

THE CONTINENTAL MARINE

MAGAZINE

OCT/NOV/DEC 2008



Training at Fort Sill
> Rolling onto the field with the 6th Motor Transportation Battalion.

2/25 HITS THE GROUND

Inside:

- > Their arrival at Korean Village
- > New Chow Hall Manager spices things up
- > Humanitarian efforts while on patrol

- > Paying final respects to the 27th commandant of the Marine Corps
- > Learn about the latest advances in ear protection

It seems as though this quarter has flown by in the blink of an eye!

Another year has come and gone. As we look forward to the upcoming year, we look back and remember what made this year special.

There have been some changes in our office, as the previous editor Staff Sgt. G. S. Thomas goes on to Marine Corps Recruiting Command. We also bid farewell to Cpl. Frans E. Labranche and anticipate greeting him as he returns to us on reserve duty.

We also pay our respects to Gen. Robert H. Barrow, who passed away on Nov. 3. Gen. Barrow was the 27th Commandant of the Marine Corps.

Capt. Greenberg takes you up close and personal with the Marines of 2nd Battalion, 25 Marine Regiment, as they get their boots dirty in the sandbox. We have stories of their first experiences in Iraq.

Some of our reservists around the country have been accomplishing amazing feats. In this edition we bring you stories from Marines who have won various awards, both military and civilian.

We also review a technological advance for the Marines serving with the Marine Air Wings. The Navy and Marine Corps has been developing a new hearing protection device that is looking to be implemented by 2012.

I hope you enjoy this edition of your magazine.

Semper Fi,
Lance Cpl. Michael Laycock
Editor, Continental Marine Magazine



Marines with Direct Support Motor Transportation Company B, 6th Motor T. Battalion, 4th Marine Logistics Group, based out of Lubbock, Texas, received extensive training on crew-served weapons like the M2 .50 caliber machine gun, the M240G Medium Machine Gun and the M249 Squad Automatic Weapon, during their training weekend at Ft. Sill, Ok. Official photo by Cpl. Johnathan D. Herring.

Marine Forces Reserve

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The “President’s Own” United States Marine Band accompanies the funeral procession of Gen. Robert Barrow, in St. Francisville, La. November 3.



Master Sgt. Michael Retana



Features

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p>8</p> <p>12</p> <p>16</p> <p>18</p> <p>21</p> <p>25</p> <p>28</p> | <p>10</p> <p>14</p> <p>17</p> <p>20</p> <p>24</p> <p>26</p> <p>29</p> | <p>Marine Corps honors 27th Commandant
The Marine Corps bids a final goodbye to the 27th Commandant Gen. Robert Barrow.</p> <p>Service members volunteer for local KaBOOM! project
Marines, sailors and other volunteers come together to build a playground</p> <p>Surgeon Takes the Reins on Economic Development in Rural Iraq
“Doc” takes care of community outside of surgery</p> <p>Harlem Cop Trades Plain Clothes for Marine Corps Cammies
From the streets of New York to the desert of Iraq.</p> <p>New York’s 2/25 attacks Shadow Range
The Marines were the first to train at the new training facility known as Shadow Range.</p> <p>National Shooting Record Set (Twice?)
Imagine setting the national shooting record, only to have to re-shoot it.</p> <p>4th MAW Marines start receiving new hearing protection
New steps are being taken to protect the hearing of the aviation Marines.</p> <p>Composer chosen for Katrina Piece
The Marine Forces Reserve Band has chosen its composer to help with a piece of music.</p> <p>Reserve Marines settle in Korean Village
Follow 2/25 as they set down and get ready for missions in Iraq.</p> <p>Marines Reach Out to Small-Town Kids
Local children see the softer side of the Marine Corps</p> <p>Reserve MP spices up life for Marines
One lance cpl.’s civilian experience benefits the entire unit when it comes to chow.</p> <p>6th Motor T Bn. trains at Ft. Sill
The Marines made the drive from their home base in Lubbock, Texas, and right away got into classes on the M249 , the M240G and the M2 .50 caliber.</p> <p>3/14, Inspector and Instructor receives Bronze Star
New Jersey Marine receives Bronze Star upon return from Iraq.</p> <p>MLG exercise preparation for ‘Javelin Thrust’</p> |
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Columns

***In Brief*4**

Taking a look at the accomplishments of MFR’s Marines.

***Marine Forces Reserve Band*7**

Take a look at some of the engagements the band has performed over the past few months.

***Marines in the Fight* 14**

Highlights of MFR Marines taking the fight to the enemy across the globe.

***Money Matters*.....30**

Foreclosures

In Brief

Taking a look at MFR Marines' accomplishments.

Crescent City Toys for Tots campaign kicks off

Marine Forces Reserve Headquarters and Toys "R" Us kicked off the 2008 Toys for Tots campaign at a local store in New Orleans, Nov. 6.

This marks the 61st year of the campaign with the goal to bring a message of hope to less fortunate children. More than 20 million toys and books are given every year to motivate America's children to grow into responsible, productive, patriotic citizens and community leaders.

According to figures posted on www.toysrus.com, in 2007, Toys "R" Us, Inc. raised over \$3 million and collected nearly 600,000 toys to help Toys for Tots provide more than 16 million toys to 7.5 million children across the United States.

Since the beginning of the partnership with the Toys for Tots Foundation in 2004, Toys "R" Us, Inc. has raised over \$13.5 million and collected more than 1.2 million toys.

Marines experience arctic survival, help local community

Barrow, Alaska, the northernmost point in North America, was the location of the Company D, Antiterrorism Battalion 4th Marine Division arctic survival training. During their most recent trip to Barrow Sept. 22-Oct. 3, 14 members of company D tackled several community service projects before taking on their arctic training. The Marines repaired sections of fencing surrounding the town cemetery and completed an outdoor deck outside the city community center. The Marines also temporarily converted a basketball court into a skate rink for the winter season.



Marines and Sailors attend safety stand-down

Marines from Marine Forces Reserve participated in a safety stand-down Nov. 13 focusing on suicide prevention and traffic safety.

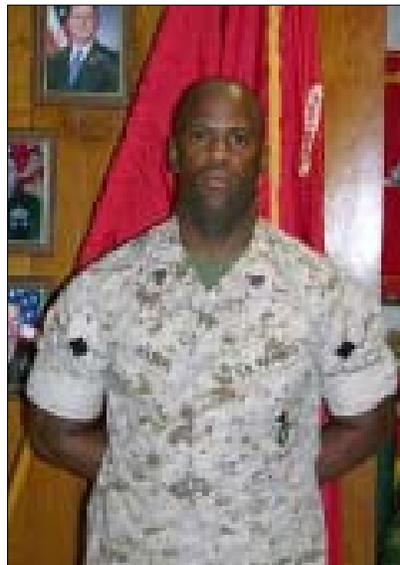
The traffic safety portion of the stand down was taught by Steve Veray, a comedian as well as a safety instructor. Veray used comedy and games to teach the class of Marines and Sailors important points about preventing drunk driving, being distracted behind the wheel, speeding and insurance guidance.

The safety stand down was in preparation of the upcoming holiday season.

3/14 Marine is USO Service Member of the Year

For the second year in a row, 3rd Battalion, 14th Marine Regiment has a reserve Marine that was honored as the United Service Organization Service Member of the Year.

Sgt. George Bolton, a cannoneer in his Marine life and a social worker in his civilian life, was honored at the Liberty USO gala in Cherry Hill, N.J. Oct. 3.



"In my mind, Sgt. Bolton epitomizes everything a citizen Marine should be," said Maj. Artur Czapka, Bolton's commanding officer. "He juggles two careers with an unwavering work ethic and that deserves recognition."

Bolton said that the award was an unexpected delight.

"It was a shock when I heard," said Bolton, a resident of Reading, Pa. "Volunteering is just something that people should do and feel good about, but it is still nice to be recognized for it."

Bolton certainly knows about helping people. When he is not acting as a section chief for his unit, Bolton is a social worker that works with autistic children.

"Helping in any way is always a positive experience," Bolton said.

Czapka didn't think twice about nominating Bolton out of the more than 500 Marines in his command.

"Sgt. Bolton is a great Marine and a great worker," Czapka said. "He fulfills a vital leadership role and not a day goes by that he does not deal with a military issue."

Bolton does not take the honor lightly.

Responsibility on the roadways

APRIL PHILLIPS,
NAVAL SAFETY CENTER PUBLIC AFFAIRS

It's a safe bet that very few young Sailors and Marines start out an evening of fun with the plan to drive home drunk. Yet, every year, several of them wind up in jail cells, sleeping it off and watching helplessly as their once-bright futures slip away in the aftermath. And that's just the lucky ones who got caught. Others never get the chance to learn from this mistake and instead become tragic statistics. Unfortunately, the number of drunken driving arrests and traffic fatalities increases every year during the holiday season.

"We see DUIs on an almost daily basis," said Dan Dray, a traffic safety specialist at the Naval Safety Center (NSC). "With the extra time off work, Christmas and New Years is a time when we really want to remind and encourage folks to drink responsibly."

It's important to plan for a safe ride home before taking the first sip of alcohol. The best of intentions can fall apart as alcohol impairs judgment.

"Young Sailors and Marines may go out with the intention of having a designated driver, but because of peer pressure, the designated driver gets drunk too," said NSC's command master chief, CMDCM(AW/SW) Charles Blanks.



