

THE CONTINENTAL MARINE

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF MARINE FORCES RESERVE

OCT/NOV/DEC 2009

Fallen Marines honored
for their sacrifice

Opportunities abound for
reserve Marines

MarForRes begins annual
Toys for Tots Drive

*2/25 warms up to
cold weather training*

*>Marines prepare for extreme cold as
they begin training for "Cold Response
2010"*

As this magazine reaches you, we will be several days into the new year. I hope that you enjoyed your holidays, and that your new year is a happy one. In this issue we look back on the last few months before 2010 and give you a look at some of the benefits coming your way.

Marine Forces Reserve starts a new era as we wave farewell to Lt. Gen. Jack W. Bergman and welcome Lt. Gen. John F. Kelly, who will be leading MFR during the transition from the East Bank to Federal City, which has started construction.

As with every year, we look at the Marine Forces Reserve Toys for Tots Campaign, which has been successfully providing toys to less fortunate children and families for 62 years.

As always we follow our Marines as they hit the field and keep their skills sharp.

We hope you enjoy this edition of your magazine.

Semper Fi,

Lance Cpl. Michael Laycock

Print Editor, Continental Marine Magazine



Cover Photo: A Marine with 2nd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment, stops and surveys his surroundings during a patrol at Vermont National Guard's Camp Ethan Allen, Dec. 12. The Marines were training in preparation for Cold Response 2010, a NATO-sponsored multinational training exercise with the Norwegian Armed forces focused on cold weather maritime/amphibious operations, interoperability of expeditionary forces, and special and conventional ground operations scheduled for early next year.

(Photo By Cpl. Tyler J. Hlavac)

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Shanna Kegans, wife of Gunnery Sgt. Cecil Kegans, and Taisha Kanagawa, girlfriend of 1st Sgt. Steven Brunner, perform figure-four choke holds, a technique used in the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program. Marines with 3rd Platoon, Company B, along with Scout Sniper Platoon, Anti-Terrorism Battalion, invited families and friends to Jane Wayne day at the Marine Corps Reserve Center in Reno, Nev., Sept. 20, to experience Marine Corps life first hand.

Photo By Pfc. Colin Smith



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These stories and more available at
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In Brief

Celebrating the accomplishments of our Marines



MFR Kicks off Toys For Tots 2009

Toys for Tots coordinators Gunnery Sgt. Carlos Walker (right) of Shreveport, La., and Staff Sgt. Kenneth Mathews of Parksley, Va., stand with the staff of a Mandeville, La., business to mark the start of their support of the 2009 Toys for Tots campaign. Marine Forces Reserve works hand-in-hand annually with the Toys for Tots Foundation to provide new, unwrapped toys to millions of children throughout America during the holiday season. During the 2008 season, 16.2 million toys were distributed to 7.6 million children in the U.S., Puerto Rico and the American Samoan Islands. □



Nominations sought for the 2010 Freedom Award



The Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award is celebrating 15 years of recognizing outstanding employers of Guardsmen and Reservists. The Freedom Award is the U.S. Government's highest recognition given to employers who provide outstanding support to their employees serving in the National Guard and Reserve and their families. It is the highest in a series of employer recognition awards given by the Department of Defense. The nomination season for the 2010 Freedom Award began Nov. 2, 2009 and runs through Jan. 18, 2010. The 2010 Freedom Award recipients will be announced early next summer and honored at a black-tie gala ceremony at the Ronald Reagan International Trade Center in Washington, D.C. on Sept. 23, 2010. To nominate an employer or for more information, visit www.FreedomAward.mil. □

Fallen Marine receives Navy and Marine Corps Medal for Heroism

Lance Cpl. Alvaro Rios, an aircraft engine mechanic with Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 234 (VMGR-234) was recognized as a hero and awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Medal posthumously for Heroism during a memorial service on Sept. 25 in Dallas.

Rios was fatally struck and killed after he and another Marine stopped to help passengers in three vehicles that had been involved in a wreck on Interstate 20 in Arlington, Texas on Sept. 20. □



Command of MFR/MFN changes hands

LANCE CPL. MICHAEL LAYCOCK
MARINE FORCES RESERVE

New Orleans – Lt. Gen. Jack W. Bergman handed off control of the largest command in the Marine Corps to Lt. Gen. John F. Kelly on Oct. 17, ending a four and a half year tour in the Crescent City.

Bergman, who retired following 42 years in the Marine Corps, leaves MFR to Kelly, who just wrapped up a one-year-deployment as the Deputy Commanding General with I Marine Expeditionary Force (forward).

During his stint in Iraq, Kelly had the opportunity to lead thousands of reserve Marines, and credited them for much of the mission's success.

"The reason we turned Anbar province into the place it is," said Kelly to Bergman during the ceremony. "Is because of the Marines you sent us."

Bergman noted that during his time at the helm of MFR, very nature of the reserve force has morphed from that of only being used sparingly to that of a sustained deployment atmosphere.

"For the first time in the history of the Reserve Component, the leadership of the country is looking at a long term, sustained use of the Reserves, versus

throwing them back on the shelf," said Bergman before the ceremony.

One of the biggest steps towards maintaining an

operational reserve, according to Bergman, was learning how to balance reserve needs with training agendas.

The strategic plan begun during his tenure as commander is the building block for this, he explained. The plan gives guidelines for the five year dwell time between deployments for reserve units to prepare them for the upcoming deployment and still be ready to handle any humanitarian missions during that dwell time.

"One year of activation is the easy part," said Bergman. "The long pole in the tent is the five years dwell time, figuring out what to do during that time. We are getting there; it's up to Lt. Gen. Kelly to finalize it."

As Bergman heads off into retirement, he says that the memories of it all will stay with him.

"I leave this billet with a warm feeling that maybe in some small way I have made a difference," said Bergman. "When I took command in 2005, I said I will give you my very best effort 24/7, in-turn, I expect the same of

you. Thank you for giving that best effort every day." □



Photo By Lance Cpl. Natasha Combs

Lt. Gen. John F. Kelly assumed command of Marine Forces Reserve and Marine Forces North from Lt. Gen. Jack W. Bergman on Oct. 17, 2009 during a change of command ceremony held aboard Naval Support Activity New Orleans. Bergman relinquished command after serving in the billet since June 2005. Kelly's previous assignment was as Deputy Commanding General, I Marine Expeditionary Force, headquartered at Camp Pendleton, Calif.

PANEL RAISING FOR NEW



MFR/MFN HEADQUARTERS

Photo By Lance Cpl. Lucas Vega

Contractors observe as the first of 196 concrete panels is erected during the construction of the future home of Marine Forces Reserve and Marine Forces North headquarters, Nov. 16.

LANCE CPL. LUCAS VEGA MARINE FORCES RESERVE

NEW ORLEANS - The first of 196 panels was erected on the West Bank of Naval Support Activity Nov. 16, officially marking the beginning stages of construction on the future home of Marine Forces Reserve/Marine Forces North command Headquarters as part of the Federal City Complex project.

The new 411,320 square foot Federal City Complex structure is slated to be in full operation by Sept. 15, 2011 as directed by the 2005 Defense Base Realignment and closure order.

The 2005 BRAC directive requires all Marines units located on the East Bank of Naval Support Activity and Marine Corps Support Activity, Kansas City, Mo., to

relocate to the west-bank, where Federal City will be located. The department of The Navy will be responsible for handling the relocation, as stated on the Web site www.nolafederalcity.com.

“We are looking at summer of 2011 of starting the process of moving the Marines to the west-bank,” said Col. William Davis, the assistant chief of staff, facilities, MarForRes. “The move depends on the progress of the construction.”

Federal City will provide support functions which are typically managed by The Department of Defense by providing 1,400 residential units with existing structures and four new buildings, athletic/recreational units, child care, food services, security and five educational establishments ranging from the elementary to college level. □

Marine Forces Reserve Band

brings holiday joy with Santa Meets Sousa 2009

LANCE CPL. MICHAEL LAYCOCK
MARINE FORCES RESERVE

NEW ORLEANS – The Marine Forces Reserve band wrapped up their annual “Santa Meets Sousa” concert tour at the Alario Center in Westwego, La., Dec. 11.

This was the fourth year that the band has preformed the tour, which stops at several venues around New Orleans. Concerts were also played in Morgan City, Monroe and Slidell.

The concerts were designed to entertain all ages. They included a sing-along of traditional Christmas



Photo By Lance Cpl. Michael Laycock

Drummers from the Marine Forces Reserve Band entertain the crowd during the 2009 Santa Meets Sousa tour. The tour collects toys at each stop. The toys are donated to the Marine Forces Reserve Toys for Tots program, for distribution to the local community. This year’s tour collected approximately 3,500 toys.



Photo By Lance Cpl. Michael Laycock

Chief Warrant Officer Michael J. Smith, former conductor of the Marine Forces Reserve Band, and his wife sit in the audience during the Santa Meets Sousa concert Dec. 11. This is the first year that the band has done this concert tour without Smith as their conductor.

carols, a play acted out between songs, and classical and contemporary holiday music. The script for the event is written with input from every member of the band. The performance is different every year, but this year’s concerts saw a vast change. This was the first year that the band has preformed the tour without Chief Warrant Officer Michael J. Smith conducting.

