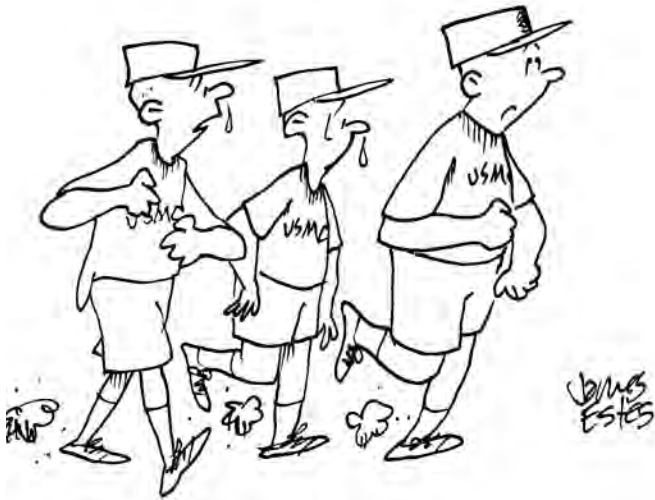
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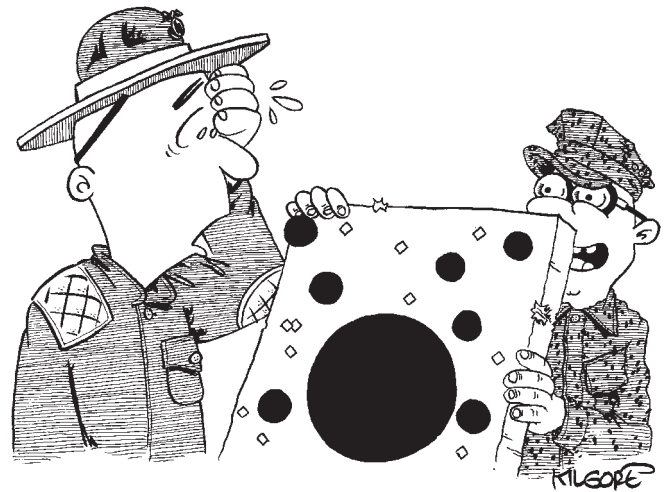
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Leatherneck Laffs



"Are we there yet? Are we there yet? Are we there yet?"



"Look, sir, a no-hitter!"



"Recruit, I'm the only GPS you need!"

BOOT CAMP

S.J. Stout



Behind Closed Doors



"I don't think 'sooey Marine' works the same as 'sooey pig.'"

"You get to go on base this year! You are so lucky."

VIETNAM:
50 YEARS AGO

Beachhead: Da Nang

The Landing by the 9th Marine Expeditionary Brigade in March 1965 Was Requested by the South Vietnamese Government

Story compiled from
official USMC releases
USMC photos

Editor's note: This article originally appeared in the June 1965 issue of Leatherneck and was compiled from official USMC releases. To see more articles from Leathernecks of the past, members can access our website at <https://www.mca-marines.org/leatherneck> and "Search the Archives."

They called it a combat landing. And it was. It was the first landing by U.S. Marines on a hostile shore since the Korean War. But like their peacekeeper landing in Lebanon in 1958, the Marines were met on the beaches of South Vietnam by a barrage of flashbulbs and curious onlookers.

Reporters thrust microphones and camera lenses at the startled Marines as they charged ashore. The mayor of Da Nang beamed happily as he cranked out pictures with his Polaroid camera.

Staff Sergeant Gordon Hopkins is cred-

ited with being the first man to hit the beach. He was promptly decorated with a lei of fresh-cut flowers. Red-faced and somewhat confused momentarily, Hopkins brushed his way through the swarm of reporters—all asking him how it felt to be in Vietnam.

The sergeant's answer was straight to the point: "My job."

It was a lousy day when the 9th Marine Expeditionary Brigade piled ashore from World War II vintage landing craft. To start things off, the landing was delayed more than an hour because of pounding

Marines and vehicles hit the surf in a "combat landing" at Da Nang, South Vietnam, March 9, 1965.



surf and rough seas. A 25-mph offshore wind caused breakers as high as 20 feet to batter the coast. Thick blue-gray clouds added to the dreary atmosphere.

Villagers in Da Nang awoke on the morning of March 8 to find the shadowy outline of the U.S. 7th Fleet's amphibious task force sitting in the mist offshore. According to the plan, the Marines were to storm ashore on a carefully spread section of steel mesh matting. Vietnamese officials were to line one side while flower-bearing teenaged girls lined the other.

At precisely 0840, the first "Mike" boat turned toward the shore. The others lined up and headed in. But none quite made it to the greeting line. The first boat rammed ashore some 40 yards from the mesh ramp. Photographers and reporters all but trampled the official greeters and giggling girls to catch the first Marine ashore.

But SSgt Hopkins must share his first-man-ashore honors by the mere nature of this landing. Some 72 minutes before the boats landed 10 miles north of the city of Da Nang, the Brigade commander came in by helicopter. The commander, Brigadier



Leathernecks of the 9th MEB waded ashore on the beach at Da Nang. Unlike the opposed amphibious landings of WW II, the Marines at Da Nang were met by welcoming onlookers and numerous reporters.



One of the vehicles brought ashore with Battalion Landing Team 3d Bn, Ninth Marine Regiment passes under a banner welcoming the Marines to Da Nang.



Above: The Hawk missile battery arrived a month before the MEB to provide additional defense of the air base at Da Nang.

Below: More Marines and vehicles push toward the beach on their way to securing the area around the massive air base.



General Frederick J. Karsh, was among the official greeters when his Marines swarmed ashore from the Bay of Tourane.

BGen Karsh, who had previously waded ashore at Saipan and Iwo Jima, explained why the Marines were in South Vietnam:

“We’ll be operating strictly in a defensive role,” he said. “Our job is to secure the area.”

The Marine Brigade was moved into South Vietnam at the request of that government in order to release Vietnamese troops from air base security duties, enabling them to take up active engagement against the Viet Cong guerrillas.

In Washington, D.C., Secretary of State Dean Rusk explained the position of the Marine Brigade. When asked by a reporter if the Marines would shoot back if they were fired upon, Mr. Rusk said: “Obviously. That’s the history of the Marine Corps.”

Toward evening, the assault force loaded aboard trucks and moved in from the beach to secure the area around the huge air base at Da Nang. A month before, a battery of Marine Hawk missiles had been brought in to provide defense against possible enemy air attack on the base.

At the air base compound, the Brigade linked up with the 1st Battalion, Third Marine Regiment, which had arrived that afternoon by C-130s of the First Marine Aircraft Wing. One arriving “Hercules” was hit by small-arms fire as it approached Da Nang, but there was no serious damage, and no one was injured.

Early on D + 1, the Brigade’s Sunday punch began arriving from Okinawa. In came Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 162 to bolster HMM-163 already operating at Da Nang. In came the light “Grasshopper” aircraft of Marine Observation Squadron 2.

The first tanks and Ontos plowed across the beach the day before, shortly after the assault forces had landed. Navy beachmaster units worked throughout the night to keep equipment and supplies moving inland.

To nearly every Marine who landed at Da Nang on March 8, Vietnam was a completely new experience. But to a handful, the trip was a return visit. They had served 30-day TAD [temporary additional duty] tours from Okinawa as advisors to Vietnamese Army and Marine units. Each had seen action against the communist Viet Cong.

Captain Lee Peterson, skipper of C-1-3, had returned to his unit on Okinawa just three days prior to the mount-out. “I just had enough time to send out my laundry,” he grinned. “But this is a good outfit, and I’m glad to be back in Vietnam with the whole unit. Every one of my Marines is eager, believe me.”

Helicopters are loaded with supplies for the Marines on Hill 327. After three initial days of quiet, the Viet Cong probed positions on the hill and were greeted by Marine machine guns.



Marines going ashore on the beach at Da Nang were delayed more than an hour due to heavy surf and rough seas.

First Lieutenant Murphey McCloy, who had served with the 11th Vietnamese Rangers and was commended for his gallantry against the VC, returned as weapons platoon commander of C-1-3.

SSgt Clifford D. Colby, who last November was wounded in action while with the 11th VN Rangers, returned as a platoon sergeant in C-1-3. He was awarded the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry before he left for Okinawa.

Another veteran returning with C-1-3 was SSgt Carl A. Loker, a platoon ser-

geant. He, too, was with the 11th VN Rangers and on at least one occasion made a parachute jump with the unit.

The Brigade wasted no time in extending its security perimeter from the air base compound. Some units moved into positions atop Hill 327, which dominates the air base.

For three long days and nights, all was quiet. The Marines lay warily behind their weapons, tensing at every shadow. The Marines were well-trained and knew their jobs, but, after all, this was it—the real

thing. Right now, it called for patience and more patience.

Then, suddenly in the predawn darkness of the fourth morning, the Marine machine guns opened up. According to press reports, a dozen VC guerrillas had snaked through the underbrush, trying to probe the positions on Hill 327. Each time, they were met with a storm of mortar and machine-gun fire. They withdrew.

A weapon of the new breed was paying off. The guerrillas were located by a small device called battlefield radar, which can pinpoint guerrillas anywhere. It's a miniature version of the dish-type radar common atop airport control towers. Movement within the radar's beam is recorded as a "pip" on a scope.

With a term borrowed from their air wing brothers, the front-line radar operators refer to their targets as "bogeys."

Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara aptly explained why the highly mobile, amphibious-trained Marines were sent into what is said to be a purely defensive operation. That reason, he said, was apparent. The Marines were ready and comparatively close by.

Our government has obligated itself to offer military assistance to South Vietnam and to provide the utmost security for our own citizens, military or otherwise, who are stationed in combat areas.

The Marines are helping to fulfill that obligation.



CORPS ALBUM

Compiled by Nancy Lee White Hoffman · USMC photos courtesy of Marine Corps History Division



Under fire, Marines attack the VC during Operation Harvest Moon about 25 miles northwest of Chu Lai in December 1965. Units involved were Task Force Delta; 2d Battalion, Seventh Marine Regiment (2/7); 3/3; 2/1 (from Special Landing Force, 7th Fleet) and three Army of the Republic of Vietnam battalions. They were supported by Marine Corps aircraft and artillery and four Air Force B-52 airstrikes.

Small numbers of U.S. military personnel had been in South Vietnam as early as the 1950s, primarily in military advisory positions. In 1965, the Vietnam War escalated, and the Marines were the first of the U.S. Armed Forces to deploy large ground units there. In March of '65, the first ground combat unit, 9th Marine Expeditionary Brigade, commanded by Brigadier General Frederick J. Karch, landed at Da Nang. In early May, the 9th MEB was absorbed into a sizeable III Marine Amphibious Force, which included the forward elements of Third Marine Division, First Marine Aircraft Wing and Force Logistics Command.

The Marines' initial area of responsibility went from 8 square miles around the Da Nang airfield to three coastal enclaves containing more than 800 square miles in South Vietnam's northernmost area, I Corps. "Their mission expanded from defense of the Da Nang Airbase to a balanced strategy involving base defense, offensive operations, and pacification," said BGen

Edwin H. Simmons, USMC (Ret), then director of Marine Corps History and Museums, in the foreword of "U.S. Marines in Vietnam: The Landing and the Buildup, 1965."

Major combat operations were Starlite and Harvest Moon where leathernecks encountered the forces of the National Liberation Front (Viet Cong) in regimental strength.

By the end of 1965, III MAF, commanded by Major General Lewis W. Walt, comprised about 40,000 Marines.

"As 1965 drew to a close, there was some hope for peace. Both the allies and the Viet Cong agreed to short truces over the Christmas and New Year holidays, and President [Lyndon B.] Johnson opened his 'peace offensive.' ... Everyone involved in the war in Vietnam talked of peace, but there was no peace. The prediction of a Vietnamese soothsayer would come true; 1966 would be a year of a 'lot of fighting and killing,' " according to "U.S. Marines in Vietnam: The Landing and the Buildup."

VIETNAM 1965



Leathernecks of Company L, 3/3 cross a river to sweep through a Vietnamese village during the second phase of Operation Blue Marlin, north of Chu Lai, Nov. 16-18.



High humidity and dust were constant concerns for leathernecks of A/1/12 who had a nearly continuous job of keeping their weapons combat ready. In this photo taken April 21, LCpl S. Filon cleans an M60 machine gun while LCpl H.C. Hale and PFC C.P. Owens work on a 105 mm howitzer.



Navy LT Edwin V. Bobula, a chaplain with 2/3, passes out bars of soap to children at the Phu Thuong Orphanage near Da Nang, Dec. 4. Winning hearts and minds with an ever-increasing civic action program was more than just a goodwill gesture.



On Nov. 11, F/2/7 Marines await an approaching UH-34 Seahorse helicopter during Operation Blue Marlin (Phase I, Nov. 10-12), a combined U.S. Marine Corps-Vietnamese Marine Corps operation between Chu Lai and Tam Ky.



Cpl William M. Lovell of Co B, 3d Tank Bn guards the perimeter in an M48 tank near Hoa Long village. Co B was in direct support of the 9th Marines at Da Nang.



Above: A U.S. Marine receives a friendly douse of water from a villager during Operation Piranha, Sept. 7-10. The regimental-level amphibious-heliborne attack was executed to clear the area of VC forces building up on Batangan Peninsula, south of Chu Lai.

Left: A Thuy Phu village chief points out surveyed artillery concentration areas to MajGen Lewis W. Walt, Commanding General, III MAF, during a visit to the village in August. LtCol William W. "Woody" Taylor, Commanding Officer, 3/4, looks on.

Right: Cpl William T. Chaconas, Co C, 1st Bn, 3d Engineers, removes a box mine from a heavily traveled road. The engineers provided mine detection and demolition teams in support of infantry operations and conducted daily sweeps of the main supply routes for mines and booby traps.





A UH-34 prepares to land atop an outpost 9 miles northeast of Da Nang, Aug. 18. Three times a week, helos resupplied the mountaintop—one of the smallest helicopter landing zones in Vietnam—with room to allow only the helo's front wheels to touch down.



Leathernecks of 2/4, attached to 7th Marines, search a village during Operation Starlite. Supported by air, artillery and naval gunfire, 1/7 and 3/3, in addition to 2/4, conducted the amphibious-heliborne search-and-destroy operation, which took place Aug. 18-24 in the Van Tuong village complex south of Chu Lai.

We—the Marines

Edited by Sara W. Bock

Student-Athletes Learn From Marines At 2015 Semper Fidelis Bowl

■ The Semper Fidelis All-American Bowl, the culminating event of the Semper Fidelis Football Program, took place at the StubHub Center, Carson, Calif., Jan. 4.

Marines helped mentor and shape approximately 100 student-athletes from across the country during a weeklong practice and mentoring event prior to the game. The participating high school football players were selected because they have achieved success both on and off the field. As part of the program, the Marines, along with NFL and collegiate-level football coaches, helped players develop skills not only vital to football, but also to enhancing their character and leadership.

“We take young student-athletes who have proven their skills on the football field, couple that with their scholastic achievements in school and their leadership in their communities, and [these qualities] fit in very well with one of the Marine Corps’ missions, which is to return Marines as good citizens back to their communities,” said Major General Mark A. Brilakis, Commanding General, Marine Corps Recruiting Command, Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va.