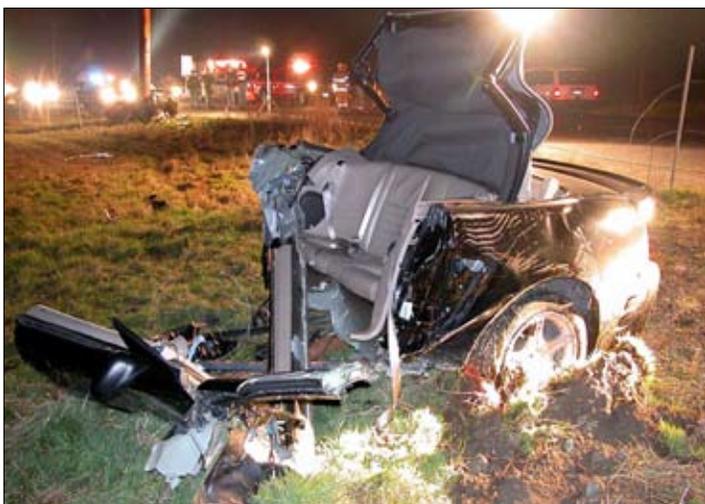
Courtesy of Navy Safety Center Public Affairs

"If you're going to be the designated driver, then do your job. Don't drink," he added.

Young service members are at increased risk for driving impaired. Many are away from home for the first time. Nonetheless, personal responsibility is key and Sailors and Marines will be held accountable, regardless of their ages. That's why it's important to look out for one another.

"Make your plan before you go out drinking, whether it's a sober shipmate, one of the Safe Ride programs, or a taxi," Dray said.

The safe ride programs he mentioned are usually sponsored by a command's Morale, Welfare and Recreation department. They involve "no questions asked" taxi rides back to the ship. Dray said there is no punishment for using the service, although Sailors will be asked to pay the bill later. However, even a large taxi bill is a lot cheaper than the fines, lawyer bills, community service, and career damage that come with a DUI charge. □



Courtesy of Navy Safety Center Public Affairs

Marines deliver holiday cheer to remote areas

AIR FORCE SENIOR MASTER SGT. STEPHEN LEE
3RD WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

ELMENDORF AIR FORCE BASE, Alaska – As part of the “Toys for Tots” program, Marines from Company D, Anti-Terrorism Battalion, 4th Marine Division departed Elmendorf, to deliver holiday cheer to 13 remote Alaskan villages.

This marks the 13th year the Marine Reserve unit has made the trek into the Alaskan wilderness. Their mission: to put smiles on the hundreds of children who anxiously await the arrival of Santa Claus- who for this trip-has traded his sled and reindeer for a Marine C-130 Hercules and a team of snowmachines.

To prepare the unit for these trips, two Marine instructors from the Mountain Warfare Training Center in Bridgeport, California came to Alaska to conduct intensive winter survival training, ensuring Co. D Marines had the skills needed to conduct the remote deliveries safely.

“From a training aspect, this trip into remote Alaska gives the Marines an excellent opportunity to put their winter-survival skills to the test, allowing them to gain

confidence in themselves and the use of their equipment,” said Maj. William Allen, Company D Site Commanding Officer.

Gunnery Sgt. Jason Milbery, the 2008 program coordinator, lists his involvement with the program as one of the top five experiences of his entire Marine career, but at the same time describes the preparation for the remote deliveries as the most hectic six weeks he has ever experienced.

“Manpower has been a particular challenge this year,” he said. “Figuring out the most efficient way to accomplish toy pickups with available personnel required detailed planning.”

Leader for the McGrath insertion team, 1st Sgt. Marvin Magcale, said he expects the 82-mile snowmachine trip from McGrath to Nikolai to put their winter-survival skills to the test, especially as they experience subzero temperatures. He added that we get a deep sense of accomplishment after completing such a trip.

“The kids in the villages have everything they need to survive but when we, someone from outside the village, show up and start handing out toys to the kids, you can see the appreciation in their smiling faces,” said First Sergeant Magcale.

After the toys are distributed, the Marines get to spend time with the children participating in games and other activities. Magcale said he really enjoys getting to know the kids and uses the time with them to provide mentorship and guidance.

Lance Cpl. Gregory Bell offered testament to the generosity of Alaskans. While working one of the donation events, an individual approached him and remarked that “when he was a child, if it weren’t for Toys for Tots, he would not have had any toys at Christmas.” He said that now as an adult with a good job, he wanted to give back to the program. To Bell’s amazement, the individual presented him with a \$500 cash donation.

The monumental efforts of the Marine Corps coupled with the generosity of the people here has provided the Toys for Tots program the ability to reach as many Alaskan children as possible. As Bell puts it, “Every kid deserves a Christmas.” □



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Joshua Garcia
Sgt. Hollis Versyp, Inspector Instructor Staff Co. D, Anti-Terrorism Battalion 4th Marine Division, drives a snowmachine onto a Marine C-130 Hercules Dec. 12. The snowmachines were the mode of transportation for Sergeant Versyp and fellow Marines while they delivered toys to children in remote villages.

Marine Forces Reserve Band

GUNNERY SGT. J.J. CONNOLLY, JR.

MARINE FORCES RESERVE

The Marine Forces Reserve band completed its third annual concert series in support of the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots program with a rousing performance Dec. 12, in suburban Westwego, La.



The holiday program featured the concert band in addition to nearly every small-ensemble within the unit, and was the culmination of a two-week-long “Santa Meets Sousa” tour that included eight performances in Texas and Louisiana, and collected more than 5,000 toys.

Teamwork by the band, receptive audiences and prior planning all contributed to the overall success of the tour, according to flutist Cpl. Sarah Gilman. “The audiences were much bigger, there were a lot more toys... it’s been much easier on us this year,” explained the native of Colorado Springs, Colo. “Our Marines stepped it up...after all that practice it all comes together

smoothly as long as we get our own personal parts done.”

The 90-minute-long concert was a choreographed mix of music, video and live performances that blended traditional classics and current favorites with sketch comedy. This unconventional approach added an extra dimension to the already challenging tour, but one that Marine leaders feel gave their troops a chance to shine.

“Acting was never in any brochure we ever saw when we were getting recruited,” explained Staff Sgt. Seth Gehman, a percussionist, and the band’s public affairs officer. “A lot of the younger Marines are stepping up and doing things above and beyond what anyone would ever ask of them.”

Each year the musicians of the band travel throughout the United States, performing more than 250 concerts, parades, and ceremonies and entertaining more than 6 million people. The band is composed of a ceremonial and concert band, jazz combo, and brass and woodwind quintets.

“Personally, I think this is this best thing I get to do as a Marine musician, bring toys to the children who don’t have any,” added Gilman. “That’s probably the highlight of my Marine career so far.” □



Marine Corps honors

CPL. FRANS E. LABRANCHE
MARINE FORCES RESERVE

Hundreds of people huddled beneath massive oak trees next to Grace Episcopal Church Nov. 3, to pay their last respects to Gen. Robert H. Barrow, 27th Commandant of the Marine Corps.

“Gen. Barrow really focused on people; he believed that it wasn’t so important how many people became Marines, but their quality,” said Lt. Gen. Jack

Bergman, commander of Marine Forces Reserve.

“He knew that the quality of his Marines would help overcome the challenges facing the Corps.”

Another Marine at the ceremony said Barrow’s belief and dedication to

the Corps may only have been rivaled by the Marines’ determination to honor him one last time.

“He deserves everything we can do for him,” said Gunnery Sgt. William Dixon, Marine Corps funeral director. “It’s nothing for us to dedicate this time and work to a man that worked for more than forty years for the Marine Corps.”

Barrow’s family, who has been a part of the St. Francisville community even before the Civil War, is well known throughout the town. Many residents also consider him somewhat of a legend.

“I think that it’s really inspiring to know that an American hero lives in your town,” said Dorothy



Lance Cpl. Mary Ann Staes

Body bearers from Marine Barracks Washington loaded the coffin of Gen. Robert H. Barrow into a hearse for a procession to funeral services via his home in St. Francisville, La.

Hammond, a neighbor and local shop owner. “Even in his death, Gen. Barrow has brought something beautiful (the ceremony) to this sleepy town.”

Gen. James Conway, commandant of the Marine Corps, and Gen. Carl Mundy, former commandant of the Marine Corps from 1991-1995, participated in the ceremony by delivering the eulogy and presenting the burial colors to Barrow’s next of kin.

According to an article published in the Advocate (La.) newspaper, Conway praised Barrow for his many initiatives ranging from recruiting to training.

“He did a lot to enhance our war-fighting capability, and on a strategic level, moved the Corps into the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He was a powerful kind of statesman,” Conway was quoted as saying.

Conway added “Our country is a safer place and the U.S. Marine Corps a better institution because of Gen. Robert H. Barrow.”

Barrow, who died in his sleep Oct. 30, joined the Marine Corps in 1942 and was commissioned in 1943, after which

27th Commandant

he deployed to the Far East with the 51st Replacement Battalion out of Camp Lejeune, N.C.

Shortly thereafter, Barrow received the Bronze Star for serving in Japanese-occupied central China. In June 1949, he assumed command of 1st Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division.

Barrow led Marines ashore at Inchon in September 1950. He received the Silver Star after fighting in Seoul, Korea, and the Navy Cross for actions during the Chosin Reservoir Campaign in December 1950.

In the early 1950's, Barrow was assigned to a then-classified position in the Far East on an island chain north of Taiwan. Then, in 1968 after serving in several overseas billets, Barrow took command of 9th Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division, in South Vietnam. In 1969, he received the Army Distinguished Service Cross for his valor during Operation Dewey Canyon. Later that year, he was promoted to brigadier general and took command of Camp Butler, Okinawa, Japan.