Smith, whose last concert with the band was in September, attended the final stop on the tour, saying that it was bittersweet.

“It makes me miss them,” said Smith. “But I am proud to see them doing so well.”

This year’s concerts were led by Master Sgt. Kevin Hunter, bandmaster, who played a starring role as the ‘mean old master sergeant who hated Christmas.’

The tour is also a part of Marine Forces Reserve’s Toys for Tots campaign. The concerts were free, but people were encouraged to bring new, unwrapped toys to the performance. Approximately 3,500 toys were collected from this year’s tour. □

Toy Train Brings Smiles For Miles



Photo By Lance Cpl. Lucas Vega

The Toys For Tots Train idles at a stop during its journey from Binghamton to Plattsburgh, N.Y., Dec. 6, as part of a two-day community relations event with Marines and volunteers delivering new, unwrapped toys to children throughout upstate New York.

LANCE CPL. LUCAS VEGA MARINE FORCES RESERVE

ALBANY, N.Y.- Santa Claus has teamed up with a few good Marines and Canadian Pacific Railroad to deliver toys for the 11th consecutive year to various communities in upstate New York via iron horse sleigh.

As part of Marine Forces Reserve's Toys for Tots campaign, the Marines of Company F, 2nd Battalion 25th Marine Regiment from Albany, N.Y., along with civilian volunteers, brought smiles to thousands of children Dec. 5-6.

The Marines spent weeks preparing for the event, which was made possible by hundreds of individual toy donors, as well as substantial corporate cash contributions.

"After the Marine Corps Ball, they were already asking for volunteers for the Toys for Tots train," said Pfc. Vernon Miner, a rifleman with 25th Marines, about the preparation efforts.

Toys for Tots is a Marine Forces Reserve program

that is facilitated in coordination with the Toys for Tots Foundation, a 501(c) not-for-profit organization. Both Marine Corps units and civilian-run Toys for Tots campaigns collect new, unwrapped toys for less-fortunate youngsters during October, November and December every year. In 2008, Toys for Tots coordinators distributed 16.2 million toys to 7.6 million children throughout the U.S.

Retired Marine Maj. Bill Grein, vice president of marketing and development for the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation, said that Norfolk Southern Railroad, Vermont Rail System and Canadian Pacific Railroad have all worked diligently for the past 10 years to keep the "Toys for Tots train" on the tracks.

It was a struggle getting funding this year," Grein said. "But we were so glad that Dunkin' Donuts came through to help make it possible again."

In a snowy, idyllic New England Christmas setting, the Toys for Tots Train made a total of 12 stops at New York stations, to include Albany, Plattsburgh and Saratoga.

The Marines and volunteers at each stop were greeted by

cheering crowds who battled sub-freezing temperatures.

Despite the cold, many families waited anxiously to receive the Marines' gifts. Others took the opportunity to snap photos with Mr. and Mrs. Claus, as well as the Marines in dress blue uniforms.

One local resident of Plattsburgh explained that she and her two children came two hours prior to the train's arrival to beat the crowds.

"We wanted to come early because these stops can get pretty crowded, pretty quickly," said Sara Johnston, who has come in years past to receive gifts for her family. "I'm a single mother, so whenever I hear about programs like Toys for Tots, I try to take advantage of them because I wouldn't want my kids to not have presents under the tree for any reason."

Retired Marines and other civilian volunteers accompanied the Marines on the train, eagerly sharing the spirit of the holidays with numerous rural communities.

Among the volunteers who worked with 25th Marines was Eric Stresland, field marketing manager of Dunkin' Donuts. Store owners throughout upstate New York pooled together \$20,000 for the purchase of new toys, Stresland explained.

"I heard about it through the press that this year's train was in jeopardy," he said. "So I convinced owners from different Dunkin' Donuts franchises throughout the community to donate funds to the train's cause."

Likewise, Cpl. Mark Stankovich, who has volunteered for the event for the past three years, keeps coming back to experience the feeling of giving during the holiday season.

"The Toys for Tots train is a lot of fun; it feels good to give to the kids that don't have much," said the veteran rifleman from 25th Marines. "I remember when I was young, it felt good to receive something for Christmas, and that's something I want the kids out here to get to experience, too."

Following two days of riding the train and delivering presents, hot meals were provided for the Marines and volunteers aboard the train.

"It's awesome to collaborate with the Marines and give back to the community," said Erin Cummings, a student and social work major at South Connecticut State University, whose sibling is a Marine currently stationed at Camp Pendleton, Calif.

The Toys for Tots train has accomplished its mission for the year, but the campaign is still charging ahead full steam throughout the rest of the U.S.

Since its inception in 1947, the Toys for Tots organization has distributed more than \$400 million in toys to an estimated 188 million children, and this year's program is on track to continue with the rich tradition of bringing joy to America's youth on during the holiday season. □



Photo By Lance Cpl. Lucas Vega

Staff Sgt. John Harris, a Marine Corps prior service recruiter from Waterbury, Conn., hands a stuffed animal to a local child during the Toys for Tots train campaign in upstate New York Dec. 6. The Toys for Tots Train toured the region and delivered toys to thousands of children Dec. 5-6.

New TRICARE benefits provide retired reservists with earlier coverage

MARINE FORCES RESERVE PUBLIC AFFAIRS

NEW ORLEANS - Retired reservists with 20 or more years of service will be able to receive government health care benefits immediately upon retirement, due to new U.S. government legislation.

The new benefit is approved under Title VII, Section 705 of the Fiscal Year 2010 National Defense Authorization Act. It was signed into law by President Barack Obama Oct. 28 and is pending implementation by the Department of Defense.

“In the past, certain members of the Retired Reserve who were qualified for TRICARE coverage at age 60, but were not yet at that age... also referred to as ‘gray area’ reserves, were not eligible for medical benefits under the TRICARE program,” said Julie Ice, director of legislative and public affairs for Humana Military Healthcare Services. “Now, with the passage of the 2010 NDAA, the ‘gray area’ reservists will be eligible for TRICARE Standard coverage from the time they retire.”

This is expected to be welcome news for Marine reservists, especially those who want to retire from their civilian jobs but are afraid of losing the private health care plans which they have through their civilian employers. It also eases retirees’ worries over paying hefty premiums with civilian insurance companies because of their age.

“The advantage of this new law is that it will fill in the gap for retired reservists,” explained Ice. “For example, if a reservist joins the military at the age of 20 and retires at 40, they will be eligible for TRICARE Standard coverage from the day they retire until they become eligible for TRICARE at age 60. Before, there would have been a gap between the

age of 40 and 60.”

Ice explained that family members of reservists will also be eligible for TRICARE Standard benefits if service members decide to activate those benefits.

Several iterations of TRICARE benefits packages were introduced into the U.S. Congress over the past two years by Representative Robert Latta of Ohio, Nebraska’s Senator Ben Nelson and South Carolina Senator Lindsey Graham. This most recent version of TRICARE benefits coverage is part of the NDAA’s \$680.2 billion defense budget for fiscal year 2010.

“Many reserve component retirees and their families have other health care options, but some do not. This new provision will give them access to TRICARE benefits,” said Austin Camacho, a spokesman at the TRICARE headquarters in Falls Church, Va. “Because this is a benefit vice insurance, it is an advantage for all reserve service members. You can’t be denied coverage based on pre-existing conditions, as can happen with civilian (health care) companies.”

Additionally, the new National Defense Authorization Act extends TRICARE eligibility to reserve members so they can receive full TRICARE prime coverage 180 days before they mobilize for active duty service. During this period, TRICARE will pay the cost of all medical and dental treatment for reservists at authorized civilian medical facilities with no premium or co-pay. Previously, reserve members were only eligible for this benefit 90 days before they went on active duty.

For more information about TRICARE benefits or to manage your account on-line, visit their website at <https://www.tricareonline.com>.

Editor’s Note:
Implementation of this new benefit is expected to take between 18 - 24 months.



Barnstead Fire, Rescue Honored by DoD



STORY FROM ESGR.ORG

CONCORD, N.H. - The New Hampshire Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR), an agency of the Department of Defense, announced today that two officers of the Barnstead, N.H., Fire & Rescue were honored with “Patriot Awards” in recognition of their extraordinary support of their employee, Sergeant Harold Arey, who serves in the Individual Ready Reserve of the United States Marine Corps.

According to Jim Goss, NH’s ESGR Executive Director, who made the presentations, “The Patriot Award was created by ESGR to publicly recognize individuals who provide outstanding patriotic support and cooperation to their employees, who like the citizen warriors before them, have answered their nation’s call to serve. Chief George Krause and Captain Mary Reed were nominated by their Reserve Component employee for being highly supportive. Supportive supervisors are critical to maintaining the strength and readiness of the nation’s National Guard and Reserve units.”