A huge driving factor for the program is the commitment from the Marines and coaches to show these student-athletes,

who have already proven themselves both physically and academically, the true meaning of honor, courage and commitment.

Aside from practicing, participating in team-building events and developing positive, intangible qualities through interaction with guest speakers and Marines, the players visited with local children during a community-relations event in Carson. The athletes and Marines played games with the children and spoke to them about being good citizens. The community event taught players about the importance of being a positive presence in their neighborhoods.

“I’m actually glad to be here because I honestly haven’t been somewhere like this to give back to a lot of kids, so it’s actually a privilege to me,” said Marshall Wallace, an outside linebacker from John Curtis Christian High School in River Ridge, La.

“All the young people here today who are Carson residents are getting exposed to the Marine Corps in a very positive, reinforcing way, teaching them about how wonderful it is,” Carson Mayor Jim Dear said of the community event. “I just think all of this coming together today is wonderful.”

The Semper Fidelis Football Program helps the Marine Corps actively engage

with communities nationwide, strengthen relationships and lend a hand in developing America’s future leaders.

Drill instructors from the Marine Corps Recruit Depots at Parris Island, S.C., and San Diego played a crucial role in the program and provided a hands-on, practical approach to reinforce the Corps’ values of honor, courage and commitment.

“I’m not here to teach them about football,” said Gunnery Sergeant Justin Crawn, a drill instructor from MCRD Parris Island. “I’m here to teach them about respect and teamwork.”

After a long, hard week of practice with coaches and drill instructors, the players were ready for the finale.

Team East took home the championship, winning 24-3 over Team West. Win or lose, all the players took home lessons that will stay with them throughout their lives.

Cpl Jacky Fang, USMC

Leathernecks Experience History While Visiting National Capital Region

■ Marines with “Bravo” Battery, 2d Low Altitude Air Defense Battalion, Second Marine Aircraft Wing, Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, N.C., packed their bags and headed to Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., for a lesson in Marine Corps history and a tour of the nation’s capital Dec. 15-19, 2014.

According to First Sergeant Wesley O. Turner, the battery first sergeant, the trip was designed to give the unit’s Marines a chance to learn about the lineage of Marines and to honor the sacrifices made by previous generations of servicemembers.

During the trip, the Marines of the battery occupied a squadbay at the Marine Corps’ Officer Candidates School (OCS) at MCB Quantico. After claiming their racks and sorting out their gear, they prepared for day one, which included tackling the Tarzan Course at OCS.

According to Captain Konrad N. Reese, commanding officer of Bravo Btry, the course gave the unit’s junior leaders a chance to challenge their Marines and build camaraderie.

“We chose to have the Marines take on the course to build unit cohesion and assess their mental courage,” said Reese. “Nothing makes a Marine more willing to



Semper Fidelis All-American Bowl Team East defensive end Joe Gazian, left, and Sgt Ivan Colina, a DI from MCRD Parris Island, S.C., honor the nation’s colors at the StubHub Center, Carson, Calif., Jan. 4. Each year, the Semper Fidelis Bowl brings high school football players together with Marines and professional and college football coaches to help the players develop skills necessary for success both on and off the field.

SGT ERIK S. BROOKS JR., USMC



COURTESY OF COMBAT CAMERA, MCB QUANTICO, VA.

During their educational visit to the National Capital Region, Marines with “Bravo” Btry, 2d LAAD Bn, 2d MAW descend the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., in December 2014.

overcome their fears than having everyone he knows cheering him on.”

On day two, the Marines visited the National Museum of the Marine Corps, located near Quantico. According to Sergeant Anthony J. Zeitz, the visit gave the Marines a chance to learn more about the Corps and help give perspective to the junior leaders within the battery.

“I think for many of the Marines, myself included, going to the museum brought out who we are as Marines and reignited the flame that inspired us to join,” said Zeitz.

During the third day, they visited Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia and toured the National Mall in Washington, D.C.

At the cemetery, the Marines walked the hallowed ground where more than 400,000 veterans and their families are buried. They stood solemnly during a burial ceremony and also viewed the changing of the guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, which honors U.S. military personnel who have given their lives in war.

After visiting the cemetery, they ex-

plored monuments and memorials around the area.

On the final day of the trip, the Marines visited the Home of the Commandants of the Marine Corps at Marine Barracks Washington. First Lady of the Marine Corps Mrs. Ellyn Dunford gave them a tour of the home and explained the history and significance of the installation at “8th and I.”

According to Reese, the battery’s leaders see the benefits of connecting their

Marines to the past and providing a link to the Corps’ history. They hope to take similar trips in the future.

Cpl J.R. Heins, USMC

“Rodeo” Rounds Up Motor T Marines

■ Diesel fumes fill the air as 7-ton trucks maneuver through an obstacle course. Meanwhile, sweaty, greasy Marines work hard to change the tires on a humvee as others rush to disassemble and reassemble the rear of a 7-ton.



CPL WILLIAM HESTER, USMC

MGySgt Alex C. Cabero Jr., center, prepares a group of Motor T Marines for the next event in the truck “rodeo” held at Camp Kinser, MCB Camp Butler, Okinawa, Japan, in December 2014.

Leathernecks with Third Marine Logistics Group, III Marine Expeditionary Force organized a truck “rodeo” for multiple motor transport units on Camp Kinser, Marine Corps Base Camp Smedley D. Butler, Okinawa, Japan, Dec. 9-10, 2014. The various units, located across Okinawa, came together to promote teamwork and proficiency.

“This event was organized to take time to remember the basics of motor transport,” said Colonel David Nathanson, G-3, 3d MLG, III MEF. “We also want to foster camaraderie between the motor transport Marines across the island.”

The rodeo of 7-ton trucks involved three timed events: driving through an obstacle course, changing tires, and disassembling and reassembling the rear of a truck.

While a flak jacket, Kevlar and gloves may hinder mobility or slow down procedures, the Marines know it is critical to train while wearing the combat essentials—and they did so throughout the event.

“It’s a lot easier to operate with no [personal protective equipment (PPE)], but that’s not mission effective,” said Sergeant Matthew V. Boyd, a motor transport dispatcher with Headquarters and Support Battalion, Marine Corps Installations Pacific, MCB Camp Butler. “You’re going to be wearing PPE in a combat zone, and [the enemy] isn’t going to wait for you to take it off to do something.”

The large gathering of Motor T Marines allowed for a sharing of knowledge and options that otherwise may not have been discovered, according to Nathanson.

“We’re testing so that we can determine whether or not there are better procedures in doing things,” said Nathanson. “We are trying to come up with creative solutions.”

“This event allows you to really shine in your skills within our military occupational specialty,” said Boyd. “It would be nice to see more things like this. It’s entertaining to be around other motor pools.”

LCpl William Hester, USMC

New Pistol Qual Course “Holsters” Old Rules

■ Leathernecks with II Marine Expeditionary Force took part in a new course designed for 9 mm pistol qualifications at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., Jan. 7. The new course includes targets that resemble a more accurate depiction of the enemy, shorter firing sections, and a requirement to holster your weapon after performing mechanical evaluations of the pistol.

During the new course, before engaging the target, Marines draw their pistol from the holster, aim downrange and fire. Once completed, they perform a magazine check to ensure rounds are loaded, pull the slide



LCpl Alexander Mitchell, USMC

Marines from II MEF check their shots on targets and record their scores during an improved 9 mm pistol course at MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C., Jan. 7. The new course features more realistic targets and a requirement to perform appropriate weapon checks.

back to check the chamber for the next round, put the weapon on safe, and holster their pistol for the next course of fire.

“Marines can assess the situation while the weapon is holstered and engage and fire when the time comes,” said Corporal Dylan Fitzgerald, a combat marksmanship coach with 8th Communication Battalion. “This type of course focuses on real-world scenarios where your pistol will be holstered before an engagement occurs.”

While in combat, Marines usually have their pistols holstered and rifles at the ready. When the time comes to use their pistol, they need to be confident in removing it rapidly and firing quick and accurate shots to eliminate potential risks.

Rather than focusing on shooting at a target and reloading as necessary during an extended amount of time, the new pistol course, much like portions of the rifle range, focuses on accurate and timely shots that are geared toward combat scenarios. This connection can help Marines maintain confidence and readiness during high-speed encounters.

“This new range parallels with knowledge and tactical abilities of table two and

table three of the rifle range,” said First Lieutenant William Keller, the 2d Law Enforcement Detachment commander of 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit. “In the old course, we focused on reloads heavily, but with the new course, we are now drawing from a holster and employing techniques to actually conduct threat assessment.”

The new target in the course resembles a human form with facial features and a bare chest that allows Marines to properly see the anatomy when performing shooting drills. The scoring system is present still, but no shapes or hip girdle are shown. Marines can see a target downrange looking back at them and conduct tactical engagement while performing proper weapon control and function checks.

LCpl Alexander Mitchell, USMC

Quick Shots Around the Corps

MEB-A Deactivates, Cases Its Colors

■ A deactivation ceremony for Marine Expeditionary Brigade-Afghanistan was held at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., Jan. 9. Following the 13-year

conflict known as Operation Enduring Freedom, the ceremony symbolically closed another chapter in Marine Corps history.

MEB-A officially took authority of Regional Command Southwest from II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward) Feb. 5, 2014, and assumed the responsibility for coalition operations in Helmand and Nimroz provinces, Afghanistan.

Brigadier General Daniel D. Yoo, Commanding General, MEB-A, spoke to the Marines, sailors, friends and families who attended the ceremony, emphasizing that if the need arises, the Marine Corps will stand up another organization in order to support the nation's requirements.

During MEB-A's time in Afghanistan, many notable milestones were achieved including the Afghanistan presidential elections, April 5, 2014, and the signing of the Bilateral Security Agreement.

Cpl Ricardo Hurtado, USMC

Marines Bring Home Kennedy Cup From JFK 50-Mile Challenge

■ A team of nine members from the Marine Corps' Expeditionary Warfare School (EWS), Marine Corps University, Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., took home the

Kennedy Cup from the JFK 50-mile run in Boonsboro, Md., Nov. 22, 2014.

The Kennedy Cup is awarded to the top-finishing military team. The EWS team was composed of faculty, staff and students, whose completion times ranged from 7 hours, 22 minutes to 11 hours, 30 minutes.

Team members were Colonel Frank Donovan, Director, EWS; Major Brandon Turner; Maj Michelle Macander; Maj Jessica Ryu; Maj Jake Hood; Captain Rob Sherwood; Capt A.J. Cillo; Capt Matt Windhol; and Lieutenant Jonathan Messer, USN.

Despite the grueling nature of the challenge, the team embraced the chance to compete in such a historical, well-supported event while representing the Marine Corps and EWS.

P. Brandy Fitzgerald

Marine Rescues Okinawan

■ Sergeant Jacob Baumann, a fire support man with Headquarters Battery, 12th Marine Regiment, Third Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force, Okinawa, Japan, quite possibly saved the life of an elderly Okinawan man in Kin Town, Okinawa, Dec. 23, 2014.

That afternoon, Baumann was driving

on a roadway near Camp Hansen, Marine Corps Base Camp Smedley D. Butler, when he noticed a man unsteadily riding his bicycle inches away from the road. As Baumann passed by, the man suddenly fell off his bike and into the road. Baumann immediately pulled over and moved the man and his bike away from oncoming traffic.

He checked the man's breathing, and when he noticed an irregular heartbeat, he began chest compressions, skills he learned during CPR certification classes and predeployment combat lifesaver training in the Marine Corps.

After he resuscitated the man, a couple of corpsmen pulled over to help, followed by a Japanese ambulance.

"I was so impressed ... to see the Marine trying to give him water and some of his own lunch box as he asked for something to eat and drink," said Sergeant Major Toshiki Iwasaki, the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force liaison officer for III MEF, who witnessed Baumann's heroic act. "The Marines [and corpsmen] are awesome, and I am grateful to them."

Cpl Rebecca Elmy



Crazy Caption Contest

Winner



COURTESY OF AMY WIRTALA

"One day it will be me they'll be reading about."

Submitted by
Christopher S. Dyer
Mason, Texas

This Month's Photo



CPL KEENAN ZELAZOSKI, USMC

(Caption) _____

Name _____

Address _____

City/State _____ ZIP _____

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



Cpl Caleb Love, crew chief, Marine Light Attack Squadron 369, provides close air support aboard a UH-1N helicopter for coalition forces engaging insurgents in the city of Ubaydi, Al Anbar province, Iraq, Nov. 16, 2005. (Photo by Sgt James P. Aguilar, USMC)

Unlocking the Insurgency: The Al Qa'im Campaign

By Savanna J. Buckner

Al Qa'im, an urban district of 200,000 inhabitants located near the Syrian-Iraqi border, comprises a society driven by an intricate tribal system. Because it runs along major transit routes and the bank of the Euphrates River in Iraq's Al Anbar province, Al Qa'im served as an important logistical center for insurgents during the Iraq war, as well as an entry point for foreign fighters. During fall 2005 and spring 2006, Marines in Al Qa'im capitalized on the Iraqi populace's role in enabling or impeding insurgency; that emphasis on the district's people significantly enabled the success of the Al Qa'im campaign, dramatically impacting subsequent coalition efforts in Al Anbar province.

Violence and political discontent erupted

"Corporal Dunham covered the grenade with his helmet and body, bearing the brunt of the explosion and shielding his Marines from the blast."

in Al Anbar province in 2003 and increased the following year as leaders emerged to unite insurgents into a vitalized, anti-coalition force. Beginning in March 2004, Marines conducted several operations in the Al Qa'im District to confront the insurgency and establish stability. On April 14, when insurgents ambushed a convoy from 3d Battalion, Seventh Marine Regiment (3/7), Corporal Jason L.

Dunham led a squad from his Combined Antiarmor Team of "Kilo" Company, 3/7 to interdict vehicles fleeing the area.

As the Medal of Honor citation for Cpl Dunham states, "[A]n insurgent leaped out and attacked Corporal Dunham. Corporal Dunham wrestled the insurgent to the ground and in the ensuing struggle saw the insurgent release a grenade. Corporal Dunham immediately alerted his fellow Marines to the threat. Aware of the imminent danger and without hesitation, Corporal Dunham covered the grenade with his helmet and body, bearing the brunt of the explosion and shielding his Marines from the blast. In an ultimate and selfless act of bravery in which he was mortally wounded, he saved the lives of at least two fellow Marines." Dunham posthumously was awarded the Medal

LCpl Scott Larkin, Combined Anti-Armor Team Blue, 2d Bn, 1st Marines, checks a house to make certain that detonated ordnance is destroyed properly as part of Operation Steel Curtain in Karabilah, Al Anbar province.

of Honor, becoming the first Marine recipient of the medal since the Vietnam War.

The operation to retake the city of Fallujah from insurgents in fall 2004 required the diversion of most of I Marine Expeditionary Force's (I MEF's) resources, and in their absence, the situation in Al Qa'im deteriorated. After Fallujah, Jordanian Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the head of al-Qaida in Iraq, established Al Qa'im as a main base for insurgents. In spring 2005, the Albu Mahal tribe in Al Qa'im requested coalition assistance against al-Zarqawi and his terrorist campaign. Regimental Combat Team (RCT) 2 from I MEF conducted Operation Matador to eliminate insurgent sanctuaries in the district. The operation was not coordinated with the region's tribes, however, and met with mixed results.