Master Sgt. Michael Retana

Officers hold the flags before presenting them to the family of Gen. Robert Barrow, during his Funeral on November 3. Gen. Barrow, the 27th Commandant of the Marine Corps, passed away in his sleep on Oct. 30.

During his tenure as commanding general of Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island, S.C., Barrow began a crusade to improve the quality of Marines being recruited into the Corps. He was selected as the assistant commandant of the Marine Corps in 1978.

In 1979, Congress confirmed Barrow as the commandant of the Marine Corps. He was the first Marine to serve a regular four-year tour as a full member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He continued his leadership in personnel reform, believing that a better quality of recruit led to an increase in performance and retention in an all-volunteer service.

Barrow retired in the summer of 1983 and served on the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board and the Packard Commission from his home in St. Francisville, La.

Barrow's personal decorations include the Navy Cross, the Army Distinguished Service Cross, Defense Distinguished Service Medal, Navy Distinguished Service Medal, Silver Star Medal, three Legions of Merit, Bronze Star Medal with Combat V and gold star in lieu of a second award, and the Combat Action Ribbon. □



Lance Cpl. Mary Ann Staes.

Marine Corps Barracks Washington ceremonial marchers step into place in front of Grace Episcopal church in St. Francisville, La., before the funeral services for Gen. Robert H. Barrow, 27th Commandant of the Marine Corps. More than 200 Marines were brought from Marine Barracks Washington for the service.

Composer chosen for Katrina piece

CPL. JOHNATHAN D. HERRING
MARINE FORCES RESERVE

New Orleans -- The Marine Forces Reserve Band has chosen its composer to help with a piece of music they are dedicating to the hurricane ravaged Gulf Coast.

Three years after Hurricane Katrina made her presence known, the MFR symphonic wind ensemble was hoping to meet the composer by September 2008, but Hurricane Gustav put a halt to that. Finally, on Nov. 5, the long awaited meeting took place. The MFR Band was introduced to Robert W. Smith, the musical composer who will be working with them to create this piece.

“There were 21 composers that responded to the inquiry of this project to write a piece to capture the spirit of the rebirth of New Orleans,” said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Michael J. Smith, the officer in charge of the MFR Band. “Based on the criteria and the experience level and association with the people, Robert was the one that was awarded the contract.”



Staff Sgt. Seth A. Gehman.

Composer Robert W. Smith speaks to members of the Marine Forces Reserve Band during a recent visit. Smith is doing research for a piece he is writing to dedicate to the people of New Orleans and other victims of Hurricane Katrina. The piece is expected to be performed by the MFR band in the spring of 2009.

Robert, who also teaches music creation and music business at the University of Troy in Alabama, says he has a certain motivation the other composers might not have.

“I was a military brat. My father is retired Army and is buried in Arlington National Cemetery, and I jump at any opportunity given to work with the military,” said Robert. “For me, to take what I can do and hopefully aid and assist in their mission is probably the greatest thing I can do in terms of serving the country.”

Aside from wanting to do his part in helping Marines complete their mission, Robert has a personal motive as well. He says he can connect to the people of New Orleans because he had a similar situation.

“I’m also in a healing process,” Robert said. “When Hurricane Ivan hit, I was one of those guys you watched on TV. There was 15 feet of water on my property. I am still dealing with it. Writing this piece is part of that healing process. It was... amazing... to watch what unfolded here, and I feel like I’ve almost walked that walk, although it was a different storm.”

“Between the military ties and my personal experience with dealing with a storm, I’m hoping to take whatever gifts I have to help bring attention and help the mission of this particular area,” Robert continued.

Both Michael and Robert have agreed that putting together a tribute piece as big as this one takes time, effort and a lot of research.

“Writing any new piece takes research,” said Robert. “The music can’t just come together, contrary to popular belief; everything has to be looked at. What kind of emotions are we trying to set? What do we want the audience to walk away with? What are my musicians’ strengths/weaknesses? All of this comes into play.”

Robert said that in creating this piece, he’s trying to move himself emotionally and that in doing that, hopefully it will move others.

A date hasn’t been set for the performance, but Robert and the MFR Band are eagerly shooting for next spring. □

Sgt. Kenneth Avery, an MFR Toys for Tots coordinator, takes a break to chat with Manson McDonald and Jackie Haynes, who reside in the home that Marines and civilian volunteers helped rebuild during the first and second weekends of October. This is an ongoing effort by MFR to help restore New Orleans and its surrounding communities.



1st Lt. Adrian Ambe

Marines lend rebuilding hand to neighbors

CPL. JOHNATHAN D. HERRING
MARINE FORCES RESERVE

New Orleans – Marines, Sailors and civilian volunteers banded together here on the first and second weekend of October to help local residents repair their home, which had been destroyed in Hurricane Katrina.

Manson McDonald, a 62 year resident of the 9th Ward in East New Orleans, lost his house when the levee broke after Hurricane Katrina's storm surges. He and his daughter, Jackie Haynes, evacuated to Las Vegas for two years. Haynes cares for her 87-year-old father, who suffers from the beginning stages of dementia.

"Mr. McDonald has owned this house for 34 years," said Mary Sarsfield, an Americorps volunteer for Rebuilding Together, a national nonprofit organization that rehabilitates homes for low-income homeowners, particularly the elderly and those with disabilities. "He has really shown us how much he appreciates our help."

The volunteers helped paint the home.

"It's good for me and the other Marines to give back to the community," said Sgt. Kenneth Avery, one of the MFR volunteers. "It shows that we have big hearts."

Haynes says that she has been eagerly waiting to move back into their home.

"The Marines really came at a good time," said Haynes. "I didn't know how I was going to be able to get the work finished on my home. They were a real God-send. I have been truly blessed."

MFR has been steadily helping New Orleans and its surrounding communities get back to normal since the category three storm ravaged the city on Aug. 29, 2005.

The McDonald home is just one of many that the Marines are helping to restore.

If you would like to volunteer, contact the Marine Forces Reserve Public Affairs Office at 504-678-0700. □

Service members volunteer for local KaBOOM!

1ST LT. ADRIAN AMBE
MARINE FORCES RESERVE

New Orelans -- More than 35 Marines, sailors and soldiers from Naval Support Activity New Orleans and Naval Air Station, Joint Reserve Base Belle Chasse joined more than 120 volunteers from across the country Wednesday in a building project sponsored by KaBOOM! at Trinity Learning Center Inc., in Violet, La.

The volunteers helped build a new playground for the school, by doing general yard clean-up and leveling, mulch hauling and raking, and playground equipment installation.

More than 120 cubic yards of mulch and more than 12 tons of concrete was used for the project.

Cpl. LaToya McIntosh, one of the 12 Marine volunteers was excited about the build project and its overall objective.



1st Lt. Adrian Ambe

Sgt. Nickolas Finewood, Cpl. Lobo Yurandir and Cpl. Melissa St. John listen to their team captain issue instructions for the construction of the playground's school bus. The project was among others which included assembly of a swing-set, building a slide and assembling decks and posts around the playground.

Lance Cpl. Rusty Henderson rakes mulch as Lance Cpl. Cory Howell hauls it in a tarpaulin. Henderson and Howell volunteered for the KaBoom! playground build Oct. 1, in Violet, La. "It is fun and hard work to build a playground. Small unit leadership is the key ingredient that has carried the project," said Henderson. The Marines amongst other volunteers hauled more than 120 cubic yards of mulch to be distributed around the playground.



1st Lt. Adrian Ambe

"I love it! Helping out this community, makes me feel good. I remember growing up not having a safe playing ground, however through our efforts, the children of this local community will realize a safe and fun playground," said McIntosh.

According to Mr. Darell Hammond, co-founder of KaBOOM!, this was the 51st playground build in the Gulf Coast area and the 112th since Hurricanes Rita and Katrina.

"We appreciate the support of Marines participating in builds all the way to the state of Mississippi. We acknowledge the sacrifice which is a shining light on the armed forces character that shares the cause, alongside its other responsibilities," said Hammond.

KaBOOM! is a national non-profit organization that envisions a great place to play within walking distance of every child in America. □

Marine translator honored for military, community efforts

CAPT. ERIN WIENER
MARINE FORCES RESERVE

San Diego – The National Defense Industry Association (NDIA) recently named Col. David L. Inmon “Twice a Citizen” for his outstanding contribution to the country and community.

“Our award to these individuals, who serve others so selflessly, symbolizes of the value our nation puts on such service,” said Michael Woiwode, awards chief for the San Diego chapter of the NDIA.

The NDIA presents these awards to honor reserve or guard personnel who have deployed in support of the nation’s priorities and who, while deployed, made exceptional contributions to the nation. An honoree was selected from each of the armed services, and Inmon was named for the Marine Forces Reserve.

Inmon deployed in support of 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, Calif., and was assigned to the Coalition Military Assistance Training Team (CMATT), Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq (MNSTC-I). CMATT is responsible for manning, training and equipping the new Iraqi Army, and MNSTC-I specifically handles the Iraqi Security Forces.

“It was one of the most challenging rewarding things I’ve ever done. I got really lucky with the job that I got. I got to be the OIC (officer-in-charge) of Besmaya Range Complex, (it was like) a mini-Twenty-nine Palms. In 10 months, it got incredibly busy, training over 3,000 Iraqi soldiers, akin to predeployment training,” said Inmon.