In accepting this award, Chief Krause stated “It’s the very least we can do to show our support of those who serve in today’s armed forces. It would be hard for me to believe that any employer would not show the same level

of support”. Captain Reed added “Speaking from a Navy Mom’s point of view, we take good care of him”.

Barnstead Fire and Rescue is a group of dedicated individuals proudly providing emergency services to the residents and business owners of the local community. Currently, they have eight officers, six full-time staff members and several per diem staff members as well as 28 call members. Their mission is to provide the highest level of service to protect life, property and the environment through efficient and effective responses to all calls for assistance, including fire, medical, rescue and hazardous materials emergencies. These services are delivered 24-hours-a-day by highly trained professionals, both volunteer and career, who serve with excellence, dedication and pride.

As the 1.3 million members of the National Guard and Reserve continue to perform an increasing number of unique missions with America’s borders and beyond, ESGR will continue to be the resource for the employers of citizen warriors. ESGR provides education, consultation, and if necessary mediation for employers of Guard and Reserve employees. More information about ESGR Employer Outreach Programs and volunteer opportunities is available at www.esgr.mil, or by calling the NH ESGR Committee at (603) 225-1892 or (603) 225-1342. □

Command and Staff College Blended Learning Seminar



Applicants wanted for “blended” Command and Staff College

MARINE FORCES RESERVE PUBLIC AFFAIRS

NEW ORLEANS - The U.S. Marine Corp’s Command and Staff College (CSC) is offering a “blended learning seminar” program through the College of Continuing Education. All active duty and reserve Marine Corps majors can satisfy their professional military education requirement in about one calendar year.

Previous Command and Staff distance education

programs were designed on a two-year schedule.

Developed by the USMC College of Continuing Education, this program offers a unique seminar construct built around resident and online learning. The academic year begins in the summer of 2010 in Quantico, Va., where students study for five weeks. This will be followed by 29 weeks of on-line classes, and will conclude with six more weeks of resident classes in Quantico from April – July 2011.

Students will also have the opportunity to meet and work with international officer students from countries such as Bangladesh, Canada, Iraq, New Zealand, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia and Sweden.

This approach gives U.S. and international officers a wider perspective and differing points of view to strengthen relationships for participating in future coalition partnerships around the world.

The program is based on the Marine Corps' CSC resident school curriculum. The program consists of eight separate courses, which cover subjects such as counterinsurgency, Marine Air-Ground Task Force Operations and international security.

Each course builds a foundation of knowledge which segues into the next and follows a structured, sequential timeline.

The main intent of the program is to provide officers with an understanding of the relationship among the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of war within a joint, multinational, interagency environment.

In conjunction with applying the Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF) doctrine and techniques to the changing conditions of warfare, this understanding gives officers the necessary tools to successfully function in any operational environment.

According to Dennis Haskin, a CCE spokesperson with the CSC distance education program, the program's

goal is to create a cadre of professional officers who think critically, engage intellectually, and solve problems in the complex and dynamic operational environment of the 21st century.

As part of their field studies, students visit the Pentagon and other government offices in Washington, D.C. They tour the U.S. Capital Building; Arlington National Cemetery; and the National Museum of the Marine Corps. Students also visit Mt. Vernon, the Federal Bureau of Investigation's training academy, historic Williamsburg, and the Norfolk Naval Base in Virginia. In addition, students experience the Civil War battlefields at Chancellorsville and Gettysburg.

The course of study culminates in June 2011 at the Marine Corps University's graduation ceremony, where officers cross the stage with fellow students from the resident Command and Staff College, School of Advanced Warfighting and the Marine Corps War College.

Although most of the CSC attendees will be active and reserve Marine Corps majors, the blended seminar is offered to all military services' majors, lieutenant colonels, and government civilians with a rating of GS-13 or higher. Senior Marine Corps captains who have been selected for major are also encouraged to apply.

Interested school candidates should contact the CCE's Reserve Liaison Office at 1-800-992-9210. □



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MFR looks to identify language savvy Marines



LANCE CPL. MICHAEL LAYCOCK
MARINE FORCES RESERVE

NEW ORLEANS – Want to make some extra money? Know a second or even third language? Then you may be eligible to participate in the new Marine Forces Reserve command language program.

The program is designed to identify Marines who speak or write foreign languages, with the Defense Language Proficiency Test, or those who can easily learn them, with the Defense Language Aptitude Battery.

Marines who take these tests may prove to be eligible for Foreign Language Proficiency Pay, and college credits, said Mrs. Isley Lundgren, Command Language Program Manager, Marine Forces Reserve.

Marines may earn from \$200.00 to \$1,000.00 a month depending on how high of a priority the language is to the military and their proficiency in that language. While there is little surprise that Arabic is one of the highest earning languages, languages such as Russian, French and Korean are also on the list for earning some of the higher levels of pay, according to Lundgren.

“I currently have a Sergeant, who is a native speaker of Amharic, in the program right now,” said Lundgren. “He is drawing \$500.00 extra a month and is eligible for 34 college credits just for having taken the exam.”

Additionally, Marines who currently only speak one language can take the DLAB to test their ability to learn new languages. If they score high enough, they will be eligible to receive materials and other valuable assistance in

learning a new language.

Marines will then be able to take the DLPT, once they develop a strong enough grasp of the language. Marines who already speak a foreign dialect, only have to take the DLPT.

Those who sufficiently prove their knowledge of a language will then be eligible for several benefits to include extra pay and college credits. Benefits will be awarded based on the Marines proficiency in the language and the need of the language in the Marine Corps.

This program’s focus is to take advantage of the native speakers of foreign languages in the Marine Corps.

“We want to exploit the diversity of Marine Forces Reserve,” said Lt. Col. Henry Mull, Chief of Staff, Intelligence, Marine Forces Reserve. “Once we validate that they can speak these languages at a certain skill level, they can be an asset to the Marine Corps. If we know that they speak a language and how well they speak that language, we have them as an asset when we go into that particular part of the world.”

The program is open to all active duty and reserve Marines that are a part of MFR. Reserve centers near any active duty base, for any service, will be able to take the test at the base’s education center. Reservists not near an active duty base can call Lundgren and she will identify a place for the Marines to take the tests. For more information contact Lundgren at (504)-678-0647 or isley.lundgren@usmc.mil. For further information consult Marine Corps Order 1550.25. □

Marines' families get a taste of Corps training

LANCE CPL. LUCAS VEGA AND
LANCE CPL. JAD SLEIMAN
MARINE FORCES RESERVE

NEW ORLEANS - Friends and family members of Marines from 3rd Platoon, Company B and Scout Sniper Platoon, Anti-Terrorism Battalion, experienced first-hand what it means to walk in the shoes of a Marine Sept. 20 by taking part in Jane Wayne Day at the Marine Corps Reserve Center in Reno, Nev.

The event helped loved ones gain a basic understanding of the unique training regimen which Marines endure and the weapons they employ while in support of overseas contingency operations.

The day's events included a live-fire range, Marine Corps Martial Arts Training, a Combat Fitness Test, an indoor simulated marksmanship trainer and vehicle static displays.

Crystal Challoner, guest of 3rd Platoon's Lance Cpl. Michael Gustason, attended the event, and like many others, said she gained a better knowledge of her boyfriend's duties after participating in the events.

"It was really informative and fun," said Challoner, who has known her Marine for more than three years. "It helped me understand what he goes through on a daily basis."

Family members were able to witness the camaraderie and esprit de corps enjoyed by Marines. Not only did they witness it, mentioned Challoner, but they took part in it.

Natricia Jordan, who is engaged to 3rd Platoon's Sgt. Matthew Ortesa, didn't know what to expect going into the event.

But after enduring combat conditioning training and putting in some live-fire range time, she left with some aching muscles and a better idea of what her husband-to-be goes through during drill weekends and deployments, she said.

"I totally understand why when he comes home he's in the train of thought that he's in and why he's sore," she explained. "Doing everything hands on totally opened up a whole new world for me."

Lance Cpl. Kevin Wiggin, a rifleman with Company B, demonstrated the CFT for the attendees.

"After running the combat fitness test, they were smoked," said Wiggin, who explained that the Jane Wayne day CFT course was only one-fifth of the length of the actual course which Marines are now required to run for score annually. "I think it was good for them to get an idea of some of the physical training we have to do. It eases minds of parents and wives because it puts into perspective how

we operate. It makes them more comfortable

Challoner used the new experiences to sum up the importance of Jane Wayne day from her perspective.

"It creates stronger ties with families," she said. "It was the unit's effort to show us that they support us 100 percent." □



Phot By Pfc. Colin Smith

Cindy Tatro, friend of 1st Sgt. Steven Brunner, fires a M40A3 sniper rifle as part of Jane Wayne Day. During Jane Wayne day Sept. 20, family, friends and spouses of Marines from 3rd Platoon, Company B, along with Scout Sniper Platoon, Anti-Terrorism Battalion, had the opportunity to experience up close and personally what it means to be in the boots of their Marine.