In August 2005, 3/6 arrived in Al Qa'im, relieving 3/2. Notably, 3/6 had deployed to Afghanistan recently, where it had gained firsthand experience in stabilizing operations, providing humanitarian aid and battling insurgents. It quickly applied that experience to the fight in Al Qa'im. Continuity between 3/6's deployments to Afghanistan and Iraq, especially among company commanders, aided Marine activity in the Al Qa'im region.

The battalion's commanding officer, Lieutenant Colonel Julian D. Alford (now a brigadier general), based his campaign approach on the observation that the people of Al Qa'im, not enemy fighters, represented the insurgency's center of gravity. The CO of RCT-2, Colonel Stephen W. Davis, supported Alford's innovative methods, which emphasized living and working among the Iraqi people to turn the tide of the insurgency.

The Marines of 3/6 immediately faced close-quarter fighting with insurgents residing in the district's urban centers. Enemy fighters often used civilians as human shields, and their violence targeted not only coalition forces, but Iraqi police and tribal leaders as well. Insurgents gradually displaced major tribes as the dominant force in the Al Qa'im region. In September, al-Qaida in Iraq destroyed music stores and movie theaters in Al Qa'im, declaring the district the "Islamic Kingdom of



USMC



MAP BY VINCENT J. MARTINEZ

By December 2005, Task Force 3/6 had spread its units in battle positions throughout the Al Qa'im District. Co L manned positions in Husaybah while Co I manned positions in eastern Karabilah. Co K manned positions in western Karabilah and Sadah, and "Whiskey" Co manned the positions in and around Ubaydi. Meanwhile, a company of light armored reconnaissance Marines patrolled the north bank of the Euphrates.



LCpl Hernandez, foreground, I/3/6, provides security from a rooftop in Karabilah, Nov. 11, 2005. In the background are two Iraqi soldiers.

Qa'im" under the control of al-Qaida.

Marines realized that working among the Iraqi people required clearing insurgents from the Al Qa'im region. During Oct. 1-7, Task Force (TF) 3/6 conducted Operation Iron Fist, a battalion-sized operation in which Marines moved through Sadah and eastern Karabilah to clear routes and eradicate insurgents in these urban centers. The aggressive clearing operation allowed Marines to establish battle positions in the towns to live in and operate with the Iraqis. Through October

and the ensuing months, Marines strengthened their partnership with the Iraqi army and attained a better understanding of Iraqi customs and tribal relationships, ensuring insurgents could not return easily.

The three weeks following Operation Iron Fist were extremely dangerous, fraught with small-arms fire, sniper fire and improvised explosive devices (IEDs). In November, Marines conducted Operation Steel Curtain, a large sweep to complete clearing the Al Qa'im District; it was the largest Marine Corps operation in Iraq

During the ambush, Lance Corporal Joshua R. Mooi entered the site of the ambush six times to rescue injured Marines and eliminate insurgents.

since the Second Battle of Fallujah in November 2004. Battalion Landing Team (BLT) 2/1, LtCol Robert G. Oltman's ground combat element of the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), arrived in Iraq at the end of October to reinforce the operation.

Hazards such as unexploded ordnance and IEDs, as well as ambushes, challenged the Marines. As in the Second Battle of Fallujah, Marines used loudspeakers to warn civilians in Al Qa'im to evacuate, and they took every effort to avoid harming civilians. On Nov. 5, Marines began the sweep, surprising the insurgents by attacking Husaybah from the west rather than the east. While TF 3/6 cleared the northern sections of the town, BLT 2/1 cleared the southern sections.

By Nov. 10, having cleared and secured Husaybah, Marines moved on to sweep western Karabilah, ridding the town of insurgents and foreign fighters, as well as explosive devices. In both Operation Steel Curtain and Operation Iron Fist, Marines received substantial close air support from Marine Corps, Navy, Army and Air Force air assets.

During Nov. 14-22, Marines secured Old Ubaydi and New Ubaydi, leaving behind battle positions for security. The equipment for battle positions, as well as food, water and ordnance, was supplied by Combat Logistics Battalion (CLB) 2. On Nov. 16, the bloodiest day of the assault on New Ubaydi, 21 insurgents ambushed a Marine platoon from Fox Co, BLT 2/1, resulting in five Marines being killed. During the ambush, Lance Corporal Joshua R. Mooi entered the site of the ambush six times to rescue injured Marines and eliminate insurgents. For his outstanding actions, which helped save the lives of 10 Marines, Mooi was awarded the Navy Cross.

In mid-November, Marines moved into the battle positions they had built in Al Qa'im's major urban areas. Marines and Iraqi security conducted patrols, acquired intelligence and developed a relationship with major tribes in Al Qa'im. Meeting with local sheiks to form cooperative arrangements enabled the Marines to exploit the division between tribal and foreign fighters, making the area more

CPL NEILL A. SEVELIUS, USMC



COURTESY OF BGJN JULIAN D. ALFORD, USMC

An interpreter assists LtCol Julian D. Alford, CO, 3/6, third from left, in his discussions with a local sheik as SgtMaj Scott Theakston, second from left, observes.

hostile to insurgents. Those events in Al Qa'im in the fall of 2005 and winter of 2006 marked some of the earliest inspiration for many sheiks later aligning themselves with the coalition in the Al Anbar "Awakening."

On Dec. 15, 2005, TF 3/6 provided security for the Iraqi parliamentary elections, in which about 75 percent of the

electorate throughout Al Anbar province voted. During the ensuing months in the volatile region, the Marines undertook patrols and joint operations with Iraqi Security Forces to further stabilize Al Qa'im.

After seven challenging months in Al Qa'im, 3/6 began its return to the United States in March 2006, relieved by 1/7. The

battalion left a more stable area, where insurgent movements were tightly restricted. The Al Qa'im campaign testified to the Marines' effectiveness in counter-insurgency operations, marked one of the first times the coalition and Al Anbar tribes united against al-Qaida in Iraq, and served as a turning point for establishing stability in the region. At Al Qa'im, 3/6 realized that the populace represented the key to success in Iraq's cultural landscape; that vital insight allowed the Al Qa'im campaign to serve as a model for later campaigns in Al Anbar province.

Author's bio: Savanna J. Buckner, a former research intern for the National Museum of the Marine Corps, is a communication arts graduate of Franciscan University of Steubenville in Ohio. A freelance writer with an interest in military history, she currently teaches English, speech and humanities at John Paul II Junior College in Benque Viejo, Belize.



CPT MICHAEL R. MCMAUGH, USMC

Sgt Dennis Howard of the 6th Civil Affairs Group interacts with Iraqi children at the displaced person compound in Husaybah, Al Anbar province during the Al Qa'im campaign.

The Battle of the Emerald *Wadi*



COURTESY OF MAJ CLINTON A. CULP, USMC (RET)

The Emerald *Wadi*, running left to right above, is the dry creek bed separating eastern and western Karabilah. The 3d Bn, 6th Marines' Scout Sniper Plt, known as Reaper, was tasked with maintaining observation of its two bridges.

By Maj Clinton A. Culp, USMC (Ret)

Editor's note: The following article, written by the commander of Weapons Company, provides a firsthand account of 3d Battalion, Sixth Marine Regiment along the Emerald Wadi in Al Qa'im, Al Anbar province, Iraq, in October 2005.

The 3d Battalion, Sixth Marine Regiment deployed to the Al Qa'im region of Iraq in late August 2005. When 3/6 assumed control of the battlespace from 3/2 late in the summer of 2005, the entire region was strongly influenced by insurgents and foreign fighters.

Operation Iron Fist began on Oct. 1, 2005, in the towns of Sadah and eastern Karabilah in the Al Qa'im region of Al Anbar province. Task Force 3/6 was given the arduous mission of clearing insurgents and disrupting the lines of communication along the Euphrates River Valley from Syria. The intent was to establish battle positions (BPs), maintain a presence in the towns and create relationships with the locals. The mission was accomplished, and both towns were cleared as the battal-

ion began to conduct patrols and build a rapport with the local population.

After the success of Operation Iron Fist, elements of Weapons Company, 3/6 oriented to the west along the dried creek bed known as the Emerald *Wadi* in order to disrupt and interdict insurgents attempting to move

One of the Tiger teams engaged with and killed three men who were preparing to launch RPGs from a house across the *wadi*. Two main gun rounds ensured no fire was received from that house again.

to the east. According to Captain Brendan Heatherman, the commanding officer of Co K, 3/6, the positions along the *wadi* led the insurgency to believe that a push into Karabilah and Husaybah from the east was imminent. This mistaken belief would be especially beneficial in later

months during Operation Steel Curtain when 3/6 came from the opposite direction.

Lieutenant Colonel Julian D. Alford, CO, 3d Bn, 6th Marines, assigned Weapons Co's First Mobile Assault Platoon (MAP 1), led by First Lieutenant Jeremy Wilkinson, and its Scout Sniper Plt (Reaper), led by GySgt Donald Rieg, with the mission of maintaining continuous observation of the two bridges (one north and one south) over the Emerald *Wadi* separating western and eastern Karabilah. Gunny Rieg had recently taken command of the platoon when 1stLt Tom Wilberg was wounded after his up-armored HMMWV (high-mobility, multipurpose, wheeled vehicle) struck an improvised explosive device (IED) a few days earlier.

Gunny Rieg, along with two four-man sniper teams (Sergeant Jeremy Riddle's and Lance Corporal George Hatchcock's teams), established a position in a building along the *wadi*. It was a typical large two-story concrete house with a walled roof that provided clear observation of both bridges and good fields of fire. The house, known as Reaper base, also had an unusually tall and thick concrete-walled yard where two or three gun trucks could be parked.

It did not take long for the enemy to take umbrage at Reaper's presence, and they launched a volley of rockets, mortars, small-arms and machine-gun fire at Reaper's position. During the fight, one Marine finished staging ammunition and equipment in a ground floor room when a C5 rocket exploded in the house, narrowly missing both the Marine and the ammunition. Reaper exchanged fire across the *wadi* for at least two hours until shortly after nightfall.

It was an indication of what was to come for the next 21 days.

On the morning of Oct. 7, other Reaper teams and two tanks (Tiger teams 3 and 4) arrived, and improvements for the defense of the house began immediately. The plan was for Tigers 3 and 4 to rotate with Tigers 1 and 2 every few days. Loopholes were created, and sandbags were trucked in to reinforce the walls and sniper hides. During the day, the enemy launched more than a half-dozen rockets and rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) at the house

and tanks—with little effectiveness. The tanks returned fire with main gun rounds at the enemy firing positions, silencing the rocket and RPG fire. Sporadic and inaccurate small-arms fire was received throughout the day, which proved to be more annoying than effective. The pattern continued for the next two days.

On Oct. 10, a squad of “Kilo” Co Marines arrived from BP Chosin to help with security as sniper teams were pulled from Reaper base to conduct other missions. Capt Heatherman, the Co K commander, said, “We didn’t feel our mission was to go out and find firefights because they would find us.” His words were proven true that day as the squad from Kilo Co was welcomed by the enemy opening up with RPGs and small-arms fire.

Reaper teams led by Sgt Riddle and Sgt Thomas Smith departed Reaper base early the next morning across Route Diamond to set up an ambush on an enemy firing position. At 0700, two men were spotted with rockets moving to another firing position. Shortly afterward, rockets were fired at Reaper base, causing no damage. Knowing the probable egress route the men would take, the Reaper teams prepared for their return. The two men, carrying their rocket launchers, soon returned the same way they had come; they would not fire at Reaper base, or anyone else for that matter, again.

Later that day, one of the Tiger teams engaged with and killed three men who were preparing to launch RPGs from a house across the *wadi*. Two main gun rounds ensured no fire was received from

that house again. Later that night, mortar rounds landed just outside the house walls. Reaper remained on alert throughout the night, expecting a night attack that did not materialize.

The morning of Oct. 12 dawned with sporadic rifle fire on Reaper base, but the origin of the shots could not be determined. Two hours later, Sgt Smith was in the firing position on the north side of the house when he spotted two insurgents shooting at the base. He took

two shots with his heavy barrel M16, putting one man down immediately and hitting the other. The second insurgent managed to find cover before he was killed. It had become clear that as long as Reaper base was occupied, the insurgents would try to force out the Marines.

LtCol Alford sent one of the battalion’s forward air controllers, Capt Ryan Pope, call sign “Zero,” and his radio-telegraph operator, Corporal Kevin Williams, to assist in the fight. They went right to work



SGT JERAD W. ALEXANDER, USMC

Above: The helmet of LCpl Bradley A. Snipes, Wpns Co, 3/6, shows evidence of the intensity of the fighting during the Battle of the Emerald Wadi.

Below: The leadership of 3/6: Capt Clinton Culp (CO, Wpns Co); Capt Conlon Carabine (CO, Co I); Capt Justin Ansel (CO, H&S Co); Maj Chris O'Connor (S-3); LtCol Julian “Dale” Alford (Bn CO); Maj Toby Patterson (Bn XO); Capt Rich Pitchford (CO, Co L); Capt Brendan Heatherman (CO, Co K); Capt Mike Haley (CO, Co B, 3d AA Bn); and Capt Robb Sucher (CO, Wpns Co, 1st LAR).



COURTESY OF BGEN JULIAN D. ALFORD, USMC



COURTESY OF MAJ CLINTON A. CULP, USMC (RET)

GySgt Donald Rieg sends a sitrep from the rooftop of the Reaper base.

as, yet again, machine-gun and mortar fire was inbound. With marking assistance from the tanks, Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron (HMLA) 369, the “Gunfighters,” made several gun runs on the insurgent firing position and forward observer.

At the same time, Kilo Co was under mortar attack at BP Iwo Jima. Cpl Scott Royal’s Reaper team 2 and LCpl Hatchcock’s team 7 had moved to a building in eastern Karabilah to observe Main Supply Route (MSR) Diamond, west of BP Iwo, looking for the insurgent mortar crews. Within five minutes of the mortar fire

stopping, two men forced their way into the building where the Reaper teams were located but were shot by the security man on LCpl Hatchcock’s team as they entered the building. The insurgents started to fire on Reaper base early on the morning of Oct. 13 and continued to do so with small arms until midday when machine guns began from multiple positions.

Kilo Co’s 3d Plt had a BP to the south, and it began to receive fire as well. The accuracy of the insurgents’ rounds seemed to improve dramatically. Reaper identified one building across the *wadi* from which

Two men forced their way into the building where the Reaper teams were located but were shot by the security man on LCpl Hatchcock’s team.

insurgents were firing; Zero had the Gunfighters engage with hellfire missiles, and the fire from the enemy decreased significantly.

Cpl Eliel Quinones, or “Q” as his fellow Marines called him, was in the “crow’s nest” on the roof of Reaper base when he took a single round to the head. The round cracked his skull, removing his hair and portions of his scalp, yet somehow he remained conscious. As he was pulled out of the firing position and moved into the house, he managed to identify the building from which the insurgent shot him. A medevac was called for, but Army helicopters were out too far to assist.

