

long-distance Osprey missions are likely to occur in the near future as VMM-265 continues to expand its capabilities.

"I was proud to see the outcome of weeks of planning come to fruition," said Capt Tristan G. Martinez, a KC-130J pilot with VMGR-152. "They were able to complete the mission and return in a timely manner. It was great to be a part of this historic flight, and we look forward to more in the future."

LCol David N. Hersey  
PAO, Marine Corps Installations Pacific

### 95 Years Ago, Opha May Johnson Paved the Way for Women in the Corps

■ There it was, her name, Opha May Johnson, simply penned on the applicant line of a Marine Corps Reserve form. Although she typically signed her name Opha M., this was an official document, and her middle name was necessary. Her decision to fill out that form entered her into an exclusively male world and made her a Marine Corps legend.

Although historians speculate whether the date was actually the 12th or 13th of August 1918, there is no argument that Opha May Johnson was the first woman to enter the Marine Corps, enlisting in the Reserve as a clerk.

"Maybe she saw an ad; we really don't know her reason for joining," said Kara Newcomer, a historian with the Marine Corps History Division. "We do know that she was the first, and for that, she should always be remembered."

Several errors concerning the pioneer of female Marines have been circulated and published by some, the first of which concerns Johnson's middle name.



COURTESY OF THE MARINE CORPS HISTORY DIVISION, HISTORICAL REFERENCE BRANCH

**Pvt Opha May Johnson, photographed at age 40, was the first female to join the Marine Corps. Johnson enlisted into the Marine Corps Reserve in August 1918.**

According to Newcomer, although many spell her middle name as Mae, her middle name actually is May.

"We also believe she probably went by her first name alone, based on how she signed her name," said Newcomer.

The second fallacy frequently circulated is Johnson's age at the time of her enlistment. Although some report she was in her late teenage years, experts say something quite the opposite.

"She was almost 40 when she enlisted," said Newcomer.

Historical records verify that fact and

show more about the professional life of the 1918 Marine private originally from the Midwest. Johnson worked with the civil service even before enlisting with the Marine Corps.

According to the defunct News in History website, an article published in *The Plain Dealer*, a 1918 newspaper out of Cleveland, said that Johnson's Marine Corps responsibilities included managing the affairs of other female reservists at Marine Corps headquarters.

As for her personal life, historians paint the following picture.

Although they didn't ever have children, Johnson was married to a man named Victor, who may have been an orchestra conductor in the Washington, D.C., area, said Newcomer.

Johnson started something that, although uncommon in the early 1900s, would slowly allow females into more military roles. According to the Women Marines Association website, some of those roles include the first female commissioned officer in 1943, Captain Anne Lentz; the enlistment of the first black female Marines in 1949; the first female Marine to be promoted to pay grade E-9 in 1960, Master Gunnery Sergeant Geraldine M. Moran; and the first female general in 1978, Brigadier General Margaret A. Brewer.

Today, women have a larger role in the Corps, as shown by the statistics.

According to the Marine Corps Concepts and Programs website, currently, there are more than 1,300 females serving as officers and more than 12,000 serving as enlisted Marines.

As the role of female Marines continues

### McKENNA ROOM OFFERS

**COMFORT TO TRAVELERS—**Marine Corps League members, including National Commandant Jim Touhy in the center, front row, gather on June 29, 2013, in the Capt John J. McKenna IV Military Courtesy Room that they sponsor and staff at the Albany International Airport, Albany, N.Y. Capt McKenna, a Marine Reserve officer and a New York state trooper, was killed in action Aug. 16, 2006, in Fallujah, Iraq. Military personnel and their families passing through Albany use the room as a place to pause and refresh in a stress-free environment.

COURTESY OF CAPT JIM TOLLEY, MARINE CORPS LEAGUE



to evolve, Marines should know that Opha May Johnson had the same characteristics as those who wear the uniform today.

"She was your typical American woman who wanted to help," said Newcomer. "She saw an opportunity to serve her country in a time of need and took it."

LCpl Samuel Ellis  
PAO, MCB Quantico, Va.

## Quick Shots Around the Corps

### Korean War Marine Identified

American Forces Press Service reports that the Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office announced Aug. 9 that the remains of a U.S. servicemember missing from the Korean War have been identified.

Marine Corps Private First Class Jonathan R. Posey Jr. of Dallas was buried with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia, Aug. 12. In December 1950, Posey, assigned to Battery L, 4th Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, First Marine Division, was serving provisionally as an infantryman with the 7th Marines at Yudam-ni in the vicinity of the Chosin Reservoir.

On Dec. 2, 1950, Posey was killed in

action while the 5th and 7th Marines were moving to Hagaru-ri. Posey was 20 years old.

In 1954, United Nations and communist forces exchanged the remains of war dead in what came to be called "Operation Glory." All remains recovered in Operation Glory were turned over to the Army Central Identification Unit for analysis. Those who were unable to be identified were interred as unknowns at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (the Punchbowl) in Hawaii.

In 2012, analysts from the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) reevaluated Posey's records and determined that portions of the remains recovered from Operation Glory should be exhumed for identification. To identify the remains, scientists from JPAC used circumstantial evidence and forensic identification tools, such as dental and radiograph comparison, which matched Posey's records.

Using modern technology, identifications continue to be made from remains that were previously recovered from North and South Korea. More than 7,900 Americans remain unaccounted for from the Korean War.

### F-35B Pilot Training Center Completed

Corporal Rubin Tan, Public Affairs Office, Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, S.C., reports that the Joint Strike Fighter Pilot Training Center at MCAS Beaufort, with capabilities to hold eight full mission F-35B simulators, classrooms, briefing rooms and more, was completed in August.

Construction of new facilities at MCAS Beaufort will continue in anticipation of the expected arrival of two training and three operational F-35B squadrons. The air station will serve as the hub for all F-35B training throughout the Marine Corps.

Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron 501, currently at Eglin Air Force Base, is expected to relocate to MCAS Beaufort in January 2014.

Future projects include the construction of vertical landing pads and landing helicopter deck training facilities.

*Editor's note: Leatherneck is planning a feature article on the new training center.*



## Crazy Caption Contest

### Winner



LCpl JACOB CHASE

"These are my Twinkies in here, and no one is going to get them."

Submitted by  
John R. Poloian  
Tewksbury, Mass.

### This Month's Photo



LCpl SARAH WOLFE 1013

(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](mailto:leatherneck@mca-marines.org). The winning entry will be published in two months.

[www.mca-marines.org/leatherneck](http://www.mca-marines.org/leatherneck)

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