Marines' 'Brotherhood' outlives contract

LANCE CPL. JAD SLEIMAN
MARINE FORCES RESERVE

NEW ORLEANS - When Lance Cpl. Jeffery Dryden returned home from fighting through Operation Al Fajr in Iraq in late 2005, he brought with him the physical and mental scars of combat and loss.

"I think I was in a depression for over a year," said Dryden.

Dryden, with the help of his reserve unit's former administration chief, found the care he needed at the Butler, Pa., Veterans Affairs Office. The former Marine motor transport operator, now a nursing assistant there, provides that same care to others.

Dryden's journey from veteran in need to veteran meeting the needs of others wasn't easy, he explained, but it's one that's helped him find his place in a post-combat civilian world.

Back to work

After returning to the states from the chaos of Fallujah, Dryden had the monthly comfort of "feeling normal again" when he joined his unit for drill weekends.

"For me, being a reservist, it was some what of a bigger challenge because for active duty you can go back and have the guys that you were [deployed] with and talk out some things," Dryden explained. "As a reservist you're just expected to go home and get back to work."

When Dryden's contract ended, so did his cathartic drill weekends. Now a civilian on the other side of the Corps, Dryden felt he had nowhere, and no one, to turn to.

"Once you get out, people ask you things and you either don't say anything because you don't think they'll understand or you do say something and they'll think you're a liar," said Dryden

Weapons off safe

It's difficult, said Dryden, to explain a thing like war to someone who has never seen it.

In December, 2005, Lance Cpl. Jeffery Dryden and Cpl.

Michael Cranmer were approaching a house infantrymen had previously searched and marked as a cache for insurgent weapons. Their mission - secure the weapons.

As motor transportation Marines fighting through the battle for Fallujah, commonly known as Operation Phantom Fury, the two men had done countless such pickups at long-emptied buildings without incident.

Cranmer, perhaps sensing something different about this particular house, told Dryden to take his weapon off safe.

"When we went up to the stairs to the landing they opened up on us down the steps, threw some grenades down at us," said Dryden.

A round grazed Dryden while Cranmer was struck in the calf as the volley of insurgent fire separated the men.

The Marines escaped the house and a firefight that would only be quelled with the support of armored vehicles and eventually a 500-pound bomb.

Two weeks later Dryden's unit would lose two of its active duty personnel on a road Dryden and his fellow Marines had recently been tasked with watching.

"They were some really good guys," he said. "That just wears on your conscience"

Brotherhood

Lucky for Dryden and others like him, Gunnery Sgt. Michael Palarino, a Wounded Warrior District Injured Support Representative, has no problem cranking up tens of thousands of miles on his new car as he crisscrosses the state of Pennsylvania making home visits to veterans who may need help.

Palarino works under the Quantico-based Wounded Warrior Regiment, a unit activated in April of 2007 and tasked with tracking and supporting ill or injured Marines and sailors.

It's his job to connect veterans with the VA care they need and help them navigate through the sometimes difficult and confusing process of filing VA claims.

"We take care of our Marines no matter what, even if they're out of the Marine Corps," he said. "We're a brotherhood; we don't forget about them. We're a family."

Before assuming his current duties with the WWR,

Palarino was the administration chief at Dryden's unit, Truck Company, Headquarters Battalion, 4th Marine Division in Ebensburg, Pa.

"When I took the job [with the WWR] they were the first guys I called, guys from my old unit," said Palarino, a native of Pittsburgh, Pa.

He found Dryden struggling to file disability for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and lower back pain with the Butler, Pa. VA and filled him in on his rights and the services he was entitled to. Eventually he helped get Dryden, who holds undergraduate degrees in psychology and sociology, his current nursing assistant job at the VA in Butler.

Not Alone

"As Marines, we're stubborn, we don't want to admit anything is wrong," explained Palarino, referring to the difficulties he faces convincing some Marine veterans to seek help after leaving the Corps. "A lot of them are afraid to take off the superman cape."

Dryden eventually took off his cape, joining group therapy sessions and talking with other vets at the VA, but admits it was one of the hardest things he's ever done.

"Marines, they think they can chew up nails and spit out bullets," he said. "They think it's seen as a weakness to seek out help."

Now that Dryden is back on his feet, raising three kids with his wife while going to school and working, he can, and does, help others do the same.

Currently, Dryden is works a nursing assistant at the VA office.

"I can't give meds or IVs or anything, but I do get patients in and out of bed, get them to the bathroom take them on field trips," he explained.

In a few weeks, he'll be promoted to the domiciliary, working to help veterans overcome drug and alcohol addiction as he nears his one year mark at the office.

His experience in the Corps makes it easier for him to understand and connect with veterans young and old who sometimes have trouble dealing with staff that have never served, he explained.

"It's just giving back, helping those who helped you help others," he said about his efforts at the VA. "Once you get in it makes you feel like your not alone anymore, you're not weird, you're not an outcast."

The Wounded Warrior Regiment provides and facilitates assistance to wounded, ill and/or injured Marines and Sailors attached to or in support of Marine units and their family members throughout the phases of recovery.

Assistance is available 24/7 call the Wounded Warrior Call Center 877.487.6299 or visit www.woundedwarriorregiment.org. □



Connecticut town dedicates bridge to fallen Marine

CPL. TYLER J. HLAVAC
MARINE FORCES RESERVE

NEW BRITAIN, Conn. - The citizens of New Britain, Conn., dedicated highway bridge 4247 to Marine Capt. Brian S. Letendre, who was killed in action May 2006 supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom, during a memorial ceremony Oct. 3.

Letendre served as an inspector-instructor for the Connecticut-based Company C, 1st Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment from 2004 to 2005, prior to deploying to Iraq in April 2006. While serving in Connecticut, Letendre actively became part of the local community and was embraced as a 'local Marine,' which led to the decision to name the bridge after him, said Timothy Stewart, Mayor of New Britain.

Stewart added that dedicating the bridge was the least they could do for Letendre's family and to recognize the sacrifices of military members.

"He was a wonderful man, strong in character and integrity, mature beyond his years," said Stewart. "This is a small token we can give to his family to make his memory last forever."

While in Iraq, Letendre served as a member of a military

transition team, training infantry tactics to a local Iraqi infantry battalion based in the Al Anbar province.

According to retired 1st Sgt. Ben Grainger, who served alongside Letendre as his first sergeant, this was no easy task as the company was charged with both patrolling and living inside the city of Fallujah. While serving with the Iraqi battalion, Letendre and other Marines had to cope with language barriers, supply shortages and learning to trust and depend on their new Iraqi comrades.

Tragedy struck on May 3, 2006 during a brazen attack by Iraqi insurgents. The insurgents started a complex attack on the compound where the Iraqi soldiers and U.S. Marines were training, beginning with mortars and machine guns and later a suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive device. Letendre was engaging the enemy when a mortar landed between him and another Marine, killing him and seriously wounding the other Marine.

Milton Letendre, the father of Capt. Letendre, said it was a humbling experience to see people show up for the ceremony.

"I'm proud that people feel that way about his service. This is a memorial to all of our fighting men and women overseas. This is a powerful message that the people of this community support our troops." □

Dillon Letendre, the son of Capt. Brian S. Letendre, stands with his grandparents, June and Milton Letendre, in front of Highway Bridge 4247. The bridge was dedicated Oct. 3 to the sacrifice of Capt. Letendre, who died supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom in May 2006.



Photo By Cpl. Tyler J. Hlavac

Reserve center takes first LEED silver award

CPL. JESSICA MARTINEZ

MCB CAMP LEJEUNE

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C.

The world is changing and slowly people are beginning to realize the importance of protecting and preserving the environment, and Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune is demonstrating that concern.

Recently, the base received the United States Marine Corps' first Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Silver certification for the building of SR-72, Reserve Training Center and Tank Maintenance Facility in the Greater Sandy Run area.

In June, Company F, 4th Tank Battalion, 4th Marine Division moved into the building. The facility supports not only 56 Marines within the company, but nine M1 A1 Abrams tanks and an M-88 Recovery Vehicle.

"Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design is a rating system for recognizing and certifying facilities," said Navy Lt. Nate Overtree, assistant public works officer for energy programs aboard the base. "LEED uses a point-scale based on sustainable design, construction and operations of facilities. The rating system is established and regulated by a non-profit organization identified as the United States Green Building Council. The idea of 'sustainability' in a building is that it will minimize the impact to the environment in the way it is placed on a site, the materials used to construct it, and the energy and water usage during occupancy."

Over the last year, the Department of Navy released a new policy in regards to all new construction and major renovations conducted on Marine Corps installations. These memorandums from the assistant secretary of the Navy Installations and Environment and the commandant of the Marine Corps require that new facilities, at the least, must meet the LEED Silver certification. There are four ratings within the LEED point system: certified, silver, gold and platinum.

"(Camp Lejeune) is the first to complete this," said Overtree. "It's been expensive and challenging, but it's the best building and the most environmental friendly. This is a very high achievement for Lejeune."