Zero and Cpl Williams worked diligently to get a UH-1N Huey on station from the Gunfighters to conduct the medevac, and with two tank teams and a light armored reconnaissance (LAR) platoon providing covering fire, the Huey was able to conduct the medevac. In an incredible feat of flying prowess, the helicopter put down in the tiny landing zone, with less than 6 feet from the rotors to light poles. It took less than eight minutes from the



COURTESY OF MAJ CLINTON A. CULP, USMC (RET)

The Scout Sniper Plt of 3/6. The platoon played a critical role in enabling 3/6 to consolidate combat power before launching Operation Steel Curtain.

time Cpl Quinones was hit until the time he was placed in the Huey. He was awarded a Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal with combat "V" for his efforts in identifying the source of fire despite his wounds.

As the insurgents' accuracy increased, Reaper Marines took more and more care with their movements, even ducking behind curtained windows. A C5 rocket sailed just over the Reaper base and hit the house to the south. It missed the Reaper base by only a foot or so.

On Oct. 14, Zero vectored in Scan Eagle to take a look at the buildings and road just to the west side of the buildings that were directly adjacent to the *wadi*. As the afternoon began, enemy machine-gun and small-arms fire began anew. Scan Eagle located the source of fire, and a GBU-12 bomb was dropped on the position. Shortly afterward, the tank platoon commander was struck by small arms while moving down MSR Diamond. The tanks returned fire as the tank moved back to a covered position for the medevac. As the sun went down, so did the incoming fire.

The morning of the 15th brought more of the same, including more accurate small-arms fire from one or two shooters. The tank teams needed to pull back to the railroad station at Al Qa'im (3/6's main base) for some maintenance, so the LAR Plt took up positions to Reaper's immediate flanks. No sooner had it pulled into position than it began to receive RPG fire. The platoon returned fire while Zero dropped another GBU-12 on the insurgents' position. Insurgent fire died off for the rest of the day.

Before sunup on Oct. 16, Cpl Royal's and Sgt Erik Rue's Reaper teams moved to a hide position that would cover the flank of the LAR Plt. At 0815, the teams spotted two insurgents moving along MSR Bronze with RPGs and AK47s in order to get a firing position on the light armored vehicles (LAVs) and tanks. The enemy was dispatched, but the teams began to take fire from other insurgents.

As the LAR Plt moved to extract the teams, more insurgents were spotted moving to get a line of fire on the LAVs. Meanwhile, Zero brought in rotary-wing close air support (CAS), and it seemed the perfect time to try the MK19, which had recently been installed on the roof of Reaper base after one of the snipers had remarked, "If 240s are good, MK19s are better!"

The tall mount was then taken off a cargo HMMWV and sandbagged on the roof and a tarp placed over it for concealment. The MK19 thumped away as the Gunfighters made a few runs in support of the extraction. The engagement escalated as more insurgents moved to



Above: Marines from the Scout Sniper Plt on the roof of Reaper base in October 2005. (Photo courtesy of Maj Clinton A. Culp, USMC (Ret))

Below: Brass litters the rooftop of Reaper base after one of many firefights during October 2005.



COURTESY OF MAJ CLINTON A. CULP, USMC (RET)

isolate the Reaper teams; even 3d Plt, Kilo Co got into the mix as the fire and movement spilled over into its sector. LAR Plt and the Reaper teams were able to return to the Reaper base around 1230. Every vehicle had taken multiple small-arms and machine-gun hits. Each also had at least one flat tire and several near misses of RPGs. At least 18 insurgents had been killed with no Marine casualties.

The next few days were relatively quiet, and on the 19th, Air/Naval Gunfire Liaison Co's (ANGLICO's) Wild Eagle 3-1 arrived on deck to assist Zero with the CAS fight. One of the Reaper teams spotted several insurgents setting up a mortar on a rooftop. After waiting until the insurgent mor-

tar team was ready to fire, Reaper opened up with the MK19. It took a few rounds to get on target, but all five insurgents and their weapon system were eliminated. The battalion took a hard hit that same day when a suicide vehicle was driven into a squad of Marines from Co K just north of BP Iwo Jima. LCpl Norman Anderson III was killed and every other squad member wounded. The next day brought another near miss from a C5 rocket, which impacted the house to the south again.

On the morning of Oct. 22, a large dust cloud formed in front of one of the tanks after an RPG impacted less than one meter in front of it. The tanks returned fire with .50-caliber rounds and a main gun round.

“Those boys had a hell of a fight for those three weeks, and it allowed us to move behind the enemy and attack them in the rear. Classic operational flanking movement.”

—BGen Julian D. Alford

About an hour later, Reaper teams spotted two insurgents with AKs and RPGs trying to sneak across MSR Diamond; the teams dispatched them. Only light fire was received throughout the rest of the day and for the next few days.

After a relatively quiet few days, six insurgents were spotted on MSR Diamond on Oct. 25; one was shot before the LAVs maneuvered on the insurgents’ anticipated route and caught them in the open. Mortar fire was called in to close off the insurgents’ egress. At the same time, Reaper base was receiving small arms and machine-gun fire. Tanks returned fire with the help of a Hellfire missile from one of the Gunfighters’ Hueys.

The highlight of the day occurred shortly after the engagement ended as LtCol Alford re-enlisted Sgt Riddle on the roof of Reaper base.

The morning of the 26th started at 0625 as more than 20 insurgents with AKs and RPGs were spotted moving on the west side of the Emerald Wadi. Reaper base, tanks and LAR were put on “stand-to,” and air was requested. Reports were received of several of the insurgents placing IEDs along the roads on the west side of the bridges that crossed the wadi. Both 3d Plt, Kilo Co and MAP 1 were put on notice as well. Before the air arrived on station, the tanks and LAR Plt maneuvered into position and mortars were called in as Reaper, tanks and LAR engaged. Several of the insurgents fell in the initial volley, and the rest fled into the surrounding buildings. The insurgents tried to consolidate their position and returned AK, RPK (Soviet light machine gun) and RPG fire to no avail as rotary-wing and fixed-wing CAS arrived on station.

Capt Phil Lang and his LAR Co arrived at the same time for a battle handover. The 27th saw light small-arms fire which Lang’s company easily returned. On the morning of the 28th, 1stLt Durand Tanner’s MAP 2 arrived to extract Reaper. The LAR Co provided cover for Reaper as they withdrew to Al Qa’im to rest and refit for the next mission: Operation Steel Curtain.

The Scout Sniper Plt, with the help of



A Marine sniper from 3/6 takes a well-earned break.



From left: Sgt Thomas Smith, Reaper team 5 leader; Cpl John Stalvey; and Cpl James Guffey, Reaper team 1, before the Battle of the Emerald Wadi. Cpl Stalvey, one of the battalion’s snipers, was killed by an IED, Oct. 3, 2005.

MAP 1, 3d Plt, Kilo Co, tanks, LAR, and CAS had kept the insurgents looking in the wrong direction for 22 days. Brigadier General Alford, now the assistant division commander, Second Marine Division, reflects proudly, “Those boys had a hell of a fight for those three weeks, and it allowed us to move behind the enemy and attack them in the rear. Classic operational flanking movement.” The Battle of the Emerald Wadi was a critical element in 3/6’s ability to consolidate combat power in Al Qa’im before the launch of Operation Steel Curtain.

Author’s bio: A prior enlisted Marine, Maj Clinton A. Culp was commissioned in 1997 and served as an advisor to the Afghan Commando Battalion during Operation Enduring Freedom and as the CO of Weapons Co, 3d Bn, 6th Marines during Operation Iraqi Freedom. He retired in 2009 after serving as the Marine Officer Instructor at the University of Idaho and Washington State University and is currently an assistant professor of outdoor adventure leadership at Montana State University Billings.





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From Parris Island to Shanghai

China Marine Celebrates 100th Birthday, Reminisces About Service to Nation

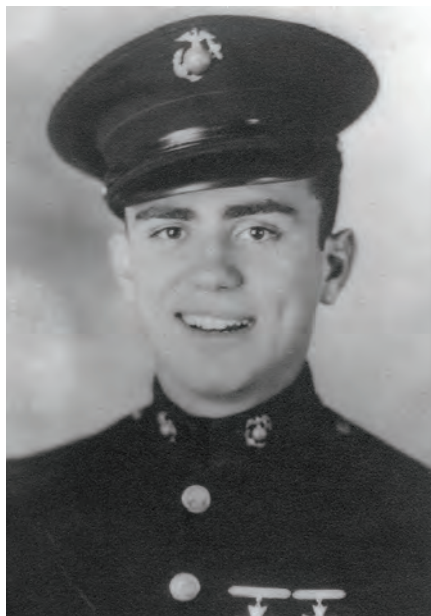
By Sara W. Bock

Marine veteran Clifton P. Fox received an unexpected delivery on Dec. 18, 2014, at his home in Gainesville, Fla. It was a letter from the 36th Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Joseph F. Dunford Jr., wishing him a happy 100th birthday and thanking him for his distinguished service as a Marine.

"It's more than I deserve," said Fox of the Commandant's letter. Fox's life story, however, says otherwise, and the 50 family members and friends who attended his birthday celebration would agree. They filled the home of his daughter, Barbara Camp, to celebrate Fox's remarkable 100-year milestone.

He lives alone, regularly mows his 5-acre lawn, drives his car and motorcycle around town, and has an exceptional ability to recall details from his earlier years.

In January 2008, Rear Admiral Oakley E. Osborn, USN (Ret) interviewed Fox about his early life and his service in the Marine Corps. RDML Osborn learned about Fox through the National Museum of the Pacific War in Fredericksburg, Texas.



PFC Clifton P. Fox

COURTESY OF CLIFTON P. FOX

The museum, in an effort to gather oral histories from veterans of World War II and earlier eras, was working to connect interested veterans with volunteers who were willing to interview them and document their experiences.

Fox, who served in the Marine Corps

from 1934 to 1938, has been verified by the China Marine Association to be the oldest living "China Marine" from the 1930s. Born on Dec. 18, 1914, in Pennsauken Township, N.J., he grew up during difficult economic times and learned the importance of hard work as he helped his single mother make ends meet. Prior to enlisting in the Marine Corps at 20 years of age, he already had held numerous jobs.

At the age of 14, he changed the year on his birth certificate by two years so that he could obtain a driver's license and get a job at an Acme grocery store.

"I had so many little jobs, I can't ... remember them all," Fox told RDML Osborn. He worked for a gas station and garage, helped dig ship channels in a river, worked on a steam dredge and hauled automobiles from Detroit to Pittsburgh by truck. When he finished high school, he took two semesters of mechanical drawing and metallurgy in college and worked as a welder. Around that time, he decided he was ready to see more of the world.

Fox recalled that he always loved history and geography, and for as long as he could remember, he had wanted to go to China. In 1934 he decided that the only way he could get there would be to join the Ma-



COURTESY OF CLIFTON P. FOX



COURTESY OF CLIFTON P. FOX

Above left: Clifton Fox, right, and his brother, Theodore Fox, reunite in 1938 on an Army transport at the Panama Canal. Theodore, a sailor, was stationed at the Panama Canal, and Clifton was on his way back to the United States from Shanghai.

Above right: 4thMarDiv leathernecks gather for a team football photo in Shanghai, China, 1936. Fox is in the first row, seated, far left.



Left: Five generations of Fox's family helped him celebrate his 100th birthday in December 2014. **Clockwise from bottom left** are Fox; his daughter, Barbara Camp; his grandson, Brian Camp; his great-grandson, Matthew Camp; and his great, great-granddaughter, Emma Camp.

Below: A cake at Fox's party was decorated with the words "Semper Fi, Cliff, U.S. China Marine."



rine Corps. He went to Philadelphia to enlist and soon found himself at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C.

His dreams were put on hold at the end of boot camp when he was informed that he wasn't going to China—rather, he was staying at Parris Island. His first task: Get a decades-old steam shovel into working condition.

"By the second day I had the thing running. It was an antique!" Fox recalled. After his success with the steam shovel, he was asked to get an old tractor working, and he accomplished that as well. He remembers being the only one at Parris Island who was allowed to eat in the mess hall while wearing dungarees.

After about a year at Parris Island, Fox had an encounter that would change the course of his next few years. He was supervising a group of recruits as they were cutting the grass outside the quarters of then-Brigadier General Randolph C. Berkeley, Commanding General, MCRD Parris Island. BGen Berkeley came outside and struck up a conversation with Fox. The general asked him how he liked the Marine Corps, and Fox replied that he always had wanted to go to China, and that was why he had enlisted. After a little more conversation, the general went into his quarters and came out with a letter that read: "To Whom It May Concern, Private Clifton P. Fox is transferred to Shanghai, China, on the next available transportation."

It was very rare at that time that a Ma-

rine would go to Shanghai during his first enlistment, Fox said. He boarded the troop transport ship *USS Chaumont* (AP-5) at Norfolk, Va., and spent 92 days on board en route to China. Being a China Marine was the best duty in the world for leathernecks at that time, he said.

When he arrived in Shanghai, he was assigned to Company D, 2d Battalion, Fourth Marine Division. He won a shooting competition shortly after he arrived and was assigned a job in the storeroom, which meant he would live in his own room above it. The cost of living was so low that Fox, like most other China Marines, had a Chinese servant, a "room boy," who waited on him. His monthly pay as a private was \$18.20, but he remembers receiving sergeant's pay, \$52 a month, for running the storeroom—extra pay was another reason why duty in China was so coveted.

Once a month, his battalion, while wearing dress blues, had to march to the racecourse in downtown Shanghai. The China Marines also played football and enjoyed the local culture. Their principal duty was to protect U.S. interests in China, including the American Consulate.

In 1937, after Fox had been in Shanghai for about a year, tensions between China and Japan intensified when the Chinese tried to drive the Japanese out of Shanghai and the Japanese resisted. Fighting broke out, and Fox recalls helping secure the perimeter of the city.

Not long afterward, in 1938, Fox re-

turned to the United States via Army transport. His younger brother, Theodore, was in the Navy and was at the Panama Canal. When Fox's ship came through the canal, the brothers reunited when Theodore boarded the ship and rode through the canal with Fox.

After deciding not to re-enlist, Fox was discharged from the Marine Corps when he returned stateside from China. On Dec. 8, 1941, the day after Pearl Harbor was attacked, he requested to re-enlist but was turned down because he had gotten married, and the Marine Corps was not accepting married men at that time. A little later, he was contacted by the Navy because of his experience as a welder. They wanted Fox to go to Argentina, Newfound-land, to start a welding shop with Seabees. With 48 hours' notice, he left for Argentina and spent two years there during WW II patching torpedo holes in ships.

Between service to his country, a successful career with a major oil company, a beloved wife, two children, as well as many grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great, great-grandchildren, Fox's life has been full.

"I've enjoyed my hundred years of being alive, really," he said. And while he believes the Corps he served in is vastly different from today's Corps, he said that it's still the finest fighting force in the world. His advice to today's Marines is to exercise discipline.

"I was happy to help my country," Fox said, and his hope is that Marines today share the same sentiment.





A Marine with "Lima" Company, 3d Battalion, Fourth Marine Regiment carries care packages back to his living area at Combat Outpost Now Zad, Afghanistan, Dec. 25, 2009.

SSGT LUIS AGOSTINI, USMC

From Mailroom to Battlefield, **POSTAL WARRIORS** Get the Mail Delivered

By CWO-4 Randy Gaddo, USMC (Ret)

During the summer of 1983, a daughter received frequent letters from her father, a Marine captain serving in Beirut. At the time, she wasn't aware of the letters; she was an infant, his first and only child.