Inmon’s efforts laid the groundwork for Besmaya Range to become the most active live-fire training facility in Iraq, according to the award nomination.

Inmon was assigned as a transition team advisor to Col. Abbas, the Iraqi army colonel who commanded the Besmaya Eagles at BRC and worked closely with the Iraqi Army to train the staff. Inmon led a team of over 150 soldiers, Marines and civilian contractors in support of the training mission. He developed and executed a training



Official Marine Corps Photo

Col. David L. Inmon shakes hands with an Iraqi tribal leader. Inmon received an award for his work with the Iraqi people to better their society, and assist with the transition of U.S. forces out of Iraq.

plan that would enable Iraqi Army soldiers to take the lead in running the base.

The program greatly increased the capabilities of the Iraqi Army there, according to the citation.

Inmon cites his support as reason for success there. “I had great people working for me. I look back on it very fondly.”

In addition to the successful expansion of the Besmaya Range complex and its capabilities, Inmon impacted the local community beyond the range through missions that included providing medical support and repairing schools, meeting with tribal elders and being recognized by the Iraqi Minister of Defense for his work.

Inmon saw a lot of positive change over the time he was there.

“I’d go back to Iraq in a heartbeat if I could be part of the solution there and assist with the rebuilding of the Iraq economy,” he said.

The award brought a sense of recognition and gratitude from American citizens to Inmon.

“The sense I get is that the general population is very proud of the military and very gratified for the job that we are doing for them.” □

Marines settle in at

CAPT. PAUL L. GREENBERG

MARINE FORCES RESERVE



Capt. Paul L. Greenberg

A Marine from 2nd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team-5, waits to take off from Al Asad Air Base, Iraq, for Camp Korean Village in a CH-53 helicopter Sept. 20. The battalion's current deployment is their second overseas in support of the Global War on Terror. Their expected tour of duty here is seven months.

CAMP KOREAN VILLAGE, Iraq — Marines from 2nd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 5, headquartered in Garden City, N.Y., arrived here during the latter part of September to support RCT-5's security and stability mission in western al-Anbar province.

"We're here primarily to conduct counter-insurgency operations with joint and coalition forces in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom," said Maj. Timothy Murphy, the battalion's intelligence officer.

Maj. Byron Duke, the battalion executive officer, emphasized that the Marines will also mentor and provide operational overwatch for Iraqi Security Forces as they assume more responsibility for the area's security.

Korean Village was first utilized as a forward observation base by the Marines in 2004 to monitor the Syrian and Jordanian borders with Iraq, both less than a hundred miles from the base.

According to Maj. Christopher Donnelly, the RCT-5 historian, American troops gave Korean Village its



Capt. Paul L. Greenberg

A Marine from 2nd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team-5, debarks a CH-53 helicopter at Camp Korean Village, Iraq, Sept. 20. The battalion, which is headquartered in Garden City, N.Y., arrived here during September to support RCT-5's security and stability mission in western al-Anbar province.

t Korean Village



Capt. Paul L. Greenberg

Lance Cpl. Alex Briere, Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 5, debarks a CH-53 helicopter at Camp Korean Village, Iraq, Sept. 20. The battalion arrived in Iraq in September to support Regimental Combat Team-5's security and stability mission in western al-Anbar Province.

moniker because the camp was the site of an area inhabited by Korean laborers who built the main supply route leading from Baghdad to western al-Anbar Province during the reign of Saddam Hussein.

The name stuck, and coalition forces still use the base as a launching pad for operations to intercept criminal elements crossing over the border and heading east toward Baghdad and other population centers.

The battalion will share the area of operations with 1st Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, RCT-5, an active-duty Marine unit based at Camp Pendleton, Calif.

The battalion's current deployment is their second overseas in support of the Global War on Terror. Their expected tour of duty here is seven months. □



Capt. Paul L. Greenberg

Marines from 2nd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team-5, patrol the streets in the town of Rutbah, Iraq, Sept. 24. The town is located in western al-Anbar province. The battalion's current deployment is their second overseas in support of the Global War on Terror.

Surgeon takes reins on economic development in rural Iraq

CAPT. PAUL L. GREENBERG
MARINE FORCES RESERVE

CAMP KOREAN VILLAGE, Iraq— When Navy Cmdr. Dennis McKenna took his Hippocratic oath as a medical doctor in 1992, he vowed to devote his life to improving the welfare of human beings.

In the rural town of Rutbah in Iraq's western al-Anbar Province, his efforts have gone beyond working with Coalition forces and the Iraqi Ministry of the Interior to reopen Rutbah's only hospital. He is using his professional experience and business acumen to help the impoverished town establish an economic base.

McKenna is the battalion surgeon for 2nd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment, 4th Marine Division. A Navy reservist himself, he is currently on a one-year mobilization with the battalion.

Although he primarily has a science and medical background, McKenna volunteered to take on the collateral duty as the economics line of operations officer (LOO).

The battalion's line of operations officers glean from

their professional and military backgrounds to serve as advisors for local Iraqi governments in areas such as governance, essential services and rule of law.

The lines of operations are about setting the people of Rutbah up for success. We need to find those people, those Bill Gates and Thomas Jeffersons. These people have been reluctant to show their potential in the past because of the situation that existed here for so long," said McKenna

McKenna explained that the most important thing is getting out into the community, talking to "the average man on the street," and getting the whole story.

McKenna made his rounds through the city Oct. 20-21, escorted by Marines and Sailors from Weapons and Golf Companies, 2nd Bn., 25th Marines on a series of security patrols, speaking with Iraqis from all socioeconomic strata to get a clear picture of the overall economic situation in order to determine how he can work with local Iraqi leaders to improve it.

The project is not an easy one, considering the fact that this remote part of the country, about 230 miles from Baghdad, is just beginning to transition to a full-fledged democracy with a free-market economy. More than half the adult population is unemployed. Furthermore, Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces have only recently quelled the violent insurgency which rocked al-Anbar province for more than three years.

"On a macro level, we're not going to solve all their problems in five months," said McKenna. "We make our recommendations so that they can find Iraqi solutions to their problems here."

When meeting with the Rutbah City Council Oct. 21, Muthana Jubaer Juwana, the city council president, told McKenna that most local Iraqi businessmen with the capital to invest are putting their money into businesses in Jordan and Oman. Juwana alluded to foreign investment in a large-scale business, such as a cement or glass factory, as the town's main hope to provide jobs.

"They have the skills and potential here," said McKenna. "They built this city. They have educated people. We just need to focus on establishing a cadre of business leaders who have confidence in their city." □



Capt. Paul L. Greenberg Assisted by Bashar Basem Radi Ayesh (center), an interpreter from Amman Jordan, Navy Cmdr. Dennis McKenna (left), the battalion surgeon and economic line of operations officer with 2nd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment, speaks with a shop owner in Rutbah, Iraq, in order to assess the economic conditions for small business owners.

Toys bridge gap between Marines, small-town children

CAPT. PAUL L. GREENBERG
MARINE FORCES RESERVE

RUTBAH, Iraq— When people typically think of Marines on a combat patrol in Iraq, the last thing that comes to mind is the image of fluffy stuffed animals.

However, with the help of a grass-roots organization in the United States, the Marines of 2nd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 5 spread American goodwill to the children of Iraq Oct. 21-23. The Marines distributed more than a hundred stuffed animals while patrolling the streets of Rutbah, an impoverished town of about 20,000 in western al-Anbar province.

“The (stuffed animals) help to connect us to the local children and for them to view us in a positive light,” said Capt. Tim Leonard, 30, a Stamford, Conn., resident who is serving as the battalion’s communications officer. “We are fortunate that people back in the states have donated the stuffed animals to benefit the children of Iraq.”

The gesture is key in building relationships between Coalition forces and the Iraqi civilians in Rutbah, most of whom have had little interaction with the Marines and Sailors.

“By engaging the local population and giving out stuffed animals to the children, we show the people of Rutbah that we are here to help them to rebuild their community and assist them in their efforts,” explained Leonard, a reserve Marine with more than seven years in the Corps and who is on his second tour in Iraq. “Humanitarian assistance is increasingly important for us, and any measure of good will is well received.”

Sara Khalid Rafa’a, 11, a native of Rutbah, received two stuffed animals from Marines Oct. 23 while walking home from school with her friends. These were the only stuffed animals she has ever received in her life.

“I want to say thank you to the people who sent them,” said Rafa’a through an interpreter. In addition to passing out the toys while on patrol, the battalion’s religious program specialist, Petty Officer 3rd Class Michael Marie, includes the stuffed animals in his weekly care packages



Capt. Tim Leonard

A Marine from 2nd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 5 gives stuffed animals to children on their way home from school in Rutbah, Iraq, Oct. 21. The toys were donated and mailed to Iraq by citizens from throughout the United States.

that he prepares for less-fortunate families in Rutbah.

“Local Iraqi leaders have identified close to 200 widows and their families for us to help, and you can be sure that most of these women have more than one child,” said Marie.

“I’m always happy to throw in stuffed animals when I have them,” explained Marie. “The food we deliver meets a physical need, but it doesn’t say, ‘We care,’ the same way a stuffed teddy bear or puppy dog can.”

Since the Marines began passing out the toys to the city’s children and parents, some of the tension that the Marines felt in the city has dissipated, and some of the local citizens’ wary glances have been replaced with appreciative smiles. □

Gotham cop trades plain cloth

CAPT. PAUL L. GREENBERG
MARINE FORCES RESERVE

COMBAT OUTPOST TREBIL, Iraq— When Sgt. Joan A. Ferreira took off his Marine Corps uniform in July 2006 and joined the New York City Police Department, he thought he was saying good-bye to the Corps forever.