The benefit of these "green" buildings include, lower



Photo By Cpl. Jessica Martinez

Recently Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune received the first U.S. Marine Corps Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Silver certification for the building of SR-72, Reserve Training Center and Tank Maintenance Facility in the Greater Sandy Run area.

energy and water costs, lower waste disposal, lower environmental emissions costs, increased productivity from workers, reduced impacts on the local environment, return on investment primarily generated through energy conservation and lower operations and maintenance costs, said Overtree.

During the building of the facility, several issues are taken into consideration to meet the requirements and increase the points toward the LEED certification, such as sustainability, water efficiency, materials and resources used, indoor environmental air quality and the innovation and design process.

"A lot of good people made this happen, and I think it's great," said Col. Richard P. Flatau Jr., commanding officer for Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune. "It puts us in the leading position to lead by example. It helps make real, something we often talk about. We hear all about LEED and the different levels, and hear about it as though it's something of the future and now it's here. We've proven it can be done. Hopefully that raises the bar for our own staff in planning, but also for the contractors that compete for construction jobs here, now they know it's doable." □

MARINES AND VETERANS MAKE HISTORY... AGAIN

CAPT. PAUL L. GREENBERG
MARINE FORCES RESERVE

NEW ORLEANS — Marines from Headquarters, Marine Forces Reserve, participated with U.S. Navy sailors and other service members in a dedication ceremony for the new wing of the National World War II Museum here Nov. 6.

The museum was completed in June 2000. The new wing features the Solomon Victory Theater, the Stage Door Canteen and The American Sector Restaurant, which serves a cuisine in a setting that harkens back to the 1940's.

"This is a great day for the state of Louisiana and a great day for the nation," said Dr. Gordon Mueller, a chairman on the board of trustees for the opening. "When we opened in 2000, there were six million veterans...now we're down to two million. This museum describes and portrays the American journey through World War II. If we provide people the opportunity to learn and experience the war through these exhibits, we will be a better nation as a result."

Along with U.S. Army soldiers, coastguardsmen and a large group of sailors based in the Greater New Orleans Area, a group of enlisted Marine volunteers based at the Naval Support Activity here served as escorts for the hundreds of World War II veterans who came here from their homes throughout the nation for this event.

"It's a little late in coming," said W.F. "Bill" Wellman of the museum's opening in June 2000 and the new expansion. "Unfortunately, a lot of guys never got the chance to see it," lamented Wellman, 85, referring to his World War II Marine comrades who have passed away in recent years.

"It (the museum) teaches a lot to the younger generation. This is a war that shouldn't be forgotten," said Wellman, who served as a communications specialist with the 16th Anti-Aircraft Battalion, 1st Marine Division on the Pacific islands of Saipan, Tinian and Okinawa between 1942-1945.

The best day of Wellman's Marine Corps career, he said, was when his ship sailed under San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge in June 1945, and the U.S. Navy Band played on the bridge to welcome the Marines home.

Wellman was able to witness the Marine Forces Reserve Band perform some 64 years later at the Nov. 6 ceremony.

Under the leadership of conductor Staff Sgt. Seth Gehman, 30 Marine musicians from the MFR Band played an outdoor concert prior to the dedication ceremony.

"It was great being part of something so big, to see all the local military from all armed forces coming together to honor the service of WWII veterans," said Gehman.

The band performed a 30-minute concert of patriotic selections, many circa World War II, before an audience of more than 1,000 city and state officials, celebrities, active duty service members and veterans and their families.

John William Sweren traveled from his home in Mesa, Ariz., for the event. "I feel great," said Sweren, who recently turned 86 and claims he is still "feeling agile."

"This is a great tribute to those who served, and to their families," explained Sweren. "I kept it all inside until about five years ago. This is wonderful... I'm happy that my family could come here with me."

A tail gunner on a B-26 Marauder which bore the moniker "Hitch Hiker," Sweren was shot down over German-occupied France two days before Christmas in



Photo By Capt. Paul L. Greenberg

World War II veterans and U.S. Marines stand side-by-side during the opening ceremony for the dedication of the wing of the National World War II Museum in New Orleans Nov. 6. The original museum was completed in 2000. The new wing features the Solomon Victory Theater, the Stage Door Canteen and The American Sector Restaurant.

1944. Several of his fellow crewmembers did not survive the crash.

Sweren was captured and spent more than two years in a German prison camp, eventually earning two purple hearts. Like so many other veterans, he returned home after the war and went to college on the new GI Bill.

“Remember you have a job to do for yourself and the people of America,” Sweren said, speaking to the young people serving in the U.S. military today. “Get the best education possible, and take advantage of all the opportunities.”

The young active duty Marine escorts had the rare opportunity to get to know the veterans and listen to their stories while at the museum.

“The experience was amazing,” said Marine Cpl. Corina Quesada, who escorted Nora Wimbish throughout the day. Ms. Wimbish was also a Marine corporal and teletype operator during World War II.

“Looking into her eyes while she shared her stories of our country’s history will be something I will never forget,” explained Quesada. “Words can not explain the experience.

“She shared with me that she likes our rank insignia the way it is now, continued Quesada. “Before we had no cross rifles in the center. She said for the most part the uniforms are still the same. As we were waiting to be seated outside, she said, ‘The Marine Corps hasn’t changed... hurry up and wait!’ Its funny how something like that will always be remembered by a Marine. She even helps maintain our Molly Marine statue in the city.”

“I feel a connection to this museum through our fellow Marines,” said Quesada. “I may have not been part of World War II, but our family was. We, as Marines today, continue to carry our legacy and values. As they (veterans) are part of history, we will also be tomorrow.”

Other ceremony attendees supported the war effort on assembly lines, such as Mary Belden, 86, who labored as a riveter in an aircraft factory in Racine, Wis., from 1942-1945 while her husband fought with the U.S. 7th Army in France and Germany.

“It is a marvelous place to go to,” said Belden. “It represents not only material things, but the spirit of the people who fought in the war and also those who served on the home front. It’s essential to have something like this so people can understand the kind of sacrifices made during the war.”

“As an Iraq War veteran, I of course feel a connection to the museum,” said Staff Sgt. Michael Mingin, an active duty Marine who escorted World War II veteran Leonard Klock.

“A war is a war is a war,” stated Mingin. “It was a very humbling experience. The stories were both happy and sad. He told me stories of what ‘liberty’ was like at the USO canteen shows. He described the ugly faces of war and the sight of seeing close friends die at the hands of the enemy.”

Klock, who served in the Marine Corps as an infantryman and parachutist from 1941-1945, saw action

on Pacific islands such as Bougainville, Guadalcanal, Vella Lavella, and Iwo Jima.

“What you can get from this museum is a tactile representation of the war,” said actor Tom Hanks, who participated in the ceremony and stayed afterwards to serve food to the troops at the reception. “At the end of the day, a good museum will make you feel differently about what you’ve seen. It will hit you in purely human terms.”

Museum entry is free for all active duty service members in uniform. For more information about the museum or to schedule a guided tour for professional military education classes, visit their website at <http://www.nationalww2museum.org>. □



Photo By Capt. Paul L. Greenberg

Cpl. Corina Quesada (left), a traffic management specialist, Marine Forces Reserve, and Lance Cpl. Nicole Ostrander, a legal services specialist, Marine Forces Reserve, escort Nora Wimbish during a dedication ceremony Nov. 6 at the National World War II Museum in New Orleans. Wimbish served as a teletype operator in the Marine Corps from 1943-1945, attaining the rank of corporal.

Fox 2/25: A Look at Deployment in Retrospect



Photo By Capt. Paul L. Greenberg

Reserve Marines from Company F, 2nd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment conduct census operations at a Bedouin camp in the al-Anbar desert near Al Asad Air Base, Iraq on Dec. 11, 2008. The Marines, using rudimentary Arabic acquired from DVD tutorial programs, were able to gain critical information on the itinerant residents who travel throughout the Coalition's area of operations. The Marines completed their 7-month tour in Iraq in April 2009. They are currently preparing for a winter deployment to Norway for cold weather training.

CAPT. PAUL L. GREENBERG

MARINE FORCES RESERVE

NEW ORLEANS - On a blustery winter afternoon in western Al Anbar Province, Iraq, Reserve Marines and Sailors from Company F, 2nd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment set out for a security patrol of the base's outer perimeter Dec. 11, 2008.

The name of their base, "Al Asad," translates to "The Lion" in English.

This is one of the Coalition Forces' largest logistical hubs in Iraq. The security of the base is therefore vital to the Coalition Forces' current operational overwatch posture, as they mentor and provide support to Iraqi Security Forces.

The reservists from Company F arrived in-country with 2/25 in early September, 2008. When a large portion of the battalion moved west to conduct operations out of Camp Korean Village near the Syrian and Jordanian borders, Fox and other elements of the battalion remained at Al Asad to fulfill the critical role of base security.

To provide defense in depth, Company F's 4th Platoon was assigned to external security. They spent their

deployment patrolling, day and night, the hundreds of miles of barren desert surrounding the base.