The captain had been sending letters home regularly to his infant daughter since he'd deployed to the war-torn country a few months earlier, a sort of diary explaining why he wasn't with her and why it was important for him to be where he was. His wife dutifully read the letters to their daughter.

Sadly, those letters would be the only communication that she'd ever have from her father; the captain was among 241 military personnel killed by the terrorist bombing of their barracks on Oct. 23, 1983. That baby girl, now a woman in her 30s, still cherishes those letters that her mother would read to her as she grew up.

Mail call has been a lifeline between families and deployed troops for generations; that heritage lives on today in "postal warriors," Marines with the postal military occupational specialty (MOS).

"The Marine Corps is the only U.S. military service that has a postal occupational specialty and 'grows its own' postal warriors from entry-level enlisted Marines to postal officers," said Marine Chief Warrant Officer 4 Isaías Rodriguez, director of the Interservice Postal Training Activity (IPTA) at Fort Jackson in Columbia, S.C.

Below left: Sgt Shawn Bear, the operations noncommissioned officer in charge for Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., sorts mail at the station post office on Dec. 20, 2011.

Below right: Sgt Stephanie A. Bowens, right, hands a package to a Marine at the base post office at Marine Corps Logistics Base Albany, Ga., May 13, 2013.



LCPL REBECCA ELLER, USMC



VERDAL L. PARKER

Enlisted Marines assigned to the postal field start training at the Fort Jackson center and advance through the ranks with periodic follow-on advanced training. The Corps' postal officers are warrant officers who have previously served as enlisted postal Marines.

By contrast, the Army postal soldiers are part of its human resources department; the Air Force recently merged its postal airmen with information management administration; and the Navy postal sailors are part of the logistics field and train separately as part of their logistics course.

According to Rodriguez, the Marine Corps finds it more efficient to sustain a trained and experienced force of postal specialists. He observed that the other services, who rely on multi-duty military or outsourced-civilian postal staff, find it difficult to deploy experienced staff in time of war. He noted, "When the balloon goes up, it can be difficult finding qualified 'greensuiters,' " without a full-time, trained and deployable force.

Marine-centric training is pivotal to the instructional philosophy for Marine students arriving at the school.

Most students arrive directly from boot camp and Marine Combat Training (MCT) and go into a Marine Awaiting Training (MAT) status for a few days to a few weeks as they await one of the 40 to 50 annual classes to open. During that waiting time, the Marine staff does not allow students too much free time.

"We maintain positive control of students," Rodriguez told Colonel David E. Jones during a briefing last August. A month earlier, Col Jones had taken over as commanding officer of Marine Corps Combat Service Support Schools at Camp Johnson in Jacksonville, N.C. As such, Col Jones has administrative control over the Marines at the postal training center. The long-distance leadership role prompted the familiarization visit.

"As soon as the students arrive here, I bring them in and talk to them about what to do, what not to do and what's off limits," Rodriguez told Jones. At the top of the list, he asserted, is no alcohol and no driving. Students are not allowed to have vehicles, and to accept a ride in any vehicle, even with a family member, they must receive authorization from instructors; and it is not a given that they will receive permission. "We validate every request,



SSGT CHRISTOPHER FLURRY, USMC

SSgt Michael Evans, a crew chief with Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 369, checks care packages on board a UH-1Y Super Huey at Camp Bastion, Afghanistan, Dec. 25, 2011.

and if it is approved, there is a positive handoff from an instructor to the person providing the transportation, coming and going,” Rodriguez emphasized.

Given that students can be in a MAT status for up to 30 days, Rodriguez and his team simply are ensuring they stay on the straight and narrow. In the joint environment where new Marines are exposed to different standards of other services, they may need reminding of who they are.

“We’re trying to sustain that transformation from boot camp to MCT,” Rodriguez said, adding that without proper guidance, newly minted Marines with too much time on their hands inadvertently could find themselves in hot water. All students, whether in MAT status or already in class, are counseled by the senior enlisted Marines on staff. They are issued a “smart pack” with basic contact and cautionary material, and they are assigned a “liberty buddy” to ensure that no Marine walks alone. They attend classes in sexual assault prevention, suicide prevention, administrative training and more.

“We do a PFT [physical fitness test] within the first week to evaluate where they might need help, and we PT [physically train] five times a week,” stressed Rodriguez. Daily room and uniform inspections, reading requirements that are fulfilled at the unit library filled with books from the Marine Corps Association Commanders’ Unit Library Program, and a required book report before they leave also help keep them focused.

But it’s not all work and no play. At least once a month the students are treated to a group activity funded by the Army’s MWR (Morale, Welfare and Recreation) program, according to Rodriguez’s deputy director, Michael Gasque, a retired Air Force postal expert with nearly 30 years of military postal experience.

Rodriguez directs three Marine instructors, four Army soldiers, two Air Force airmen, two Army civilians and one contractor as the instructor and leadership team. Collectively, the 12-person joint-service and civilian staff at the training center have nearly 200 years of experience, so when students leave the school, they are ready to hit the ground running.

Military personnel from all branches along with Department of Defense (DOD) civilians are trained in basic and supervisory postal skills involved in operating a military postal facility. The school trains more than 800 students annually during about 50 class sessions in a five-week entry-level class and an 18-day advanced course. Marine students average about 80 per class, with the vast majority of their classmates coming from the Army.



CPL DAVID BESSEY, USMC

SSgt Jamison Randolph, the senior drill instructor of Platoon 2080, Co F, 2d Recruit Training Battalion, MCRD Parris Island, distributes mail to his recruits at the end of the training day, Aug. 11, 2014.

The heritage of the IPTA dates to 1980 when the DOD designated the Army as the single manager for the Military Postal Service (MPS). The Army established the Military Postal Service Agency (MPSA) as a field operating agency with a brigadier general as executive director and a joint staff.

The MPS is an extension of the United States Postal Service (USPS) and generally operates where that agency doesn’t. IPTA was established in 1982 at Fort Benjamin Harrison, Ind., and moved in 1995 to Fort Jackson.

The heritage of postal work done today by Marines and other military personnel dates back more than 70 years to June 1942.

That is when Victory Mail (V-Mail) was launched. V-Mail was an expedited mail service for American forces overseas. It was needed due to the huge volume of wartime mail that suddenly overwhelmed the Post Office and War and Navy de-

partments, according to the Smithsonian Institution’s National Postal Museum.

Before that time, mail was very expensive and normally only for business purposes, according to Lynn Heidelbaugh, a curator with the museum. “Mail was really expensive during the Revolutionary War,” she explained in an online *Smithsonian* magazine article. As prices came down, mail became the only method of communicating over a distance, she noted. The Spanish-American War (1898) and World War I challenged the U.S. Postal Service even more.

A 1942 annual report to the Postmaster General cited on the National Postal Museum’s website emphasized the importance of mail to the war effort. It noted, “The Post Office, War, and Navy Departments realize fully that frequent and rapid communication with parents, associates, and other loved ones strengthens fortitude, enlivens patriotism, makes loneliness endurable, and inspires to even greater

Marines with Police Advisory Team, 2d Bn, 5th Marines at Combat Outpost Now Zad, Afghanistan, receive care packages from elementary school students on May 27, 2014. (Photo by Cpl Isaac Lamberth, USMC)

devotion the men and women who are carrying on our fight far from home and friends. We know that the good effect of expeditious mail service on those of us at home is immeasurable.”

The IPTA staff strives to carry that heritage forward to future generations.

“The school prepared me for everything I’ve experienced so far,” said Corporal Christiana Howard, postal clerk at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C., who joined the Corps in 2012 to be in legal admin, but was assigned the postal MOS due to the needs of the Corps. She is not disappointed.

“I am actually happy at the post office,” said the Mount Pocono, Pa., native, who works at the depot post office alongside other military and civilian staff, including one USPS employee. Howard completed the five-week postal course in August 2012 and noted that everything in the real post office is very similar to what she saw in school.

A fairly new addition at the school is the mock post office. Rodriguez explained that the USPS provides the most updated postal equipment for a training room that gives students a realistic view of what they’ll be seeing when they are assigned to posts and stations throughout the Corps. Currently used for familiarization only, Rodriguez said a graded exam is in the works. Senior Marines going through the supervisors’ course will learn how to conduct an inspection using the mock post office.

“The inspection is very good, a very effective learning tool,” Gasque said, offering more insight on how new supervisors are trained and evaluated. “We can actually teach supervisors all that they need in the mock post office, and then they perform an out-brief to the warrant officer and me, just as they would to a base commander.”

The staff noncommissioned officers need that level of training because they might be the head honcho, as Staff Sergeant Marcus D. Kibble finds himself at Parris Island as the depot postal chief and senior postal Marine on base. Kibble went through the basic postal course shortly after joining the Corps in 2003 and is slated for the supervisors’ course in June. He has done his time out in the field, including a combat deployment during Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan.



SSgt Marcus Kibble, the depot postal chief, organizes hundreds of recruit letters into their respective battalions at Parris Island, Aug. 11, 2012.

Technology has changed dramatically, even since Kibble joined the Corps. He noted that there are vast differences in how mail is tracked, with the ability to scan every parcel and know exactly where it’s been and where it’s going. “Technology is always improving,” he said. “We handle each piece of mail far less than we used to, but at some point we have to hand sort it and get it into the right box.”

Technology such as e-mail, Facebook, text messages and other digital communications has impacted “snail mail” somewhat, but mail call is as important as ever.

“I think electronic mail has probably reduced overall volume of mail, but it will never replace it because it’s very emotional when you receive a handwritten letter from your mom or a friend,” said Cpl Howard. “I think people put more into it when they write. I write my mom letters because it makes me feel like I took the time to write her a full letter rather than a quick text.”

During Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm in the early 1990s, an estimated 81 tons of mail was delivered per day to deployed troops. The “Any Service Member” mail program started, enabling civilians to send U.S. servicemember letters and care packages. School classes adopted units and sent cards and letters. There was enormous support for troops, and it was reflected in the volume of mail.

Predating Howard’s comments, but echoing their sentiment was a comment attributed to retired Marine General Walter E. “Walt” Boomer, who was the commanding general of Marine Forces, Central Command and I Marine Expeditionary Force during Desert Shield and Desert Storm. His comment validated the heritage of mail call in terms that all Marines and their families can appreciate when he said, “A soldier’s best friend, next to his rifle, is the postman.”

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



Sea Stories

Compiled by Sara W. Bock

SEA STORY OF THE MONTH

The Roll Call

In 1962 I was a corporal in the process of changing my military occupational specialty and was transiting through Naval Air Station Memphis, Tenn., en route to a school. I was given the assignment of holding morning roll call for the Marines freshly out of boot camp who were being tested and subsequently assigned to various schools. I was calling names in front of a large formation when I suddenly (and very loudly) sneezed.

Almost immediately, a private in the back ranks shouted, "Here, Corporal!" Taking that as an intentional

with a private who had been in the Corps for more than 18 years and who had made it to the grade of gunnery sergeant twice. He was a Korean War veteran who had earned numerous ribbons and medals for heroism and valor, including three Purple Hearts with his "doing it his way" attitude.

When the inspecting colonel approached the private, our recently promoted major informed the colonel that the private was not wearing all of the ribbons that he was entitled to. The colonel asked the private why he wasn't displaying all of his ribbons. Without a hesitation, the private said, "Sir, I did not want to

paymaster in two wars to get a Purple Heart.

Col John M. Priestley, USMCR (Ret)
Burton, Mich.

"Put Some Windage on It"

I was a drill instructor at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C., from 1959 to 1962. As the series gunnery sergeant, I was on an inspection with the series officer. The officer asked a recruit about the rear sight on his rifle: "Where is the windage knob?" The recruit showed him. Then the series officer told the recruit to put some windage on it. The recruit blew his breath on it.

1stSgt Harry O. Blake Jr., USMC (Ret)
Plainfield, Ind.

The Padre's Miracle

I wasn't feeling all that bad, considering where I was and why I was there. Of course I was hungry; the IV in my arm didn't help much. Neither did the post-op throbbing. Still, it had been three days since the chopper pulled me out of Khe Sanh and two since I came out of surgery. I was feeling a bit lonely, as there was no one close to me that night in the Da Nang military hospital, so I was glad to see a chaplain approaching. His eyes swept my blanket-clad body from my pained smile to where the blanket dropped flat just below my knees and he sat down.

"How are you feeling, son?"
What does a "hard-core" 21-year-old Marine say? "Fine, Padre. I'll be back in the field with my outfit in two weeks!"

He passed over that bit of bravado to ask what unit I was with.

"I'm a Marine. I'm with Headquarters, 26th Marines, up at Khe Sanh." There followed the usual chitchat: my name, where I was from, family and so on. We were

discussing my younger brothers when, growing restless, I stretched out my legs from the lotus position I sometimes rest in.

The chaplain's face lit up. "Thank God!" he cried, clasping his hands together and casting his eyes toward heaven. "I thought you'd lost both legs!"

"Come on, Padre. How could I go to the field without my legs? I'm in here because they took my appendix out."

The sequel came several years later. I was safely home and a bachelor state senator, out with a young woman I'd been dating. In a cuddly mood, she was gently rubbing my stomach. Suddenly, she stopped.

"You've got a welt," she said.

"Scar," I responded, trying to sound like James Cagney.

"My God, where'd you get that?"

"Vietnam."

"What the hell happened?"

"Took my appendix out."

She beat me severely about the head and shoulders.

I should have said, "I don't want to talk about it!"

Former SSgt Robert A. Hall
Madison, Wis.

I ordered the private to the front of the formation, whereupon he was given a really good NCO tongue-lashing.

affront to me, I ordered the private to the front of the formation, whereupon he was given a really good NCO [noncommissioned officer] tongue-lashing. Finishing my diatribe, I asked for his name. Obviously shaken, he responded with, "Corporal, the private's name is ZETSCHKE." I could not help but laugh out loud. Coincidentally, we ended up at the same school and then spent two years together at the same duty station.

Larry D. Richey
Prescott, Ariz.

embarrass the new major." The colonel, who also had been in Korea, almost lost his composure, then said, "Now I know why you are a private, Private."

Sgt Jim Biegger
USMC, 1964-67
Maxwell, Iowa

An Unlikely Purple Heart

Late in the Battle of Peleliu, a warrant officer acquaintance came to see me. He said he had just been visiting Captain "C" in the hospital. Capt "C" had been out washing up before breakfast when a remaining Japanese defender who was still fighting from the Umurbrogol Pocket fired a round into the island command area, striking the captain in the buttocks. He said Capt "C" was happy as a lark—he was the first

Looking Out for the Major

In the summer of 1965, Marine Corps Base Twenty-nine Palms, Calif., had an IG [Inspector General] inspection. I was in Support Battalion, along

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.rock@mca-marines.org. We offer \$25 or an MCA&F membership for the "sea story of the month." Spread the word!



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In the Highest Tradition

Edited by R.R. Keene

Sergeant Kills IED Expert, Risks All to Save Wounded Marine



Sergeant Andrew C. Seif, 27, of Holland, Mich., will be awarded the Silver Star during a ceremony this month at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C. He is a member of 2d Marine Special Operations Battalion, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command.

The award was signed by Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus on behalf of the President of the United States for service as set forth in the following citation:

“For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action against the enemy while serving with Marine Special Operations Company H, Special Operations Task Force-West, Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force-Afghanistan in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM.