The Marine Corps, however, had other plans for him.

Ferreira is now a 24-year old squad leader with Task Force Military Police, Multi-National Force-West, based at the Port of Trebil, a desolate border crossing between Iraq and Jordan.

The turn of events that brought Ferreira from patrolling the streets of East Harlem to the western fringes of al-Anbar province began with a letter he received in February 2008 from Marine Corps Mobilization Command in Kansas City, Mo.

The registered letter directed Ferreira to report within 90 days to Camp Lejeune, N.C., for a one-year, active duty mobilization.

“I had mixed feelings,” said Ferreira, who had been working on foot patrols for more than a year in one of the most crime-ridden sections of New York City. “I like being a cop. You know when you find your niche in life; I found mine in the NYPD. It was hard to leave my job and my family to come back in.”

Ferreira was also working on his bachelor’s degree full-time, sharing an apartment with his twin brother, who works in New York City as an investment banker.

Although he had completed his four-year active duty commitment in the Marine Corps in July 2006, Ferreira still had four years of obligated service in the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR).

All U.S. active duty service members, upon joining the military, incur an eight-year commitment. Most are on active duty for four or six years, and then serve the remainder of their contract in the IRR.

During their time in the IRR, service members can be recalled to active duty at any time for a period of up to 12 months, with one additional month for leave.

In July 2006, the President of the United States authorized the Marine Corps to involuntarily activate up

to a maximum of 2,500 Marines from the IRR at any given time, according to Maj. Winston Jimenez, 41, the public affairs officer for Marine Corps Mobilization Command, who is a native of Merriam, Kan.

There are currently about 1,000 IRR Marines mobilized on active duty in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

As IRR Marines complete their year and are deactivated, said Jimenez, others can be involuntarily activated, so long as the total number of IRR Marines on involuntary active duty at one time does not exceed 2,500.

Jimenez explained the reasoning behind using IRR Marines to augment active duty forces.

“The commandant of the Marine Corps has established minimum unit-manning levels for units to deploy in support of the Global War on Terrorism,” said Jimenez. “Individual Ready Reservists are used to fill the unit manning shortages and raise the units to required deployment manning levels.”

Task Force MP, which also consists of Marines from MP Co., Marine Wing Support Squadron 271, and 1st Battalion, 12th Marines, needed a number of key junior leaders, like Ferreira, to fill out their ranks. In the spirit of “once a



Sgt. Joan A. Ferreira (left), a 24-year-old New York City Police Officer, Multi-National Force-West, departed his Marines Oct. 15. Ferreira is a New York City Police Ready Reservist currently on one-year mobilization.

es for Marine Corps cammies



Capt. Paul L. Greenberg

and team leader with Task Force Military
its Combat Outpost Trebil on patrol with
ork City police officer and Individual
mobilization orders.

Marine Corps knowledge that every Marine should know mostly weapons and convoy security,” said Ferreira, who served his first hitch as a motor transport operator. “The training was a refresher to get us back into the Marine Corps mindset. All the knowledge was still in the back of my brain housing group.”

Before deploying to Iraq, Ferreira spent the summer training with his new unit at Marine Corps bases in North Carolina and at Fort Polk, La., an Army base.

While at Fort Polk, Task Force MP went through an intensive 30-day exercise called “Cajun Viper.” Training side-by-side with U.S. Army soldiers from the 82nd Airborne Division, the Marines learned critical anti-

Marine, always a Marine,” Ferreira answered the call.

“Getting back into the Marine Corps way of thinking was tough after being out for two years and being an independent operator,” explained Ferreira.

Before joining Task Force MP in May 2008, he went through administrative processing and physical examinations at Camp Lejeune, then attended an abbreviated infantry course to ensure that his warrior skills were honed.

“It was basic

insurgency tactics and techniques. Many of the scenarios were set in an urban warfare environment and included thousands of Iraqi role players to lend a sense of realism to the training.

In the end, Task Force MP emerged a cohesive team that was prepared to face any assigned mission during their seven-month tour in Iraq.

Ferreira’s team is currently responsible for monitoring traffic through the Port of Trebil, checking identification badges, passports and biometrics information to catch insurgents and other criminals on the lam.

As the only major border port with Jordan, one of Iraq’s primary trading partners, Trebil is the crossing point for almost all vehicle traffic and commerce traversing the two countries.

Because the border port is a hot spot for insurgents and other criminals to pass into and out of Iraq, Ferreira’s Marines and their Iraqi counterparts vigilantly check those entering and leaving the country for counterfeit passports and identification badges and analyze the biometrics data to find and/or track people of interest.

Although the possibility of a terrorist attack at the border is always present, Ferreira expressed that the atmosphere in Iraq is less hostile than what he faced day-to-day back in East Harlem, which the police refer to as an “impact zone.”

Nonetheless, Ferreira is disappointed about missing his shot at moving on to being a plain-clothes police officer this past summer, the first step to achieving his life-long goal of becoming a narcotics detective.

Ferreira cited his sense of obligation to his country and his community for aspiring toward a position in such a dangerous field.

“It’s the guy that would be selling drugs to my kids, to anybody’s kids,” he said. “You aren’t who you really are when you’re on drugs. It leads to theft, assault, and other criminal activities.... Chasing these people down, cleaning up the streets, that’s what I really want to be doing.”

Regardless of his personal druthers, however, Ferreira, like thousands of other U.S. military veterans from all branches of the service in the IRR, continues to serve on the front lines of the Global War on Terror. □

Reserve MP spices up life for hungry Marines

CAPT. PAUL L. GREENBERG
MARINE FORCES RESERVE

COMBAT OUTPOST TREBIL, Iraq— When you step into the chow hall here, the first thing you notice is the smell of gourmet coffee. Next, you notice an orderly array of shelf-stable meals displayed in cubbies along the plywood walls, available to the post's Marines 24-hours a day.

If you come during morning or evening chow hours, you will find home-cooked meals, made mostly from scratch.

These amenities were made possible, in large part, by the knowledge, skills and experience of one of the post's most junior Marines, Lance Cpl. Jennifer Shell, who is currently serving as the chow hall manager.

Shell, a military police officer, joined the Corps after graduating from culinary school with a bachelor's degree in hotel and restaurant management in 2005.

According to Shell, she enlisted in the Marine Corps "because of the pride associated with it, and more importantly because of my dad, who served on MSG [Marine Security Guard] detail in Singapore during the Vietnam War."

The first five months of Shell's tour here were spent serving in the role of military police officer, responsible for the outpost's security and supporting the various U.S. military advisor training teams and convoy escort personnel that the base houses when they aren't out on missions in this remote and barren region on the Iraqi-Jordanian border.

A member of Military Police Company B, 4th Marine Logistics Group, based in North Versailles, Pa., Shell and four other reserve Marines from her unit deployed as individual augments to 3rd Battalion, 10th Marine Regiment's Task Force MP.

Five months into her unit's tour, Shell's squad leader, Cpl. Kristyn Stewart, from Pittsburgh, recommended that Shell be appointed to take over management of the chow hall from a more senior Marine.

"She's a restaurant manager and graduate of culinary school," said Stewart, 26, who is on her third mobilization and tour in Iraq. "I identified a need, and (Shell) was a perfect fit for the job."



courtesy of Dhurgham Takleef Abdulzahra

Lance Cpl. Jennifer Shell, a military policewoman who is currently serving as the chow hall manager at a combat outpost near the Port of Trebil on the Iraq-Syrian border, enjoys a visit with children at an Iranian Kurd refugee camp in the region on May 15. Shell is with Military Police Company B, 4th Marine Logistics Group, based in North Versailles, Pa.

Cpl. Nathan Dahlheimer, 28, is a military policeman and squad leader from Monticello, Minn, attached to 3rd Bn., 10th Marines. "The menu became really monotonous after five months and everything was boiled, usually in a bag," said Dahlheimer. "Lance Corporal Shell prepared real meals from scratch. She helped improve morale, as her meals gave us something to look forward to every night."

Not only did Shell's experience create better meals, her work has enhanced the overall service of the chow hall in a number of ways.

"I thought it was outstanding," said Gunnery Sgt. Jason Stephens who is serving as team chief for the Port of Entry Transition Team. "I was very impressed with Shell, as a junior Marine, taking over the job and running with it."

"Cooking for people here is much more fulfilling than cooking in the civilian world," said Shell with an ear-to-ear smile. "The Marines simply appreciate it more." □

New York's 2/25 attacks Shadow Range

LANCE CPL. FREDRICK J. COLEMAN
3RD MAW PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE (FORWARD)

AL ANBAR PROVINCE, Iraq – Activated reserve Marines from the Garden City, New York-based Company F, 2nd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward) tackled the challenges of a combined-arms training here Oct. 20 – 25.

The Marines were the first to train at the recently completed training facility known as Shadow Range.

As the role of Marines deployed to Anbar continues to shift to advising Iraqi security forces, the facility affords troops a means of maintaining combined-arms capabilities while supporting over-watch missions in the region.

Fox Co. practiced combat scenarios that challenged their ability to communicate and move under fire. Simulated enemies fired at the Marines from trenches. Marines dashed to covered positions and practiced establishing mortar firing points. Squad leaders barked orders into radio handsets setting teams of Marines in motion on the training range.