Petty Officer 3rd Class John McClure, a company corpsman, went out on more than 50 of these patrols. A 24-year-old native of Jonesville, La., this was McClure's fourth tour in Iraq, and he remarked on the improvement in the security situation he witnessed between 2004 and 2008.

"There wasn't a day that went by when you didn't get mortars, rockets or small arms fire," said McClure. "Now, there's... just nothing. Only empty desert."

The patrol's first stop Dec. 11 was at a Bedouin shepherd camp some miles outside the base. The Marines, while conducting census operations, interviewed the tribe's leader, Fallah Humak, who has been camped there with his wives and children for the past 30 days. Parked out front of his tent was Humak's aging pick-up truck, his family's only source of transportation.

Due to a scheduling error, the Marines had no Arabic interpreter. They therefore put their Arabic training into practice in the course of interviewing Humak and sharing a cup of chai tea with him on the floor of his tent.

The patrol loaded back up to continue their trek through the desert. The only sign of other human life was an

occasional helicopter from the base flying overhead.

After several hours, the Marines and sailors arrived at a checkpoint where another Bedouin camp had been sighted several days earlier by aerial observation. The transient tribesmen had apparently moved on, leaving only tire tracks and an empty fire pit as evidence of their occupation.

In the last hour before sunset, the patrol set up an observation post. The gunners manned the turrets and scanned the desert for activity, while the rest of the troops took a short chow and coffee break as the temperature quickly plummeted into the 40's.

Cpl. Ellsworth Bucey III, a 24-year-old team leader and real estate salesman from Albany, N.Y., fired up his camping stove to boil water for the coffee.

Ellsworth, who deployed to Iraq in 2006 as a volunteer with 1st Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment, said that this experience was "like night and day" compared to his first tour, which "was much more kinetic."

"It's good to see the country take a turn for the better," said Ellsworth, who explained that the only interaction he's had with Iraqis this time has been chance encounters with farmers, shepherds and people traveling through the desert from small remote villages to get water from the stream beds which fill up after a rain storm.

After nightfall, the vehicles continued on their circuitous route, winding through the berms and rock piles and negotiating the treacherous slopes of the dry stream beds.

Cpl. Scott Sayre, the 28-year-old patrol leader in the front vehicle, suddenly ordered the patrol to halt. One of the Humvees had snapped an axle.

The Marines circled the wagons and called back to base, about 30 kilometers away, for a wrecker to come out with the quick reactionary force to tow the Humvee.

"We do our best to prep the vehicles, but some things are just out of our control," said Sayre. "It seems like you always have the most problems when you are furthest away

from base."

This was Sayre's first overseas deployment, and he explained that his mission was much different than what he'd anticipated after training all summer at Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center in Twentynine Palms, Calif.

"I always expected to be in a city, doing counter-insurgency operations," said Sayre. "I didn't think I'd be somewhere so desolate with no population but sheep herders and a few villages here and there."

As the patrol waited in the moonlight with temperatures dipping down into the low 30's, the troops remained alert, scanning the flat terrain and discussing their plans for vacation after returning home from deployment in the spring.



Photo By Capt. Paul L. Greenberg

A motor transport Marine from Motor Transport Platoon, Headquarters and Service Company, 2nd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment backs up a 7-ton wrecker to hitch it to a Humvee which broke down during a security patrol outside Al Asad Air Base Dec. 11, 2008. The battalion completed their 7-month tour in Iraq in April 2009.

Some would go to the Caribbean, others intended to see Europe. Sayre said he had three weddings to attend when he got home. But that was months away, and the Marines' stomachs were growling. With each passing hour they calculated the waning likelihood of making it back in time for late-night chow at the dining facility.

The sound of the 7-ton wrecker cutting through the cold night wind was music to the Marines' ears. The battalion's motor transport crew had finally arrived.

Led by Sgt. Jose L. Salas of Motor Transport Platoon, Headquarters and Service Company, 2/25, the Marine transport crew

hooked the defunct vehicle up to the wrecker, which Salas gave the moniker, "seven tons of fun."

The convoy crawled through the shrouded surface of dirt, rocks and craters, changing course when necessary to avoid a dangerous slope. They finally arrived at The Lion's gate just after midnight, cold and exhausted.

Even though the Marines and Sailors of Company F didn't find the counter-insurgency battle they expected in Iraq, they conducted a worthwhile mission as guardians of one of the most strategically important American strongholds in the Global War on Terror. □

From group to regiment, regiment to battalion: *Marines continue to drawdown in Iraq*

LANCE CPL. MELISSA LATTY
COMBAT LOGISTICS REGIMENT 27 (FORWARD)
MULTI NATIONAL FORCE - WEST PUBLIC AFFAIRS

AL ASAD AIR BASE, Iraq – Combat Logistics Battalion 46 officially took over for Combat Logistics Regiment 27 as the logistics combat element during a Transfer of Authority ceremony aboard Al Asad Air Base, Iraq, Dec. 16.

The battalion, which arrived in theater this past August, is the first all-reserve logistics battalion to serve during Operation Iraqi Freedom and will now, at approximately 1,000 service members, be the smallest unit to serve as the logistics combat element.

This is one of many reductions the Marine Corps has recently made in Iraq. One of which included the downsize of the 2nd Marine Logistics Group to a regiment in September of this year. CLR-27, which is made up of about 2,000 Marines and sailors, assumed the combat service support role and took charge of all logistical operations normally run by an entire logistics group, which is typically composed of about 4,000 Marines and sailors.

Lt. Col. Eric Davis, the commanding officer of CLB-46, took over for Col. Vincent A. Coglianesse, the commanding officer of CLR-27.

Coglianesse addressed all guests who attended the ceremony, which included Maj. Gen. R. T. Tryon, the Multi National Force - West commanding general, Maj. Gen. John E. Wissler, the MNF-W deputy commanding general, and the Marines and sailors of both logistics units. During his speech, he emphasized the significance of the transfer of authority from group to regiment and now the reduction to a battalion.



Photo By Lance Cpl. Melissa A. Latty

Marines from Combat Logistics Regiment 27 and Combat Logistics Battalion 46 stand at the position of attention as the CLR-27 colors are presented during the playing of the Marines Hymn and Anchors Away before being cased and retired during a Transfer of Authority ceremony aboard Al Asad Air Base, Iraq, Dec. 16, 2009. Lt. Col. Eric Davis, the commanding officer of CLB-46, took over as the logistics combat element for Col. Vincent A. Coglianesse, the commanding officer of CLR-27.

a great reputation of support.”

Now, next to step up to the plate and potentially follow in the regiment’s footsteps is CLB-46.

“Today, we are here to mark another historical milestone - a battalion will assume the LCE role,” he said.

As the logistics combat element, CLB-46 will be a direct liaison to MNF-W and will now head a broader scope of

“Since 2004, we have had MLG-size elements providing all six functions of combat service support to Multi National Force - West units,” Coglianesse said. “This past September the departure of Brig. Gen. Juan G. Ayala and the casing of the 2nd Marine Logistics Group colors marked another significant reduction for the Marine Corps. It was the first time in the short history of OIF that a regiment assumed that critical combat service support role. Combat Logistics Regiment 27 took the reins and was able to maintain



Photo By Lance Cpl. Melissa Latty

Col. Vincent A. Coglianesse, the commanding officer of Combat Logistics Regiment 27, addresses the Marines of CLR-27 and Combat Logistics Battalion 46 during a Transfer of Authority ceremony aboard Al Asad Air Base, Iraq, Dec. 16, 2009. Lt. Col. Eric Davis, the commanding officer of CLB-46, took over as the logistics combat element for Coglianesse.

logistical services and responsibilities.

So far, CLB-46 has conducted more than 800 outside-the-wire missions and traveled more than 45,000 miles to provide combat logistics support throughout Iraq's Al Anbar province. The unit's earlier success has set the bar high for how they will finish out the Marine Corps logistics mission in Iraq.

"Whether it's through combat logistics patrols, route clearance missions or drawdown operations, the Marines and sailors of CLB-46 have made it happen. I've been able to visit them at their respective companies and it's obvious that this team is not only capable of writing the final chapter, but they will ensure it gets done right," added Coglianesse.

The Marines of CLB-46 are eager to take on this role and hopefully gain the reputation that will come along with it.

"It's exciting to be here at the end and to be the last Marines in Iraq," said Davis. "I feel that for a CLB to be given the opportunity to serve as the LCE validates the Marine Corps' total force concept. I hope that based on our

performance, the reserves will be considered for future combat logistics regiments."

For the remainder of their deployment, CLB-46 will be providing a full range of combat logistics support, to include transportation, engineering services, and medical capabilities.

"We will focus mainly on maintenance for the vehicles and equipment as we support the responsible drawdown," Davis said. "Our end goal is to finish strong."

Coglianesse had the same expectation for the battalion.