“On 24 July 2012 Sergeant Seif was part of a small team conducting a cordon and search operation to remove a high value target, known to be western Afghanistan’s



Sgt Andrew C. Seif with his wife at the USO Gala in Washington, D.C., in October 2013 when Sgt Seif was named the USO Marine of the Year. This month he will be awarded the Silver Star for combat action in Afghanistan during his 2012 deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

improvised explosive device expert. As Sergeant Seif aggressively maneuvered to prevent the target’s escape, a fellow team member closer to the compound was struck by small arms rounds. Uncertain of the severity of his teammate’s wounds, Sergeant Seif quickly and courageously moved toward the compound to render immediate aid and secure the area.

“Refusing to wait for reinforcements, he tactically moved alone across exposed ground and entered the compound to identify the threat and violently finish the engagement. After clearing the entire compound alone, he moved back outside to assess and treat his teammate’s wounds. Under persistent enemy fire, Sergeant Seif moved his fellow Marine to a safer position and began to treat him while periodically returning fire.

“By his bold initiative, undaunted courage, and complete dedication to duty, Sergeant Seif reflected great credit upon himself and upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service.”

Personal Combat Awards

The awards records in the Marine Corps’ Award Processing System (APS) and Improved Awards Processing System were used to populate this list, which reflects personal combat awards from the start of the global war on terrorism presented to Marines and sailors serving with U.S. Marine Corps forces only. This list may not reflect certain personal combat awards processed outside of either system and/or approved by another branch of service. Any questions on the content should be submitted in writing to the Personal Awards Section at Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, Manpower Management Division, MMMA-2, 2008 Elliott Rd., Quantico, VA 22134.

The following awards were announced in December 2014:



Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal With Combat “V”

HM1 Phillip N. Alexanian, 2d Marine Special Operations Battalion (MSOB), U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command (MARSOC)
GySgt Roy Archer, 2d MSOB, MARSOC

SSgt Trevor P. Blaylock, 2d MSOB, MARSOC
Sgt Joshua D. Boarman, 2d MSOB, MARSOC
SSgt John M. Crawford, 2d MSOB, MARSOC
Sgt Brian T. Daniels, 2d MSOB, MARSOC
SSgt Joseph L. Donadio, 2d MSOB, MARSOC

GySgt Leon R. Elman, 2d MSOB, MARSOC
Sgt Zachary K. Kapinus, 1st Battalion, Second Marine Regiment, Second Marine Division
Sgt Jordan R. Malone, 1/2, 2dMarDiv
GySgt James W. Nowell Jr., 2d MSOB, MARSOC
Cpl Anthony M. Palumbo, 1st

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Combat Engineer Bn, 1stMarDiv
1stSgt Frank O. Robinson, 1/7,
1stMarDiv
SSgt Benjamin M. Rogers, 2d
MSOB, MARSOC
HM3 Timothy D. Severino, 2d
MSOB, MARSOC
Capt James R. Smith, I Marine
Expeditionary Force (Forward)
HM2 Kalebb S. Vanfossen, 2d
MSOB, MARSOC



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

1stLt Coleman G. Akin, 1st
CEB, 1stMarDiv
Cpl Justin C. Anderson, 1/7,
1stMarDiv
Cpl Kevin M. Belgrade, 1/7,
1stMarDiv
Sgt Justin R. Bonzato, 2d MSOB,
MARSOC
SSgt Joshua R. Brodrick, 1/7,
1stMarDiv
Cpl Cody G. Evans, 1/7, 1stMarDiv

SSgt Liam A. Flynn, 2d MSOB,
MARSOC
Sgt Jared F. Frederick, 2d MSOB,
MARSOC
GySgt Gerald D. Furnari, 1/7,
1stMarDiv
Cpl Eric Garcia, 1/7, 1stMarDiv
Sgt Robert A. Garcia, I MEF (Fwd)
1stLt Zachary D. Geelan, 1/7,
1stMarDiv
Cpl Philip M. Hales, 2d MSOB,
MARSOC
1stLt James D. Han, 1/7, 1stMarDiv
Sgt Nathan D. Harris, MARSOC
HN Travis J. Hippey, 1/2, 2dMarDiv
Sgt Ernest T. Jefferson, 1/2,
2dMarDiv
Sgt Kerry M. Kemp, 2d MSOB,
MARSOC
SSgt Brandon R. Langill, 2d MSOB,
MARSOC
HMC Jan H. Lemar, 2d MSOB,
MARSOC
Sgt Steven H. Lish, 1/7, 1stMarDiv
Sgt Brandon M. Marquez, 2d
MSOB, MARSOC

Sgt Darrell A. Martin, 2d MSOB,
MARSOC
Cpl Jake E. Meyer, 1/7, 1stMarDiv
Cpl James J. Mitchell, 1/2,
2dMarDiv
Sgt Christopher L. Modlin, 1/2,
2dMarDiv
HN Sear Munoz, 1/2, 2dMarDiv
Sgt Michael N. Nibler, 1/7,
1stMarDiv
Cpl Horacio Riveraolivera, MEF
Headquarters Group (Fwd)
Sgt Sloan L. Seiler, 1/7, 1stMarDiv
HM3 Patrick M. Shea, 2/9,
2dMarDiv
1stLt Alexander K. Sherrod, 1/7,
1stMarDiv
1stLt Matthew J. Stelmach, 1/7,
1stMarDiv
Sgt Charles M. Wikman, 1/7,
1stMarDiv
Sgt Michael L. Wood, 2d MSOB,
MARSOC
Sgt Joel A. Yoder, 1/7, 1stMarDiv



Passing the Word

Edited by Sara W. Bock

Gunny Starts Nonprofit, Named Washingtonian of the Year

For her impressive endeavors in partnering mentors with at-risk teens in the Washington, D.C., community, Gunnery Sergeant Tawanda “Tee” Hanible was named a 2014 Washingtonian of the Year by *Washingtonian* magazine at the Willard InterContinental Hotel, Washington, D.C., Jan. 15. Hanible’s work, both in and out of uniform, continues the legacy of heroes positively impacting their Corps and country.

Hanible serves as the administration chief with Company D, 4th Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, Fourth Marine Division at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va. In 2011, when she arrived at Quantico, she realized that there were servicemembers who had a desire to work with youth but didn’t know where to start. In response to that need, the Chicago native founded Operation Heroes Connect, a nonprofit organization that fosters mentorships between active-duty and veteran servicemembers and at-risk youth.

Through the program, Hanible and her volunteers spend off-duty time mentoring troubled teens in the Washington area.

Hanible was one of nine people to receive a Washingtonian of the Year Award during the ceremony. Since 1971, *Washingtonian* magazine has recognized individuals who volunteer or run nonprofit organizations. The award is given to those who demonstrate the utmost initiative and community spirit to better the city of Washington, according to Leslie Milk, the Lifestyle editor for *Washingtonian*.

“She has a wonderful story,” Milk said of Hanible. “She came from difficult [circumstances], and now she and her organization work to help young people who are in rough situations. She has a wonderful spirit,” she added.

Crediting her adoptive parents for instilling in her a desire to help children in difficult circumstances, Hanible said that they “would give even if they didn’t have anything to give.” They adopted four children, including Hanible and her biological brother, and were foster parents to more than 15 other children. Following her parents’ lead, Hanible felt it was her calling to help at-risk children



GySgt Tawanda “Tee” Hanible, left, founder of Operation Heroes Connect, and Catherine Merrill Williams, president and publisher of Washingtonian Media, display Hanible’s 2014 Washingtonian of the Year plaque following the awards ceremony in Washington, D.C., Jan. 15.

by providing support, resources and opportunities necessary to help them reach their full potential.

“By being in that position, I can kind of advise them without them taking it from me as they would from their parents, which makes it easier for them to be a little more open to hearing what I have to say,” Hanible said of the teens she mentors.

Operation Heroes Connect holds meet-and-greet-type events where all the volunteers and children meet for the first time. At the end of these events, the mentees select a mentor. Sixteen-year-old Deja J. Adams selected Hanible as her mentor.

“We met during a bad situation, but these last three years have been a blessing,” Adams said. “She has helped me a lot, and whenever I want to give up, she’s there motivating me to not quit and stay strong. She brings out that Marine attitude in me.”

Both the mentor and the mentee must have a mutual respect and appreciation for one another, said Hanible. Adams looks up to her mentor, who guides her toward achieving her goals and dreams.

“As I have received this award, I know I have had an impact in our community, but it still hasn’t hit me on the magnitude of this accomplishment,” Hanible said. “I

will feel a much greater sense of accomplishment when we are able to see our mentees one day become mentors, so that the cycle continues of people helping people.”

“That’s who she is—she’s your go-to woman,” said Adams of Hanible. “She’s the type of woman that if she isn’t busy more than 12 hours a day, then she’s not doing enough.”

For more information about Operation Heroes Connect, to make a donation or learn how to volunteer, visit www.operationheroesconnect.org.

Compiled from a report by Sgt Jose D. Lujano, USMC and the Operation Heroes Connect website

Seminar Prepares Marines For Future Success

The John A. Lejeune Education Center at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., began a new personal readiness seminar Jan. 7-8. The seminar is designed to help prepare Marines and sailors for the rest of their careers—in the service and beyond—through knowledge about the opportunities available to them.

The weekly seminar is part of Marine for Life, a program mandated by the Department of Defense with the goal of con-

necting Marines with opportunities for personal and professional development.

During the seminar, Marines and sailors learn about programs such as the Military Apprenticeship Program, which allows military personnel to complete apprenticeship requirements concurrent with their service on active duty. The seminar also offers information about continuing education and other benefits.

"The seminar has an interesting presentation and passionate instructors," said Lance Corporal James Jones, a signals intelligence operator analyst with 2d Radio Battalion. "I learned in-depth about the programs I am offered for education and career and who I can talk to for assistance. If someone hasn't taken the class, or doesn't have a career plan, [then he or she should] come to the class, and it will provide a lot of information."

During the seminar, the participants take tests before and after periods of instruction to gauge just how much they have learned. Not only do Marines and sailors learn about personal and professional development, but they also learn about how to manage their finances.

"As a retired [Marine] master sergeant, I enjoy the opportunity to continue mentoring Marines," said Deon Boyce, personal readiness seminar program manager. "Through the seminar, we show them how they can work to become more competitive for promotion, a viable asset to their unit, and overall make them a better person. Maximum participation from Marines will make for a better Marine Corps," he added.

The Marine for Life program provides assistance to Marines who are transitioning to civilian life, as well as those who already have left the Corps. It enables Marines remain a part of the Marine Corps family through networking and harnesses the skills, contacts and networks of veterans and others in the community to assist Marine veterans in the transition.



MARINES, CELEBRITIES CONNECT—Actor Kaley Cuoco-Sweeting enthusiastically receives a custom aviator jacket from Col John Farnam, center, Commanding Officer, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., on the flight line Jan. 10. She and other cast members from the movie "The Wedding Ringer" visited MCAS Miramar to sign autographs and tour the base. They also answered questions following a free screening of the movie.

Additional information about Marine for Life is available for Marines as well as prospective mentors and employers at www.marineforlife.org.

LCpl Mark Watola, USMC

Tax Law Change: TRICARE Patients Must Attest to Health Care Coverage

As tax season is underway, Department of Defense officials want to remind TRICARE beneficiaries of changes in tax laws, which require all Americans to have health care insurance.

For the first time since the Affordable Care Act passed in 2010, all U.S. citizens, including servicemembers, military retirees and their family members, must

report health care coverage on their 2014 taxes, said Mark Ellis, a Defense Health Agency health-care operations program analyst.

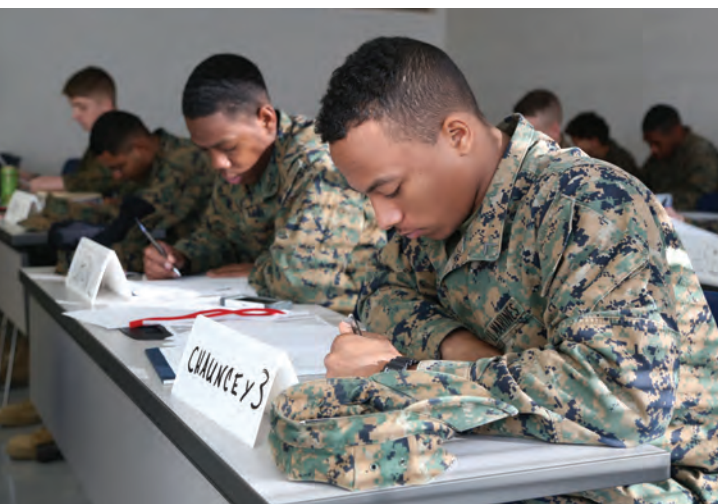
For this year only, taxpayers will "self-attest" on their 2014 tax forms to each month in which they had health care coverage, he said.

The Affordable Care Act mandates that health care must meet minimum essential coverage, and for the majority of military personnel and their families, TRICARE coverage meets the criteria, Ellis said.

Uniformed servicemembers who have questions about TRICARE, the Act and the individual coverage mandate can visit the TRICARE website, www.tricare.mil, and download the fact sheet on TRICARE and the Act, where TRICARE plans are listed with how they match up to minimum essential coverage.

The site also has suggestions for those who need additional coverage to meet the Act's minimum requirements. That group could include retired reservists, select reservists, young adults up to age 26 and those who leave military service but need transitional coverage. Ellis urged those TRICARE beneficiaries with tax-related questions to contact the Internal Revenue Service or their tax advisers.

Defense Media Activity



LCpl Mark Watola, USMC

Marines take an assessment test to gauge the knowledge they gained during a new personal readiness seminar at MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C., in early January. The seminar is part of the Marine for Life program and is designed to provide information about programs and resources available for personal and professional development.

In Memoriam

Edited 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.

MGySgt William H. Bauder, 83, of Charlestown, Ind. He served in Korea with the U.S. Army and, upon completion of his service, enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in 1954. He served with the VMF(AW)-235 "Death Angels" during the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. He spent two tours in Vietnam, including one during the Tet Offensive of 1968. He also was a recruiter in Indiana.

Sgt Frank D. Bona, 83, in Waterbury, Conn. He was in a tank battalion during the Korean War. He was a member of the MCA&F and the Korean War Veterans Association.

Capt Michael T. Duncan, 71, of Scottsdale, Ariz. He served in Vietnam, earning a Bronze Star and a Purple Heart. Originally from Chicago, he was an enthusiastic fan of the city's sports teams.

SSgt Donald Fowser, 85, of Pennsville, N.J. He served in Korea in MAG-12, 1st MAW. After completing his military service, he returned to Pennsville where he was a self-employed building contractor. He was a state building inspector and a member of the Cape May VFW Post 386.

Gavino Guerrero Sr., 80, of El Paso, Texas. He served in the Marine Corps. Later, he became a minister, serving congregations in El Paso and Midland, Texas.

Sgt Arthur Herzog, 93, of Palm Desert, Calif. He served in the South Pacific during World War II as a gunner on Douglas SBD Dauntless dive bombers. He later became a pharmacist and owned a pharmacy in Harlem.

Col Peter L. "Highpockets" Hilgartner, 87, in Great Falls, Va. He enlisted in the Marine Corps after high school and received a fleet appointment to the U.S. Naval Academy. He was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps in 1951.