The company concluded their training with a live-fire



Lance Cpl. Fredrick J. Coleman

Round casings fly off the M-249 squad automatic weapon as Lance Cpl. Tony DeLaire fires at a target here Oct. 20. "The more I shoot the weapon, the more I learn about it, making it easier for me to determine problems with it should any arise," said DeLaire.

assault course in which the Marines put their refreshed combat skills to the test. Squads moved through the course employing a variety of weapons – mortars, rocket launchers, machine guns and their service rifles. During the movement, they engaged a simulated enemy hidden in the desert hills.

"Now that we have the range, we have the ability to get the Marine skills back up to the level they were when they departed from the states," said Maj. Tom Armas, the company's commanding officer.

The exercises provided the unit an ideal opportunity to refresh ground combat skills and afforded instructors at the range an opportunity to evaluate the new facility and their curriculum.

"The range is still in testing phase right now," said Chief Warrant Officer 5 Stuart White, gunner, Advanced Infantry Training Center, Multi National Forces-West. "After the first group goes through, the instructors will look at the reports and make adjustments to the range to get the most out of the training."

During their six-month deployment, the unit will continue to rotate Marines through combined-arms training at Shadow Range. Marines who have completed the training will return about once a week to maintain their combat skills. □



Lance Cpl. Frederick J. Coleman

Mortarmen with Co. F, 2nd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment dig a fighting hole after arriving at Shadow Range for five days of training that began Oct. 20. The training ended with a live-fire exercise that tested their decision-making skills and ability to work as a unit. "The exercise went very well and I'm glad to serve with these Marines," said Staff Sgt. Mark Pagan, a platoon commander with the unit.

Reserve commander a

CAPT. PAUL L. GREENBERG
MARINE FORCES RESERVE

CAMP KOREAN VILLAGE, Iraq— When Lt. Col. Geoff Rollins took command of 2nd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team in October 2006, he had a daunting task before him.

Rollins had 18 months to prepare his Marines for mobilization and deployment to Iraq.

Reservists attend weekend drills one weekend each month and an annual training session each year in order to keep their proficiency honed in their military occupational specialties. The rest of the time, many reservists have typical American lives, with full-time civilian jobs and families.

Rollins, 42, drives more than 700 miles round trip from his home in Richmond, Va., once a month to attend his

battalion's drills. He balances his commitment to the Corps with his family, business career and passion for motorcycle riding.

In accordance with Marine Forces Reserve's structure, 2nd Bn., 25th Marines is geographically dispersed, for the most part, throughout the northeastern U.S. Weapons Company is co-located with the battalion's Headquarters and Service Company in Garden City, N.Y.; Company E is based in Harrisburg, Pa.; and Companies F and G are in Albany, N.Y., and Dover, N.J., respectively. The battalion also includes a heavy-weapons detachment from Broken Arrow, Okla.

Although each company drills together one weekend each month, the battalion only comes together once a year for their annual training, which typically lasts between two to four weeks.

Prior to the battalion's mobilization in May, they



Capt. Paul L. Greenberg

Lt. Col. Geoff Rollins (right) and Sgt. Maj. Anthony Allen distribute candy to children in Rutbah, Iraq, during their visit to a primary school with the town mayor Nov. 18. Rollins is the commander of 2nd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 5, and Allen is the battalion sergeant major.

adapts and overcomes

received several hundred individual augmentations from other Marine units to fill out their ranks. The end result was a melting pot of both reserve and active duty service members, both new recruits and veterans, who hail from companies and detachments in 11 states.

They were trained and ready by September to join First Marine Expeditionary Force, an active duty unit based in Camp Pendleton, Calif., which was already in Iraq.

“Through teamwork we can maintain our traditional relationship between reserve and active components,” said Rollins. “I want this battalion to be the epitome of the total force concept. Discipline means doing what is right, all the time.”

The battalion is currently based at Camp Korean Village in Iraq’s western al-Anbar province with the mission of mentoring and providing operational over watch of Iraqi Security Forces.

Rollins cited one of his biggest challenges as “the loss of critical pieces of our pre-deployment training program,” as shortly before mobilization, the battalion’s timeline was moved up 30 days.

Next, shortly before their arrival in Iraq, Rollins was informed that he would have to divide his unit into two separate elements, geographically dispersed, after arriving in-country.

However, in classic Marine Corps fashion, the commander learned to adapt and overcome.

“First and foremost, our greatest accomplishment thus far is the successful split of the battalion for its two missions,” said Rollins.

“This has not been done since World War II, and we have successfully executed two distinct missions as two separate task forces. The security-force detachment has made significant improvements to the force-protection posture of Al Asad Air base. The (Korean Village) detachment continues to separate the insurgents from the population with an aggressive patrolling plan, coupled with lines-of-operations management that has involved the battalion in key leader engagements, where we are working with the local government officials in their attempt to build capacity for growth. These lines of operation include economics, government, rule of law and communications.”

Rollins credits much of the success to the increased level of maturity which reservists bring to the table. He explained that this is due, in large part, to the years of both active duty service in the Marine Corps and subsequent civilian work experience, particularly in the fields of



Capt. Paul L. Greenberg
Lt. Col. Geoff Rollins (rear, center), commanding officer, 2nd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 5, and Qasum Marai Awwad, mayor of Rutbah, visit a classroom at Huran Primary School Nov. 18. This is the battalion’s third mobilization since 2002 and their second deployment to Iraq.

emergency medicine and police work.

As a sales consultant for a major information technology firm for 12 years, Rollins cites his own professional experience as a critical element of his development as a leader of Marines.

“Strength comes from cohesion and unity,” wrote Rollins in his command philosophy. “The majority of our Marines and Sailors only spend a fraction of their lives in the Corps. During this period, we need to provide them the opportunity for improvement, not only to make a better Marine or Sailor, but more importantly a better American citizen. We need to help form positive attitudes of service, honor and commitment. We owe them nothing less.”

Rollins’ previous combat tours include serving as a platoon commander with 1st Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment in Operation Desert Storm in 1991, a company commander for 1st Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment during Operation Restore Hope in Somalia in 1993 and as commanding officer of Company E, 2nd Bn., 25th Marines in 2003 during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

This is the battalion’s third mobilization since 2002 and their second deployment to Iraq. □

Texas Marines refine skills at Fort Sill

CPL. JOHNATHAN D. HERRING
MARINE FORCES RESERVE

FORT SILL, Oklahoma – Leathernecks with 6th Motor Transportation Battalion, trained extensively on an array of weapons and tactics here Oct. 16 – 18, for their four day drill weekend.

The Marines made the drive from their home base in Lubbock, Texas, on Thursday and right away got into classes on the M249 Squad Automatic Weapon, the M240G Medium Machine Gun and the M2 .50 caliber machine gun. They also received a class on Improvised Explosive Devices.

On Friday, they were given the opportunity to fire the weapons before training on nighttime convoys and driving with night-vision goggles.

“The 50 cal. was my favorite weapon to fire,” said Pvt. Matthew C. Tiffin, who is fresh out of Marine Combat Training (MCT) and hopes to be a motor vehicle operator with the battalion upon completion of school. “We didn’t fire the 50 at MCT, so I really enjoyed today’s training. This is just my second drill, but I’m learning a lot,” continued the Midland, Texas, native.

The Marines fired the SAW from both short and long distances, but they fired the M240G and M2 from a range of about 500 meters. They mounted an M2 on top of one of their MK-23 motor transport vehicle replacement trucks (7-ton).

“Our veterans haven’t fired these weapons in over a year, and our younger Marines have never fired some of these weapons,” said Capt. Matthew Beuchert, who plays dual roles as both the Inspector Instructor and the company commander for Direct Support Motor Transport Co. B. “This is an eight drill weekend and with the amount of time we can get these guys, they need to get some trigger time with crew-served weapons, especially firing from the vehicles. They also need to familiarize themselves with the nighttime driving, to get a feel of the effects of driving with no depth perception.”

While one squad fired the weapons, another would get a chance to talk to both the battalion commander and the battalion sergeant major, who have been flying to all of their units to get some face-to-face time with their Marines.

“We have units spread out all over the United States,” said Sgt. Maj. Donnie G. Boyer, battalion sergeant major. “Our job is not to just sit there in Red Bank, New Jersey,



Cpl. Johnathan D. Herring

One of the missions of the Marines training at Ft. Sill, Ok., the weekend of Oct. 16-18, was to fire the M2 .50 caliber machine gun from a turret on top of a MK-23 motor transport vehicle replacement truck (7-ton).

and shoot out e-mails and make phone calls. You have to get out in the field to be able to see how your Marines are doing.”

During chow, some of the Marines were presented coins from Boyer. Lance Cpl. Josiah Scully, a motor vehicle mechanic, Cpl. Jordan Eads, an administrative clerk, and Petty Officer 2nd Class David Domingo, a corpsman, all received coins from Boyer for distinguishing themselves from the others. Scully and Eads are scheduled to be meritoriously promoted on Nov. 2, and Domingo was the corpsman of the quarter.

“I had the opportunity to congratulate these Lubbock Marines on taking the Marine of the Quarter, NCO of the Quarter and Corpsman of the Quarter boards. They’re obviously doing something right here,” said Boyer.

Lt. Col. J. Eric Davis Jr., the commanding officer, said that he was excited about getting out and meeting his Marines.

“One of the great things about being the battalion CO is that you get to fly around to all the sites and see what they’re doing and to reinvigorate yourself,” said Davis.