"I look forward to hearing about the great accomplishments you will continue to achieve as you close out the last phase of the Marine Corps' contributions to Operation Iraqi Freedom," he said. "Remember, there are hundreds of Marines and Sailors, to include each of their families, who have endured life-altering sacrifices and are counting on you for a strong finish." □



Photo By Lance Cpl. Melissa Latty

Master Gunnery Sgt. Norman Hoosier (left), the operations chief and senior enlisted staff non-commissioned officer with Combat Logistics Regiment 27, and Col. Vincent A. Coglianesse (right), the commanding officer of CLR-27, perform the casing of the regiment's colors during a Transfer of Authority ceremony aboard Al Asad Air Base, Iraq, Dec. 16, 2009. Lt. Col. Eric Davis, the commanding officer of CLB-46, took over as the logistics combat element for Coglianesse.

“Cowboys” of VMFA-112 head for historic deployment to Iraq



Photo By Sgt. Lisa Rosborough

SGT. LISA ROSBOROUGH

MAG 41

NAVAL AIR STATION, JOINT RESERVE BASE, FORT WORTH, Texas - Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 112 recently deployed approximately 100 Marines along with 12 F/A-18 Hornets to Al Asad, Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

“The recent deployment to Iraq is a historic moment for the squadron,” said Col. Richard Giudice, commanding officer of VMFA-112. “My primary goal is to ensure the safety of each of the ‘Cowboy Marines’ and ensure a safe return home.”

Marines of VMFA-112 mobilized June 27, before departing with the main body in September for a seven-month tour in Iraq. They are joined by two more units from Fort Worth, Texas - Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron (MALS) 41 and Marine Air Control Squadron (MACS) 24.

A brief history of Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 112.

According to historical records, VMFA-112 was activated March 1, 1942 in San Diego, California, flying the F-2A “Brewster Buffalo.” Originally known as the “Wolfpack,” in October 1942 VMFA-112 deployed to Noumea, New Caledonia, flying the F-4 “Wildcat,” and later participated in the Guadalcanal, Southern Solomons, and Iwo Jima campaigns.

In 1943, VMFA-112 began flying the F-4U “Corsair,” and continued operations in the Southern Pacific Theater. In November 1944, the squadron deployed aboard the USS Bennington and conducted air operations until deactivation

on September 10, 1945.

VMFA-112 was reactivated as a reserve squadron on July 1, 1946 at Naval Air Station Dallas, Texas. The squadron flew the F-4U “Corsair” until 1955 when it received its first jet aircraft, the F-9F “Panther.” Five years later, the squadron transitioned to the F-3J “Fury,” which it operated until the arrival of the F-8 “Crusader” in 1965.

By February of that same year, the squadron was assigned to Marine Aircraft Group 41 and in October its sister-squadron, VMF-111, was deactivated, with Leatherneck personnel and aircraft to be absorbed by VMFA-112, making it one of the largest reserve squadrons in terms of the number of aircraft assigned.

In July of 1967, the unit changed its name to the “Cowboys,” and redesigned the squadron insignia to reflect the local Dallas Cowboys NFL team.

During 1975, the squadron was re-designated as Marine All Weather Fighter Squadron 112 (VMFA-112) and transitioned to the F-4 “Phantom.” In 1976, the squadron upgraded to the McDonnell Douglas F-4N Phantom II, and became Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 112.

VMFA-112 flew the venerable “Phantom” until 1992, when the very last Marine F-4 was retired at a ceremony at Naval Air Station Dallas, and the “Cowboys” of VMFA-112 transitioned to the McDonnell Douglas F/A-18 “Hornet” which they still fly today.

On October 8, 1992, Capt. Joe “Crip” Riley flew the first Hornet sortie for the Cowboys. VMFA-112 moved to Naval Air Station – Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth in September 1996. □

Marines take part in Natural Fire 10's opening ceremony

LANCE CPL. LUCAS VEGA
MARINE FORCES RESERVE

Kitgum, Uganda- Reserve Marines from Military Police Companies, Twin Cities, Minn., Wahpeton, N.D., Company A, Lexington, Ky., and Company B, Pittsburgh, Pa., participated in the opening ceremony of Natural Fire 10, Oct. 16 along with various East-African militaries including Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and the host-nation, Uganda.

The training exercise, is sponsored by the joint chiefs of staff and is a biannual joint and combined military exercise consisting of a three part disaster exercise, including a table top exercise, field training exercise with a live-fire range, humanitarian civic assistance projects and regional security.

In all, there will be close to a combined 1,220 U.S. military personnel, and East-African military personnel participating in the exercise.

During the ceremony, several senior officials from the nation's governments and militaries were among the guest speakers to address the visiting militaries participating in the training exercise.

A chairman of the Kitgum local government, John Ogwok Komakech, was one of few notable speakers to address the audience, which was made of government excellencies and their guests, East-African and United States servicemembers.

Ogwok expressed his gratitude by welcoming the visiting nations and said he is looking forward to the success of the exercise.

1st Sgt. Oscar Jordan, Inspector & Instructor first sergeant of MP. Co, marched the 30-man Marine and soldier platoon during the ceremony. As the I&I, Jordan is going to oversee much of the training and is also anticipating the success of the evolution as well.

"I look forward to building relationships with the East-African nation we are training with," said Jordan, "I also look forward to experiencing their different cultures."

Natural Fire 10, which was first held in Kenya in 1998, is lasted 11 days, with 7 of those days being hands-on training by all the nations militaries.

The training included convoy training, crowd/riot control, hand-to-hand combat, weapons handling, and helicopter training. □



Photo By Lance Cpl. Lucas Vega

1st Sgt. Oscar Jordan, Inspector and Instructor first sergeant of Military Police Company Twin Cities, Minn., interacts with a member of the Kenyan military shortly before the opening ceremony of Natural Fire 10, a joint training exercise with the East-African countries of Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda.

Marines participate in live fire range during Natural Fire 10

LANCE CPL. LUCAS VEGA
MARINE FORCES RESERVE

KITGUM, Uganda – Reserve Marines, alongside the U.S. military’s allies of Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda, familiarized East-African soldiers and Marines with various U.S. and East African military’s weapon systems Oct.17-18 as part of Natural Fire 10.

Natural Fire 10, a joint training exercise consisting of live fire ranges, field training, table top exercises, humanitarian missions and civic assistance projects, began it’s first official day of training on the 17th.

The two-day evolution for the live fire range portion, trained the East-African soldiers and Marines from MP Co. Twin Cities, Minn., Company A, Lexington, Ky., Company B, Pittsburgh, Pa. and 4th Landing Support Battalion, Concord Ca.-on proper maintenance, handling, cleaning, and usage of the weapons, which included the M16A4, M240B, AK-47, G3, RPD and PKM.

“The G3 and AK-47 have a little more kick than our weapons,” said Pfc. Brandon Ladue, a military policeman with MP Co, Twin Cities. “It was fun to shoot the weapons for the first time and get a better feel of their capabilities.”

In preparation for a helicopter ride to the range, the students spent the majority of the 17th familiarizing themselves with the weapons systems and learning how to tactically board and debark a CH-47.

The following day the students flew to a range via CH-47, to practically apply the classroom portion of the training, with a live fire training exercise using foreign and domestic weapons.

The East-African soldiers, many of them who said they had never seen or used M16A4’s or M240B’s, experienced the weapons for the first time at the live fire range.

Likewise, the Marines were trained with the AK-47, G3, RPD and PKM, which many of them claimed they had never handled prior to Natural Fire 10 as well.

A primary Marine instructor for the event, Sgt. Evan Wray of MP Alpha Company, Lexington, Ky, instructed the East-African soldiers and Marines alike, about the weapons.

“Working with Marines and foreign countries side by side is great training,” said Wray, a reserve military policeman. “This training extends beyond this exercise and the range because you never know when a Marine is going to need to use a AK-47, G3, or PKM in combat operations; just like the East-African soldiers will never know when it will come in handy to utilize our weapons in combat.”

By Wray’s side was a Kenyan Armed Forces soldier, Senior Private Nixon M’mei

Obwaso, who served as the interpreter for the periods of instruction for the weapons and live fire portion of the exercise.

The Kenyan soldier stepped up to the duty unofficially



Photo By Lanc Cpl. Lucas Vega

Pfc. Brandon Ladue, with Military Police Company Twin Cities, Minn. supervises a Ugandan soldier while clearing a weapon in a clearing barrel.



Photo By Lance Cpl. Lucas Vega

Navy Corpsman Hospital Medic Petty Officer 3rd Class Chris Crady with 4th Tank Battalion, Fort Knox, Ky., gives Kenyan, Ugandan and Tanzanian soldiers a closer look at the M16A4 service rifle during a weapons class as part of Natural Fire 10, a joint-service training exercise conducted with East-African militaries.

for some of the Burundian, Rwandan and Tanzanian soldiers, who spoke little English, in support of the Marines training and in efforts to break the language barrier.

“The training is good because you get a better understanding of the Americans and the neighboring countries of Kenya,” said Obwaso. “I have never used and M16A4 or M240B before now.”

Ladue concluded at the end of the evolution that he was content with the training he had received over the last two days.