He was a forward artillery observer during the Korean War and received the Bronze Star with combat "V."

In Vietnam, he commanded 1st Bn, 5th Marines, 1stMarDiv. He was awarded the Silver Star for his actions during Operation Swift, when 1st Bn was heavily engaged

with a larger enemy force.

According to his citation, "Lieutenant Colonel Hilgartner responded with inspiring leadership, rallying his men to meet the inordinate demands placed upon them. With complete disregard for his own safety, he continually exposed himself to intense enemy fire by moving to the points of heaviest contact to assist subordinate leaders in the control of their men and direct the establishment of a perimeter to repel the fierce enemy attack. At one point when he detected a gap in the perimeter ... [he] unhesitatingly led a squad ... through heavy enemy fire to close the perimeter."

He served a second tour of duty in Vietnam as a staff officer in Saigon.

After retiring from the Marine Corps, he began a second career in brokerage investments, becoming vice president of investments with Legg Mason Wood Walker Inc. He is the co-author of "Highpocket's [sic] War Stories and other Tall Tales."

Doris (Caston) Lambert, 64, of Orange, Calif. She served three years in the Marine Corps. She later worked for 35 years in the Santa Ana (Calif.) Police Department.

Beverly Walter Landstreet III, 92, of Nashville, Tenn. He enlisted in the Navy V-5 program in December 1941 and was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps. He was a naval aviator who flew the PBJ-1 with VMB-413 in the South Pacific.

His personal decorations include the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal.

After the war, he attended the Nashville School of Law. He formed an investment banking firm and worked in that industry until retiring in 1993.

LtCol Hugh N. Levin, 82, of Oceanside, Calif. He was a Marine Corps aviator who served from 1953 to 1973, including tours at Da Nang and Chu Lai, RVN. He flew the A-4D Skyhawk with VMA-224. In July 1966 during combat over North Vietnam, his aircraft was hit, and he was forced to eject into the Gulf of Tonkin. He was rescued by a Navy helicopter short-

ly thereafter. His personal decorations include the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Purple Heart.

Following his retirement from the Corps, he was involved in sales, investments and writing.

Col Harmon S. Morgan Jr., 78, of Fripp Island, S.C. He enlisted at age 17 in 1954 and retired in 1991. He was a naval aviator, who flew A-4 Skyhawks, among other aircraft. In 1975 he was the executive officer of VMA-211. He commanded 2d ANGLICO. His awards include the Defense Superior Service Medal, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Purple Heart, the Defense Meritorious Service Medal and 20 Air Medals.

After his retirement he was a volunteer firefighter in Fripp Island.

James Murphy Jr., 88, of Milan, Ill. He was a Marine Raider in the South Pacific during World War II. After the war, he worked for many years as a machinist for the Rock Island Arsenal.

James J. Murphy Jr., 89, of Staten Island, N.Y. He served in combat with 27th Marines, 5thMarDiv on Iwo Jima. He received the Purple Heart after being wounded there. After he was discharged from the Marine Corps in 1948, he opened Murphy Marine Supply Company in Manhattan. He was a member of the American Legion.

Joseph P. O'Brien, 79, of Orange County, Calif. He served in the Marine Corps. He also was an electrician. For the last 16 years he worked for the Anaheim Angels baseball team.

Lt Col Irvine "Ozzie" Purdy, 86, of Mission Viejo, Calif. He served in the Marine Corps for two years. Later he joined the Air Force Reserve. He had a career in education and worked as an industrial arts teacher, as well as a school administrator.

Mark P. Seidler, 58, in El Paso, Texas. He served in the Marine Corps from 1977 to 1981. He was a Marine security guard, serving at several U.S. Embassy posts around the world. He later became a motorcycle salesman.

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Marines in I-Corps - 1965**

2 - 15 May - "Delta to the DMZ"



*3 Vets who fought at
Hamburger Hill!*

7 - 19 Jun - Special USMC Units in I Corps

8 - 19 Aug - 50th Anniversary of Op Starlite

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**13 - 26 Feb '16 - Tet Offensive & Battle of
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Doc on the bridge!



See Khe Sanh's Red Clay!

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18 - 24 Jun - 70th Anniversary Battle of Okinawa

18 - 28 Jul - Liberation of Guam, Tinian & Saipan

**31 Jul - 10 Aug - WWII - 70th Anniversary of
Hiroshima & Nagasaki**

1 - 12 Aug - Guadalcanal "Turning the Tide"

12 - 25 Oct - 70th Anniv of "China Marines - 1945"

29 Jan - 8 Feb '16 - WWII 75th Anniv Invasion of the Philippines



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WWII "U.S. Irish Marines"**



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100th Anniversary of The Great War 1915**

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1 - 9 Jun - D-Day: Normandy to Paris

**13 - 20 Jun - 200th Anniversary
Waterloo**



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7 - 18 Sept - 70th Anniversary Italian Campaign



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MSgt Leslie E. Sheary, 94, of Lewisburg, Pa. He was a flutist in the United States Marine Band from 1955 to 1968. He also was a member of the U.S. Air Force Band, the New Orleans Symphony, Dallas Symphony and the 11th Army Air Force Band.

SSgt Andrew P. Stevens, 27, of Richlands, N.C. During his nine years in the Marine Corps, he served tours in Afghanistan and Iraq. He was a Marine security guard and recently completed a tour as a drill instructor at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego. He was killed when a truck smashed into his vehicle during a visit home to see family in Pennsylvania.

Capt Leonard Tygart, 79, of Twentynine Palms, Calif. He enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1952 and served for almost 30 years, including tours in Korea, Japan and Vietnam. After his retirement from the Corps, he was the owner of Plaza Furniture in Twentynine Palms.

Dan M. Vickrey, 82, of Lantana, Texas. After graduating from high school, he served in the Marine Corps. He later went to college and was then employed by Ryerson Steel for 37 years in sales and management positions.

Sgt Nolan Walker, 78, of Athens, Texas. He served in the Marine Corps and was a member of the MCA&F. After his dis-

charge from the Corps, he worked for 25 years for East Texas Container as a maintenance supervisor.

Col Fraser E. West, 96, of Ione Valley, Calif. He grew up in Reno, Nev., and turned down an appointment to the United States Military Academy in order to study animal husbandry and agriculture at the University of Nevada.

He was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps in February 1941. He fought on Guadalcanal, Bougainville and Guam. He was awarded the Silver Star for his actions as the commanding officer of Co G, 2d Bn, 9th Marines, 3dMarDiv in action against Japanese forces during the attack on Fonte Hill, Guam in July 1944.

According to the citation, "Major West skillfully led his men forward approximately four hundred yards under heavy enemy machine gun and rifle fire and personally directed the occupation of his company's night defensive position. ... Consistently disregarding enemy fire during the ten hours of fighting, he continued to lead his men until wounded by an enemy bullet while directing tank fire on new targets on the morning of 26 July." He was awarded the Purple Heart after being wounded on Guam.

He served in various assignments all

over the world and retired from active duty in 1964.

After retirement, he had a horse trailer manufacturing business and ran a cattle ranch. He also competed in rodeos in the calf and team roping category until he was 92.

He helped establish the Ione Valley Land, Air & Water Defense Alliance to provide a voice for the local citizens regarding environmental issues.



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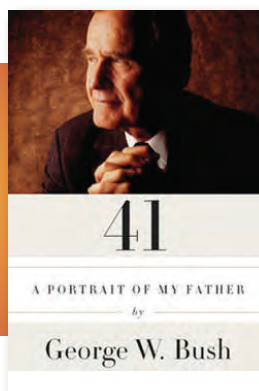
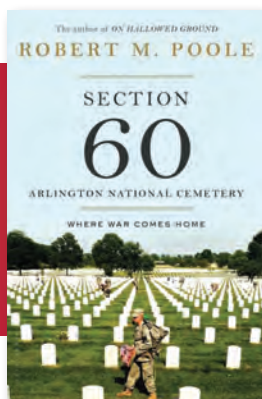
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Find useful information like this
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SECTION 60: Arlington National Cemetery. By Robert M. Poole. Published by Bloomsbury. 256 pages. Stock #1620402939. \$24.30 MCA Members. \$27 Regular Price.

Section 60 is a 5-acre gravestone plot located in the heart of Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Va. It's currently the most active section in the cemetery where the men and women from our country's recent wars are interred side by side with the remains of the "greatest generation" and veterans of Korea and Vietnam. The haunting sound of "Taps" can be heard there on a daily basis as they are honored.

In the new book "Section 60," author Robert Poole captures the nature and essences of the scenes during which family members, comrades and friends converge to honor the passing of their loved ones. According to Poole, the cemetery is a hallowed place, but Section 60 "is alive, more active."

Arlington National Cemetery was established during the American Civil War and had been the home of Confederate General Robert E. Lee and his wife, Mary Custis, a descendent of George Washington. The home was built by Custis' father and passed down to his daughter. In what could only be regarded as an act of revenge, the property overlooking the federal city was appropriated from Lee by the U.S. government as a cemetery for Union soldiers. Since then it has become the site of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the final resting place of many of our military

honored dead, including President John F. Kennedy, Lieutenant General John A. Lejeune, Colonel Gregory "Pappy" Boyington, and GEN John J. Pershing.

One especially impactful story in the book is that of Corporal Ian M. Muller, who was killed by an improvised explosive device March 11, 2011, in Afghanistan. Jim and Alison Malachowski, the parents of Staff Sergeant James Malachowski, a friend of Cpl Muller, drove nine hours to attend the funeral at Arlington. Marines, it is true, take care of their own and so do their families. Friends and neighbors flocked by the hundreds to the solemn event. Sadly, the couple would soon be attending their own son's funeral at the same cemetery.

SSgt Malachowski's funeral consisted of six body bearers from the Marine Corps accompanied by a contingent from the Army's Old Guard's matched gray mounts, wagons and riders for his "full-honors" funeral. Drums and the hooves of the horses were muffled as Marines, family and other mourners followed the solemn procession of the colors, the band, marching platoon and funeral caisson.

A dismounted group of motorcyclists from the Patriot Guard, many of whom were military veterans, saluted as the caisson passed. The Marine Band struck up "The Marines' Hymn," the cue to the body bearers to hoist the casket and move toward the grave site. Rifles fired, "Taps" rang out, the band played the "Navy Hymn" ("Eternal Father") and the flag

was folded and presented to the family on behalf of the President and the Commandant of the Marine Corps. After the chaplain offered a final prayer, mourners then tossed handfuls of dirt into the Marine's final resting place at the grave site. With one final heart-rending salute, members of the grief-stricken procession slowly retired.

One interesting recent interment was that of Sergeant Clyde A. Thomason, a World War II Marine Raider. His skeleton was recovered by a team seeking the remains of members of the storied Makin Island raid. With the aid of advanced identification technology, Sgt Thomason's remains were positively identified. After 70 years, this gung-ho Medal of Honor winner finally came home to rest in American soil. His recovery serves as an example of the dedicated work of the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command. The author writes, "The Marines had been true to their motto, 'Semper Fidelis,' Always Faithful, never losing sight of the buddies they had been forced to leave behind."

"Section 60" makes a solemn yet touching contribution to the understanding of how war affects a grateful nation. However, the book is more about the care and treatment of our military dead and the staggering effects to the grieving families, friends and comrades of America's honored fallen. In the ongoing global war on terrorism, a smaller number of our forces engaged, and the burden is born by a much smaller number of American families than in previous global conflicts. The sting and heartache displayed by the surviving members of the families dominates the pastoral setting of the perfectly aligned rows of grave markers.

Poole notes to most Americans, the opening shot in the war on terrorism took place on Oct. 12, 2000, when the Navy ship, USS *Cole* (DDG-67), was attacked by terrorists and 17 crewmembers were killed. But we Marines know better. We knew what we were facing back on Oct. 23, 1983, when a suicide bomber drove his

truck into the Marine barracks in Beirut, Lebanon. (When visiting Arlington National Cemetery, please pay respects at the nearby Beirut Memorial located in Section 59.)

Poole's skillfully woven narrative helps us to understand the depth of the losses to our country and to the family members who bear the horrendous personal burden of their tragic loss. The author, a former executive editor at *National Geographic*, also wrote the intriguing book titled "On Hallowed Ground," a complete history of Arlington.

Buy "Section 60" and remember our fallen American heroes and their grief-stricken families.

Robert B. Loring

Author's bio: "Red Bob" Loring is a frequent Leatherneck reviewer, who has had more than 100 book reviews published in the magazine.

41: A Portrait of My Father. By George W. Bush. Published by Crown. 304 pages. Stock #0553447785. \$25.20 MCA Members. \$28 Regular Price.

In 1983, George H.W. Bush wrote a letter to his children declaring, "I'm getting a little older. I'm not sure what the future holds. I don't worry about that. Win or lose, older or younger, we have our

family." Now at the age of 90, the 41st president, who has done his fair share of both winning and losing, is finally having his story told by his eldest son in "41: A Portrait of My Father."

That in itself is telling of the kind of man the first President Bush is: He is the only modern president not to write a memoir, a decision his son, George W. Bush, believes

is due to the humility impressed upon him by his mother. The older Bush was first and foremost a family man, which makes the younger President Bush's decision to take up the task of telling his father's story even more fitting.

Make no mistake, this book is not objective, and its author doesn't pretend to be so. In his opening remarks, "Bush 43"

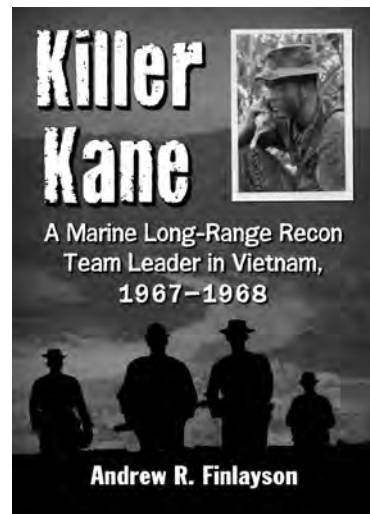
Killer Kane

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explains, "I do hope to show you why George H.W. Bush is a great President and an even better father." Equal parts a history of Bush's career and a story filled with family anecdotes and memories, "41: A Portrait of My Father" does just that.

The book begins with "Bush 41" sky-diving and then celebrating his 90th birthday surrounded by family. The book continues by describing his father and mother, and the younger Bush explains the profound impact Bush 41's father had on him. He also describes the immense effect his grandfather, and particularly his grandmother, had on his father.

From there, the book moves in chronological order to Bush's decision to serve in the Navy in World War II before attending Yale, and his subsequent move to Texas. It then covers his beginning in politics, his presidential re-election loss, and his son's presidential library dedication.

"41" is split into 12 sections, each representing a specific period of Bush's life. The longest section is devoted to his four years as president, but almost as many pages are dedicated to the elder Bush's life after he leaves politics. It takes almost 200 pages to get to 41's presidency as the author recounts the different positions his father held which paved the way to the White House: the youngest naval aviator when

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he enlisted during WW II, founder of an oil company, congressman, ambassador to the United Nations, chairman of the Republican National Committee, chief liaison to China, director of the CIA, and then Vice President of the United States.

The size of George H.W. Bush's career could easily have muddled the book, but George W. Bush gracefully navigates the reader through his father's life.