Once he met the Marines, Davis said this unit more than surpassed his expectations.

“I’ve been in the Marine Corps Reserves for more than 13 years, and I’ve never heard of a 100 percent participation from a unit,” said Davis, “I’m astounded and pleased that the Lubbock Marines have managed to do that.” □

National shooting record set (twice?)

GUNNERY SGT. JULIA WATSON
MARINE FORCES RESERVE

PHOENIX – Imagine setting a new national record, shooting from 800, 900, and 1,000 yards without a scope on your rifle, only to find out that you must fire the course again. This is exactly what happened to Gunnery Sgt. Justin Skaret during the Arizona State Long Range Palma Championships in November of 2007.

The Palma Trophy Match is shot in three stages of slow fire in the prone position using an iron-sight .308-caliber rifle with a 155-grain bullet. Competitors aim for targets that have a 20-inch bull's eye 800, 900, and 1,000 yards away.

On the first day of the three-day competition, Skaret, the recently appointed head coach of the Marine Forces Reserve Rifle Team and the only Marine on the 2007 United States Palma Team, had not dropped any points and was only down four X's (center shots) going into the last

stage of fire. Rain prevented the other relays of shooters from finishing the course, which resulted in the final stage being rescheduled for the last day. Skaret's national record score of 450-35x for the 1,000 yd line was removed, and he would need to re-shoot that stage.

Skaret thought he had to shoot another perfect score to set the record and recalls, "About my third shot in, I shot a nine ... that ticked me off, because I thought I had just lost the record, so I just started hammering rounds down range. When I was finished, I had shot a 149-10x which gave me an aggregate of 449-36x." The previous record was only 449-20x, which meant that Skaret's score of 449-36x, along with his determination and talent, would indeed secure the record in his name.

After the record was verified by the National Rifle Association, Skaret was presented with a Secretary of the Navy Trophy Rifle. When asked what it felt like to have shot the record twice and to have a rifle awarded, Skaret said, "It was frustrating [to re-fire], but I was happy to have set the record regardless, and I definitely felt it was an honor to receive the rifle, because it's pretty rare for the Marine Corps to award someone a rifle." The rifle was awarded during the National High-power Rifle Championships on the ranges of Camp Perry, Ohio, in August 2008.

"Tryouts were tough for me." Skaret added, "We had to shoot against previous Palma Team members who were more experienced." With tryouts being solely an individual effort, Skaret said, "My wind reading ability wasn't up to par back then, and I ended up placing 21 of 28 people not cut from the 110 trying out." With additional evaluations and in specialized training sessions, Skaret's hard work paid off when he became one of 16 people selected as firing members on the U. S. Palma Team in October 2005.

"Becoming a member of the United States Palma Team felt like an accomplishment for me because Palma is considered the pinnacle of long-range prone shooting." The World Long Range Championship is a quadrennial event. In team competition, the United States has won 13 of the 27 Palma competitions that have been conducted since the championship started in 1876. □



Gunnery Sgt. Julia Watson

August 2008 at the National Service Rifle Championships, Gunnery Sgt. Justin Skaret, member of the Marine Forces Reserve Rifle Team, is awarded a Secretary of the Navy Trophy Rifle by the Officer in Charge of the Reserve Shooting Teams, Lt. Col. Thomas Reid. Skaret set a new National Service Record of 449-36x out of 450 in November 2007 at the Long Range Palma Championships in Phoenix.

3/14, Inspector and Instructor receives Bronze Star

LANCE CPL. MICHAEL LAYCOCK
MARINE FORCE RESERVE

NEW ORLEANS – Capt. Joseph Lizarraga, Inspector/Instructor, Battery G, 3rd battalion, 14th Marines, and a Hamilton, N.J. native, was awarded the Bronze Star for meritorious service while on deployment in Iraq, at the reserve center in Trenton, N.J., Oct. 20.

Lizarraga received the award for his efforts during a seven month deployment to Iraq in which he oversaw 80 Marines from the Trenton, N.J., area as they performed detainee operations. Lizarraga deflected credit from himself, praising the overall team effort of his unit during the time frame.

“I just simply couldn’t have done it without their talents” said Lizarraga. “I truly am, from the bottom of my heart, proud to be able to serve with these Marines.”

Battery G provided combat assistance and detainee care for the area surrounding a regional detention facility in Iraq. Their work was similar to a warden’s. They oversaw the detainees and maintained security of the facility.



Official Marine Corps Photo

Capt. Joseph Lizarraga, Inspector/Instructor, Battery G, 3rd Battalion, 14th Marines, stands before Lt. Col. Rob Roberson, Commanding Officer, 3rd Battalion, 14th Marines,

as the citation is

read for Lizarraga’s Bronze Star. Lizarraga earned the Bronze Star for meritorious achievement while on a seven month deployment to Iraq. During that time, Lizarraga lead 80 Marines from the Trenton, N.J., area in detainee operations for a regional detention facility.

Lt. Col. Rob Roberson, Commanding Officer, 3rd Battalion, 14th Marines, pins the Bronze Star on Capt. Joseph Lizarraga, Inspector/Instructor, Battery G, 3rd Battalion, 14th Marines. Lizarraga received the Bronze Star Oct. 20, for his involvement in Battery G’s recent deployment to Iraq. During that time, Lizarraga lead 80 Marines from the Trenton, N.J., area in detainee operations for a regional detention facility.



Official Marine Corps Photo

“Detainee operations are very complex,” Lizarraga explained. “To do it correctly, you really have to perform and do the right things for the right reasons.

The Marines also worked closely with the local police, training them and augmenting their staff when necessary.

This is what earned them the title of “most customer friendly RDF out there” according to Lizarraga.

He was personally responsible for putting together a speech to help the detainees who were found innocent understand the Marines mission in Iraq.

“We are not here to conquer or to occupy,” Lizarraga would tell them. “We are here to help you. We are here to care about the safety and security of Iraq.”

Programs that Battery G started while in Iraq have gone on to other sites and have been very successful according to Lizarraga. He believes that it is because if you treat the Iraqis right, they will respect you.

Lizarraga received the Bronze Star because of the work he and his Marines did to make Iraq a safer place, and although he received the Bronze Star, if you ask Lizarraga, it’s his Marines that did all the work. □



Official Marine Corps Photo

Sgt. Denise Mason, Assistant Operations Chief, 4th Supply Battalion, Newport News, Va., stands before the commander during her promotion ceremony to sergeant. Mason was chosen as the Marine Corps League's Reservist of the year for her exceptional performance working with the Quantico Viper program.

Reservist of the Year 2008

LANCE CPL. MICHAEL LAYCOCK
MARINE FORCES RESERVE

NEW ORLEANS –Sgt. Denise Mason, Assistant Operations Chief, 4th Supply Battalion, Newport News, Va., and a Norfolk, Va. native, was announced as the Marine Corps League's Reservist of the Year on Aug. 8.

Master Sgt. Patricia Harewood, Battalion Admin Chief, 4th Supply Battalion, Newport News, Va. submitted the recommendation on Jun. 16. Harewood said Mason worked diligently during the 2007 annual training season to ensure that 4th Supply Battalion units would have the resources necessary to complete their annual training. Mason coordinated travel for large and small groups, wrote letters of instruction for the units, and developed matrices to track the Marines as they traveled from one place to another for training.

Mason made herself available to solve problems such as ticket and gear issues and stranded Marines while keeping her superiors updated about the changes in the situation.

Her work was crucial in coordination of chow, billeting and work selection during the Personnel Temporary Augmentation Program at Camp Lejuene, N.C.

According to Harewood 4th Supply Battalion was instrumental in the development of Quantico Viper, a formal predeployment in Quantico, Va. Mason assisted in many of the crucial aspects of monitoring the Marines progress, contacting personnel and ensuring that transportation went smoothly for over 700 Marines. She helped maintain the Marines records and made sure that those records went where they belonged.

“At first I was surprised,” Mason said about hearing she was to receive the award. “It's a great honor and I appreciate my leaders submitting me for the award.”

Mason received the award Oct. 3, at the Twenty-Eighth Annual Modern Day Marine Military Exposition, at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va. □

4th MAW Marines start receiving new hearing protection

LANCE CPL. MARY A. STAES
MARINE FORCES RESERVE

Marine Forces Reserve, New Orleans – Recently, the Navy and Marine Corps have been working together to introduce new technology for hearing protection.

Lt. Cmdr. David Peterson, 4th Marine Aircraft Wing safety officer, and Chief Petty Officer Julius Rivera, an aeromedical safety corpsman with 4th MAW, are starting a trend in hearing protection that is sweeping across the sea services.

The new protection will feature hardened impressions of the individual wearer's ear, instead of the foam plugs that have been used since the 1950's. The impressions go into the wearer's ears much like earbuds and are then covered by new earmuffs that feature a better seal for added protection.

"Aircrafts now produce noise of over 150 decibels," said Peterson. Sounds in excess of 130 decibels can cause permanent hearing damage.

After an initial evaluation, Marines are then fitted for an otodam, a piece of foam that prevents the inserts from



Photo Courtesy of 4th Marine Aircraft Wing

touching the eardrum.

The ear is then filled with silicone, a material that makes the impression of their ear, and allowed to dry. Once the silicone dries and is removed, the ear is then inspected for agents that may have been left behind and redness. The actual inserts are made from this ear impression.

While many individuals may not be accustomed to the new protection, Rivera feels it is the best thing to save at least one of their five senses.