“Knowing how to use these weapons is something every Marine should get the chance to experience,” he explained. “I think the training was extremely informative and I would recommend it to any service member.” □



Photo By Lance Cpl. Lucas Vega

Sgt. Christopher Federer with Military Police Company Wahpeton, N.D., supervises a Kenyan soldier during a live-fire training exercise as part of Natural Fire 10. NF 10 is a joint-service training exercise conducted with East-African militaries.



2/25 Marines Warm Up To Cold Weather Training

Photo By Cpl. Tyler J. Hlavac

Lance Cpl. William Huber, a squad automatic weapon gunner with 2nd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment takes a firing position during a patrol Dec. 16. The patrol was conducted as training in preparation for exercise Cold Response 2010. Cold Response 2010 is a NATO-sponsored multinational training exercise with the Norwegian Armed forces focused on cold weather maritime/amphibious operations, interoperability of expeditionary forces, and special and conventional ground operations.

CPL. TYLER J HLAVAC MARINE FORCES RESERVE

New Orleans — When field temperatures drop as low as 5 degrees, things start to break down. Water in CamelBaks and canteens freeze, batteries for gear lose energy, and moving from point to point takes longer as Marines struggle to maintain energy and warmth.

Marines with 2nd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment try out their winter camouflage utility covers Dec. 16 during a drill weekend training event in preparation for exercise Cold Response 2010. Cold Response 2010 is a NATO-sponsored multinational training exercise with the Norwegian Armed forces focused on cold weather maritime/amphibious operations, interoperability of expeditionary forces, and special and conventional ground operations.

It's a tough reality that Marines from 2nd Battalion, 25th Marine regiment found themselves facing as they began their first round of cold weather training in preparation for their upcoming deployment to Norway as part of the multinational exercise Cold Response 2010.

After receiving their cold weather gear issue and classroom training in October, the Marines found themselves conducting their first cold weather pre-



Photo By Cpl. Tyler J. Hlavac

deployment training at the Vermont National Guard's Camp Ethan Allen Firing Range Dec. 10-12. Camp Ethan Allen is a harsh training environment composed mainly of snow-covered mountains and hills used to train military personnel in the art of cold weather and mountain operations, providing an excellent training area for the Norway-bound Marines.

"The idea is to get Marines outside and work and live in an environment similar to Norway," said Sgt. Bradley Kramer, one of three mountain warfare instructors from the Marine Corp's Mountain Warfare Training Center (MWTC), Bridgeport, Calif., who will also be deploying with the Marines to Norway. "We want them to familiarize themselves with this type of terrain."

The Marines kicked off the training weekend with refresher classes from the instructors. After the class the Marines squared away their packs and began the 4km hike to their campsite for the weekend. During the movement, the Marines received their first lesson in cold weather training as some found themselves burdened by the weight of bringing far too many layers of warm clothing and comfort gear as well as hauling the Marine Corps Cold Weather Kit sleds loaded with 50 pounds of essential camping gear.

"It's been awhile since we humped with full gear, so now we know maybe not to bring as much extra gear. The sleds were also tough, but we definitely showed our teamwork in getting them to the site," said Cpl. Henry Stemler, an acting platoon sergeant with Company F, 2nd Bn., 25th Marines.

The Marines quickly established their camp site as night approached and prepared themselves for night patrols. Carrying isomats and snow shoes, the Marines conducted a quick patrol under the watchful eyes of the MWTC instructors and learned other lessons about cold weather training; how moving in cold weather takes longer and how to adjust to wearing the extreme cold weather boots.

"In the cold weather you have to be slow moving and keep close dispersion; otherwise it's easy for Marines to get lost or hurt," said Stemler. "But you also have to try to keep your tactics the same as much as possible. You adapt to the environment. The environment doesn't adapt to you."

The next day the Marines broke down the camp and began their movement back to the initial staging site. After dropping their gear, the Marines broke off into squads and practiced squad drills, allowing individual squad leaders the opportunity to assess the abilities of their respective squads in the cold environment.

"We wanted to give the squad leaders some face time with their Marines," said Staff Sgt. Chad Marquette, one of the MWTC instructors. "This (cold weather operations) is very much a small unit leader's fight and squad leaders need to be able to develop tactical soundness for their squads."

After completion of the training, the instructors spoke positively of the reservists' performance out in the field.

"Reservists have less time than their active-duty counterparts to work together and work with their gear," said Marquette. "They did a good job, especially considering the last training they had was back in October. Going from traveling on a warm bus to immediately being in a cold environment, is quite impressive."

Cold Response 2010 is a NATO-sponsored multinational training exercise with the Norwegian Armed forces focused on cold weather maritime/amphibious operations, interoperability of expeditionary forces, and special and conventional ground operations.

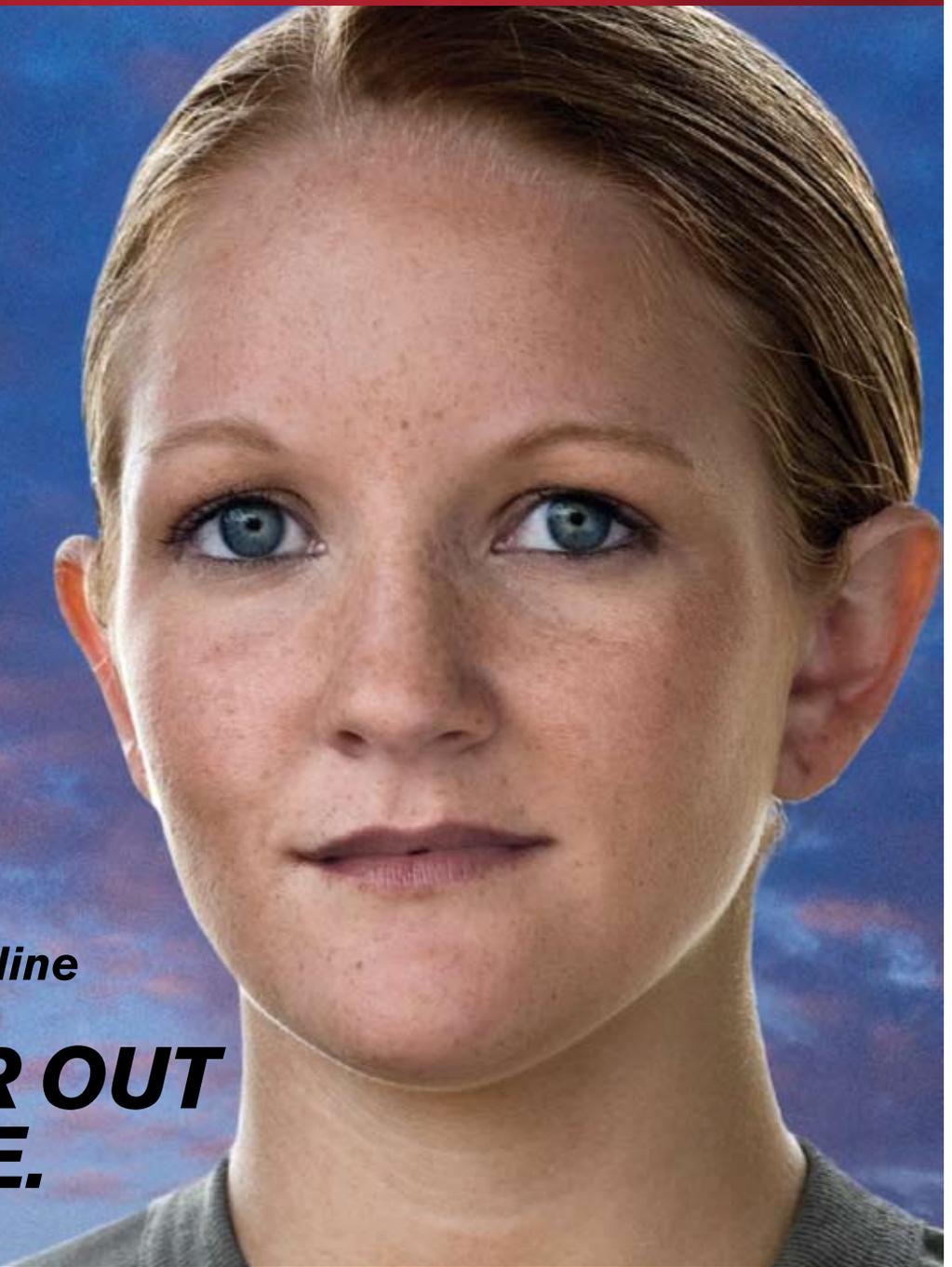
The exercise, previously known as Battle Griffin, will occur entirely north of the Arctic Circle and will emphasize individual and unit cold weather capabilities. The last time U.S. Marines participated in the exercise was 2005. Cold Response will be the first deployment for the battalion since returning from a deployment to Iraq earlier this year. □



Marines with 2nd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment try out their issued snow shoes for the first time at their Home Training Center Oct. 15. The Marines received the snow shoes in preparation for exercise Cold Response 2010.

Photo By Cpl. Tyler J. Hlavac

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tried to cross the line
with my friend,
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OF THERE.***

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