There would be no way to write a book about Bush 41 without the mention and discussion of politics. While the purpose of this book is not to push Republican policies or prove that Democrats were a thorn in the Bush family's side, Bush 43 does come to the defense of both his father and himself, particularly when discussing the Middle East. His political justifications and arguments, however, are few, and very rarely is a harsh word spoken about anyone, whether it be a Democrat, Republican or foreign leader. The lone exception to this was H. Ross Perot, about whom Bush 41 bluntly said, "I don't like him."

Bipartisan politics and political enemies are not the focus of this book; instead Bush 43 focuses on the friendships and personal diplomacy that marked Bush 41's life and career. From playing tennis with Democrats to writing personal letters to the leader of the Soviet Union to attending Emperor Hirohito's funeral, Bush 41's unique ability to make friends and be respectful is a fresh reminder that politics aren't always heartless and scheming. Bush 43 tells how the friendships Bush 41 cultivated over his lifetime helped him succeed in his career and his personal life.

The inclusion of family anecdotes keeps this book from being just another political biography and, instead, gives the reader a glimpse of Bush 41 as a man. After Bill Clinton defeated Bush 41 in his re-election bid for president, he kindly welcomed Clinton into the White House and "wrote in a letter that he left ... on the Oval Office desk, he was rooting hard for his successor." Bush 41 later would go on to have a close relationship with the Clinton family.

The insights Bush 43 provides on his father's career and campaigns were informative and thought-provoking, but the best parts of the book are the ones depicting some of the hardest moments of Bush 41's life. The tragic death of his young daughter, Robin, is described in the early sections of the book, and although Bush 43 admits to not fully understanding Robin's death at the time, his description of his father and mother throughout Robin's treatment for leukemia truly is heartbreaking to the reader.

His daughter's death was not the first tragedy Bush 41 had dealt with as a young man.

During WW II, the torpedo bomber he was flying was shot down during a mission. While he survived, the other two men on his aircraft did not. According to Bush 43, his father struggled with guilt over their deaths and has said that he thinks about them every day. His experience with war deeply affected him, and as he wrote in his diary right before Operation Desert Storm, "It is my decision, my decision to send these kids into battle, my decision that may affect the lives of innocen[ts] ... my decision that affects the husband, the girlfriend, or the wife that is waiting. And yet I know what I have to do." Bush 43 writes that his father instilled in him the idea that the military must feel supported by their Commander in Chief.

Bush 43 successfully defines his father beyond his title as President of the United States while at the same time explaining the great influence his father had on his family, his friends and his country. His homage to his father can be appreciated by all Americans, regardless of political party.

Emily K. Reinwald

Author's bio: Emily K. Reinwald is a college student majoring in political science.



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SOUND OFF

[continued from page 6]

today's youth struck home.

I proudly served as a corpsman of Marines in Vietnam. I have several "Vietnam Veteran" T-shirts that I wear all the time. I live near the beach in California in an area where a great number of folks, young and old, either walk or jog all during the day. Twice while on my morning walk I have been asked what Vietnam is and what I am a veteran of.

There is a great deal of awareness today of the recent conflicts we as a nation have been involved in, and there is a constant mention of the veterans and the struggles they face reintegrating into society. I am sure most everyone knows of Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq and the other places where our men and women have fought and died. And I salute them all.

When we came home from Vietnam, we were mistreated or ignored. No one ever mentioned PTSD to me. I have been home for more than 45 years, and I still have dreams of that "vacation spot." I can live with that, but to think that the more than 2,500,000 men and women who fought there are totally forgotten is more than a nightmare.

Those who stand up for this great country to preserve her freedoms should never be forgotten, and those who make the ultimate sacrifice should forever be enshrined in our memories.

Thank you for letting this old man vent.

Bob Werner
Encinitas, Calif.

• You are not so old, Bob, and sometimes it is hard for me to believe that the war we were in was that long ago. Those who served are not forgotten and will not be as long as you and I have a breath in our bodies to remember them: "Lest we forget."—Sound Off Ed.

Who Can Wear Marine Corps Dress Blues?

In the story in the January issue, titled "A Story of Survival, Loyalty," by Roxanne Baker, I noticed two discrepancies with the picture of Mr. (Corporal) Edgar Harrell.

Why is he wearing dress blues? Obviously he didn't retire from the Corps, so he is not authorized to wear any Marine uniform. I know that he's a World War II veteran, and I respect him for it, but that doesn't entitle him to wear dress blues just because he's in the "speakers' circle."

Second, let's assume that, by some policy quirk, he is authorized to wear dress blues. If that's the case, he's wearing the

wrong chevrons. If he was a corporal prior to 1962, he was without crossed rifles under his chevrons. Also, he's wearing a white web belt, which wasn't even in existence when he was in the Corps. Marines either wore cloth or leather belts.

If Mr. Harrell is going to be an "unofficial" spokesman for the Corps, the least he can do is wear the proper uniform of his time.

MGySgt George E. Hajar, USMC (Ret)
Bluffton, S.C.

• The regulations that follow have been excerpted from the Marine Corps Uniform Regulations: "Former Members of the Armed Forces. Unless qualified under another provision of this Order or under the provisions of 10 U.S.C. 772, former members who served honorably during a declared or undeclared war and whose most recent service was terminated under honorable conditions may wear the uniform in the highest grade held during such war service only upon the following occasions and in the course of travel incident thereto: (1) Military funerals, memorial services, weddings, and inaugurations. (2) Parades on national or state holidays; or other parades or ceremonies of a patriotic character in which any active or reserve United States military unit are taking part. ...

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"According to 10 U.S.C. 772, the Marine Corps uniform may be worn by personnel not on active duty under the following conditions: ... Retired Marine Corps officers may bear the title and wear the uniform of their retired grade. ... Former Marines not on active duty who served honorably in time of war in the Marine Corps may bear the title, and as authorized by regulations prescribed by the President, wear the uniform of the highest grade held during that war (subparagraph 11002.1)."

Those choosing to wear the uniform also are required to conform to current Marine Corps height, weight and grooming standards.—Sound Off Ed.

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.

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

• USMC Hawk Assn. (50th Anniversary), Aug. 19-23, Palm Springs/Rancho Mirage, Calif. Contact Stan Buliszyn,

(352) 509-2043, sb353@usmchawk association.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.

• **531 Gray Ghost Squadron Assn.**, April 23-25, Pensacola, Fla. Contact GySgt Ralph Delisanti, USMC (Ret), (585) 426-4091, ralphdelisanti@yahoo.com.

• **Reconnaissance and Combat Helicopter Marines (RVN, 1965-71, 50th Anniversary)**, April 21-24, Oceanside, Calif. Contact Charlie Kershaw, (760) 438-8638, c2k2@earthlink.net.

• **Veterans of Guam and Iwo Jima (70th Anniversary)**, March 16-23, Iwo Jima. 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.

• **Veterans of Iwo Jima (70th Anniversary)**, March 5-7, Camp Pendleton, Calif. Contact Daniel Zepeda, (951) 201-6251, zepeda012@msn.com.

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



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• **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 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.

• **BLT 3/9 (50-Year Reunion)**,

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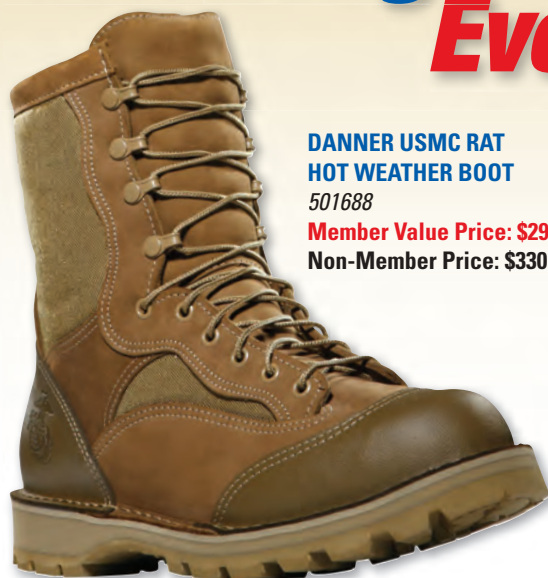


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Sept. 8-12, San Diego. Contact Charles Saltaformaggio, (504) 812-7369, csaltaformaggio@yahoo.com.

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

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

• **F/2/1 (RVN, 1967)**, April 20-22, Tampa, Fla. Contact Dieter Maass, (920) 846-2988, dietermaass@centurytel.net.

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

• **H/2/7 (RVN, 1965-70)**, June 5-7, Buffalo, N.Y. Contact Ralph Sirianni, (716) 903-9640, tripp19@aol.com.

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

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• **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.saignonmac.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, 1-68 (June-November 1967)**, April 28-May 4, Fredericksburg, Va. Contact LtCol Dick Kurth, USMC (Ret), tbsldash68@gmail.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 Connors, USMC (Ret), (919) 303-2697, (919) 418-

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• **Plts 17 and 19, Parris Island, 1955** (and others who went through PI during 1955 are welcome too), June 4-6, Parris Island, S.C. Contact Al Pasquale, (484) 802-2516, pasquale@bigplanet.com.

• **Plt 98, Parris Island, 1948**, is planning a reunion. Contact SSgt Jim Proulx, USMC (Ret), (904) 343-4850, bertojoto1@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 2023, San Diego, 1983**, is planning a reunion. Contact Jeffrey R. Johnson, 3751 Merced Dr., Unit 4D, Riverside, CA 92503, jrj430@yahoo.com.

• **Plt 2030, Parris Island, 1965-66**, is planning a reunion. Contact John E. Lyford, (518) 654-6073, reniejohn@roadrunner.com.

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

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

• **VMF/VMA-214**, April 24-25, MCAS Yuma, Ariz. Contact 1stLt Shane Long, (928) 269-2730, shane.h.long@usmc.mil.

• **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 Tarawa (CV-40/LHA-1)**, April 16-19, Norwich, Conn. Contact Lester Ward, 101 Meadow Ln., Randolph, MA 02368, (781) 961-2583, or Walter Tothoro, 106 N. Tranquil Trl., Crawfordsville, IN 47933, (765) 362-6937, walsue@acceleplus.net.

• **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

• Retired Marine John "Jack" Rine, (302) 541-4131, snobird2@mchsi.com, to hear from **John TURNER**, **Richard HIGHTOWER**, **Fred SIVERLY**, **Cpl WESTERVELT**, and any other **Marine security guards who served in Vientiane, Laos, 1956-57**. He would also like to hear from any **MSG Marines who served in Rangoon, Burma, 1957-58**, particularly **Bob GREER** and **Bill FLYNN**.

• Former Sgt Karl C. Lippard, P.O. Box 60719, Colorado Springs, CO 80960, (719) 444-0786, karl.lippard@gmail.com, to hear from or about **1stLt Richard J. CRAIG**, **1stLt Randall CRACHES**, **Capt R.K. WEIR**, **2ndLt Roger Stebleton** and **2ndLt John H. ROWE**, who served with **M/3/9, RVN, 1965**.

• Marine veteran Milt "Jinx" Jenkins, 1080 Freedom St., Tulare, CA 93274, (559) 685-9834, lthneck6569@att.net, to hear from fellow members of **Radio Telegraph Operators Course, Class 5-66, MCRD San Diego**.

• T. Fazzini, 2516 Regina Pl., Hamilton, OH 45013, fazzinpa@miamioh.edu, to hear from or about members of **Plt 471 (Battalion Honor Plt), Parris Island, 1952**.

• Steve Toward, 8108 Carrollton Pkwy., New Carrollton, MD 20784, (301) 220-1124, stoward224@aol.com, to hear from anyone, particularly **Tom LOUGHTY Jr.**, who was with his brother, **Marine**



Marine veteran William Kelley would like copies of this Marine recruiting poster from the early 1970s, which features his father, GySgt Michael Kelley, USMC (Ret).

Ronald J. TOWARD, when he was killed in action while serving with **3d Bn, 26th Marines at Charlie Ridge, RVN, April 10, 1969**.

• Marine veteran Anthony Dean Glumac, 206 Orchard Knob Rd., Clinton, TN 37716, (865) 405-8858, scoopage54@aol.com, to hear from or about **Silver Star recipient SSgt Frank LENNA**, who was Glumac's **senior drill instructor in 1967**.

Wanted

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

• Marine veteran Ray Gonzales, 140 Babcock Rd., #303, San Antonio, TX 78201, rayg7774@gmail.com, wants a **recruit graduation book and platoon photo for Plt 1071, San Diego, 1977**.

• Marine veteran William Kelley, (404) 441-3348, william.kelley@sanofi.com, wants copies of a **recruiting poster (left)** featuring his father, **GySgt Michael KELLEY, USMC (Ret)**, circa **early 1970s**. The poster reads: "They come back as Marines. And that's your reward if you volunteer for recruiter duty."

Sales, Trades and Giveaways

• Marine veteran Walter Geary, (516) 644-3779, mcvet13@yahoo.com, has a **recruit graduation book, Plt 2053, Parris Island, 1980**. Free to anyone who can identify himself in the book.

• Former Sgt Howard E. Sweitzer, 1417 N.W. 62nd Way, Margate, FL 33063, (954) 972-0555, has the following items for sale: a **Korean War-era Navy flight jacket, G-2, size M, \$125**; **Leatherneck magazines from 1984 to 2012, make offer**; an **11x14 framed and signed color illustration "My Colt" (1911A1), 1958, \$75**; and a **black-and-white cartoon, "Sally Ride," 1983, framed \$45, unframed \$20**.



How can I get a copy of my MCRD platoon photo?

According to the Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C., website, <http://www.mcrdpi.marines.mil/>, photos back to 1939 can be obtained by calling: (843) 228-1546/1555.

For MCRD San Diego photos, visit the website, <https://www.mcrdmuseumhistoricalsociety.org/platoon-photos-and-grad-books>, or write or call MCRD Museum Foundation, Building 26, P.O. Box 400085, San Diego, CA 92140-0085. Office Phone: (619) 524-4426, Fax: (619) 524-0076



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Rick Spooner, USMC, 1942-72

The 2015 Leatherneck Marine-to-Marine Classified Information and Insertion Order

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Marine-to-Marine classified ads are accepted on a space-available basis and available only to those and/or their spouses who served in the United States Marine Corps. The ad must list the years served in the Marine Corps.

All ads are black-and-white in this section. Ads are accepted camera-ready and electronically; pdf, tif or jpeg formats (300 resolution). Any classified ad may occupy one column width (2.25 inches) by a maximum of 10 inches of column height.

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Saved Round

Edited by Sara W. Bock



PIN-UPS OF THE PAST—Longtime readers may remember that *Leatherneck* used to feature a monthly pin-up girl, from 1943 to 1980 to be exact. This pin-up of Marilyn Monroe appeared 61 years ago in the March 1954 *Leatherneck*, a month after she toured Korea with the USO to perform for American military personnel. On Feb. 16, 1954, Monroe sang for an estimated 13,000 leathernecks of the First Marine Division, boosting morale by singing “Diamonds Are a Girl’s Best Friend,” among some of her other hit numbers.

Other notable *Leatherneck* pin-up girls of the past include Lana Turner, Natalie Wood, Rita Moreno, Jayne Mansfield and Raquel Welch. Times have changed, but these pin-ups forever will be a part of *Leatherneck*’s long history as the “Magazine of the Marines”—and it’s always fun to take a look back.



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