"This is something new to most people," said Rivera. "Most people haven't had anything stuck so far into their ear. At first, it may be a little uncomfortable, but people should give it a try. It's like breaking in a new boot; you have to get used to it."

Some Marines did have complaints about discomfort at first. However, once the impressions were looked at and a few fitting problems fixed, Peterson said the wearers could tell the change.

While the transition will not be complete until 2012, Marines should keep an ear to the ground for the new effort to make their jobs a little safer. □



Photo Courtesy of 4th Marine Aircraft Wing

MLG exercise preparation for 'Javelin Thrust'

CPL. ZACHARY BOLDEN
4TH MLG PUBLIC AFFAIRS

MARIETTA, Ga.

– Any large-scale training exercise involving several complex moving components takes months of intense preparation and coordination. Leaders of the 4th Marine Logistics Group were feeling some of the pressures involved with a command- post exercise for the upcoming 4th MLG training exercise Javelin Thrust 2009.

Various elements of 4th MLG gathered at their Headquarters and Service battalion for the evolution on December 6-7, and focused on the coordination for the logistic movements involved with the exercise.

4th MLG will be heading Javelin Thrust with support from 4th Marine Air Wing, 4th Marine Division, and Training and Education Command.

The preparation for this large-scale exercise was composed of three separate CPXs. The 4th MLG began focusing on staff training, execution procedures, software systems, and a general overall rhythm which will be used



during Javelin Thrust. The Commanding General of 4th MLG, Maj. Gen. Darrell L. Moore, explained that the first CPX is focused on setting the right tempo for the following two CPXs and to ensure a smooth exercise.

“We are focusing on the proper steps and procedures to execute a successful battle rhythm,” Moore said, adding that the lessons learned from last year’s exercise were paired with new challenges for the current operation. “We are adding some altitude to this exercise to help prepare the battalions for real world scenarios like Afghanistan.” he added.

Over the past five years the 4th MLG has been focused on providing support for Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom with individual augments, detachments, and platoons, Moore said. The MLG had lost a bit of its edge with regards to preparing battalion staffs for command and control of elements larger than a platoon or detachment. Olympic Thrust and Javelin Thrust are the initial phases to prepare the MLG leaders for real world major operations, he added.

Javelin Thrust 2009 will be conducted next summer at various locations throughout the continental United States.

□

Dealing with the Possibility of

MILITARY ONESOURCE

Recent changes in the housing market, including what financial experts are calling the “subprime mortgage fallout” have left many people struggling to pay their mortgages, which can lead to foreclosure.

If you are in danger of falling behind on your mortgage or are already facing foreclosure, it’s important to know that you do have options. But in most cases, the quicker you take steps to deal with a potential foreclosure the more options you’ll have.

What is foreclosure?

Foreclosure happens when a property owner defaults (doesn’t pay) on a mortgage. When this happens, the lender who provided the loan has the right to foreclose, which is the term for the process that allows a lender to recover the amount owed on a defaulted loan by repossessing a property.

Experts estimate that about 4 percent of homeowners in the U.S. face foreclosure. But that number may be growing because of the changing housing market and the growth of what experts call “subprime” mortgages, which are high-risk loans made to people who have a poor credit history and who wouldn’t qualify for a conventional mortgage. Subprime loans typically have a high interest rate and may also have other restrictions or penalties because subprime borrowers have a higher rate of default than conventional borrowers. Because the number of subprime mortgages has increased in recent years, the number of loans in default and thus foreclosures has increased, too.

The foreclosure process

Every mortgage lender has a different process, but there are two basic stages of foreclosure: preforeclosure and foreclosure. The preforeclosure process is the best time to take steps to deal with the problem. Once the process enters a legal foreclosure process, it is not impossible but is much more difficult for homeowners to stop the proceedings.

Here is a basic outline of the preforeclosure process:

1. The borrower misses a mortgage payment.
2. The lender sends a late notice.
3. The borrower misses another payment.
4. The lender attempts to reach the borrower in writing and by phone to resolve the situation.
5. No arrangements are made and the borrower continues to miss payments.
6. The lender issues a demand for payment of the mortgage in full.
7. No payment is made.

At this point, the lender will usually initiate the legal foreclosure process. Foreclosure is a complex legal proceeding that has many steps. Every step must be documented in court records and usually requires the homeowner to be formally notified.

In general, the foreclosure process consists of three main steps:

1. The lender files a formal Notice of Default (NOD). A NOD is a public record that states the bank’s intention to repossess the property.
2. The lender files a Notice of Sale (NOS). If the loan isn’t paid off or some other kind of arrangement isn’t made within a certain period of time -- often three months -- the bank then files an NOS, which includes the date when the property will be sold at auction. Notices of Sale are usually posted on the property, filed in the local courthouse, and published in the local newspaper.
3. The property is sold at auction. Finally, the mortgage lender will recoup whatever it can by selling the property to the highest bidder at a public auction. If the homeowner is still living in the property, the new owner often begins formal eviction proceedings.

What foreclosure means for a homeowner

Foreclosure can be a devastating financial blow. A foreclosure can destroy your credit record, making it very difficult to get another mortgage or even rent an apartment. It takes years to rebuild a credit record, so you want to do anything you can to avoid a bad record.

The emotional stress of going through a foreclosure and losing your home can also be devastating. For many people, the loss of a home is a major emotional crisis that is difficult to recover from.

And the loss of a home doesn’t end financial problems.

Borrowers who are foreclosed on may continue to face significant debt even after a foreclosure. In some states, if a lender forecloses on a home and is only able to sell it at a loss (for less than what the borrower owes) the borrower is still liable for the difference and the lender can go after other assets to get it.

Many borrowers who go through foreclosure are also surprised to find that they owe taxes on what is called cancellation of debt income. This might happen if the mortgage lender accepts a payment arrangement that is less than what you owe or sells the property for less than the loan and agrees to “forgive” the outstanding debt. The IRS considers that forgiven, or cancelled, debt to be taxable income.

of Foreclosure on Your Home

What you can do

Foreclosure can be stressful and frightening. Fear of losing your home coupled with a financial crisis can make it difficult to think clearly and make decisions. Homeowners often think there isn't anything they can do, or they find the situation so stressful that they simply ignore it. But in most cases, you do have options. You may not be able to keep your home, but you can take steps to reduce the financial impact of a foreclosure.

It's important to realize that foreclosure is an expensive process for the mortgage lender. In most cases, lenders would rather work out an arrangement with a homeowner than enter into foreclosure, which can take a year or longer, during which the bank is not making any money on the loan.

The most important thing you can do if you're falling behind on payments or facing foreclosure is to communicate with your lender. Don't ignore letters and phone calls. The longer you wait to act, the fewer opportunities you will have to avoid foreclosure. Reach out to your lender as soon as you know you might be unable to make a payment and ask what your lender can do to help.

Lenders have many options available to people who are having financial difficulties including the following:

- Forbearance, which allows you to pay less than the full amount of your mortgage payment or even pay nothing at all for a certain period of time. Forbearance is a good option for people who expect to be able to bring their mortgage current at a specific time in the future. For example, if you are behind in payments but are expecting a bonus or a tax refund in the near future that you can use to pay off everything you owe, you might want to request forbearance.
 - A reinstatement occurs when you pay your mortgage company the total amount you are behind, in a lump sum, by a specific date. This is often combined with forbearance.
 - A repayment plan is an agreement that gives you an agreed on amount of time to repay the amount you are behind by combining a portion of what is past due with your regular monthly payment. At the end of the repayment period, you have gradually paid back the amount of your mortgage that was delinquent.
 - Loan modification is an agreement that changes the original terms of your loan to make the payments more affordable. Common modifications include the following:
 - adding missed payments to the existing loan balance

- Changing the interest rate
- Extending the number of years you have to repay

If you aren't able to use one of the options listed above and keeping your home isn't an option, there are still steps you can take to protect your credit and avoid a foreclosure. Your lender can help you figure out which of the following options might be best for you:

- Selling your home. Lenders will usually give you a specific amount of time to sell your home and pay off the total amount owed. Most lenders require specific terms for this agreement, such as the use of a real estate professional.
 - A short sale. In a short sale, the lender agrees to a sale of the property for less than what is owed on the mortgage and then "forgives" the rest of the debt. This can be a good option if changes in the real estate market have left you with a home that's worth less than what you owe. However, it's important to realize that the government considers forgiven debt -- the difference between what you owe and what the property sells for -- taxable income and you will be responsible for paying that tax.
 - Assumption. Under this arrangement, the loan company allows a qualified buyer to take over or "assume" the existing mortgage. This shifts ownership of the home to a new person without the need to secure new financing.
 - Deed-in-lieu of foreclosure. This solution is exactly what it sounds like: you give the deed for your house back to the mortgage lender and your debt is forgiven. But there are limitations to this option that make it more complicated than it sounds. For example, you may have to try to sell the home for at least 90 days before the lender will consider this option. And a deed-in-lieu of foreclosure arrangement may not be available to you if you have other liens, such as a second mortgage or home equity loan.

Filing for bankruptcy may also be an option for some people. Filing for bankruptcy temporarily stops the foreclosure process and can force the lender to agree to some kind of arrangement. However, bankruptcy has many other implications and should only be considered with the help of a financial expert.

Foreclosure rescue scams

Unfortunately, there are many unscrupulous people who take advantage of the emotional and financial stress that homeowners go through when they are facing foreclosure. Foreclosure rescue scams are deals that claim they will save your home or pay your mortgage, but they are just money-making schemes. □

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