

3/5 Marines honor fallen warriors during memorial



Marines with 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, salute during the playing of taps during a memorial ceremony, April 29. Moments before, the Marines fired a 21-gun salute in honor of the 25 fallen warriors of the battalion.

Story and photos by
Cpl. Ned Johnson

Marines and sailors with 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, memorialized 25 Marines killed in action during a recent deployment to Sangin, Afghanistan.

"We continue to value their sacrifice, which is why we are here today," said Lt. Col. Jason Morris, battalion commander of 3/5. "I take great pride that these men lived their lives with honor, courage, and commitment; that our God is merciful and that they will live forever in the history of the Corps."

A solemn breeze cooled the morning air across a helicopter-landing-zone as Marines, family members, and friends gathered to honor their fallen loved ones. The 25 battlefield memorials stood in a semi-circle in front of a

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Headquarters Battalion conducts DADT repeal training

Story by
Lance Cpl. Glen Santy

Headquarters Battalion, 1st Marine Division conducted Don't Ask, Don't Tell repeal training at the Camp Margarita, 33 Area chapel, April 26.

The Marines and sailors of Headquarters Bn. learned about the changes to the policy and were given a chance to ask questions

during the training session.

The repeal of DADT will give gays and lesbians equal opportunity rights to serve openly and without harassment in the military.

"Sexual orientation is a personal and private matter," said Col. Rudolph Janiczek, commanding officer of Headquarters Bn. "Whether I know or not, I am obliged to treat you equally."

The training covered Marines' privacy as well as and Marine standards and conduct.

Topics of discussion and concern included possible cohabitation of Marines of different sexual orientation and the possibility of base housing allowances for same-sex marriages.

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Marines REBOOT! their lives

Story and photo by
Cpl. Eugenio Montanez

Members with National Transition Veterans Services Inc., visited Wounded Warrior Battalion West, and offered their services to the Marines and sailors of the battalion, April 28.

During the visit, NTVSI representatives spoke about REBOOT!, a three-week transitioning program they developed to prepare service members for the transition to civilian life.

The program is designed to help Marines cope with the day-to-day situations often associated with transitioning from a military to civilian status, and locate the necessary tools to find and maintain a job.

During the course, Marines interact with their instructors in discussions and exercises to identify and hone their skills, and create a plan for when the transition is complete.

"In all the other transition programs available to Marines, you can't learn what you learn here," said Obom Bowen, a facilitator with NVTSI and a retired Marine

(REBOOT, page 3)



Obom Bowen, a facilitator with National Transition Veterans Services Inc., and a retired Marine staff sergeant, talks to Marines about REBOOT!, a three-week transitioning program for all service members aboard Camp Pendleton, April 28. "In all the other transition programs available to Marines you can't learn what you learn here," said Bowen, from Brooklyn, N.Y.

DARKHOUSE

(cont. from page 1)

battalion of Marines in formation, reminded all of the high price of freedom.

Each Marine was honored first by their respective company commander and their best friend in the battalion. Warriors and comrades stood up and expressed the jovial attitudes, patriotic spirit and giving hearts seemingly shared by all who sacrificed their lives for their country.

Each passing moment brought tears to Marines' and family members' eyes alike and echoed the heroic effort made by those fallen.

"For many of our wounded brothers, this is their first time back to the battalion and their friends," said Morris. "The families have travelled across America, and today will help them understand how much we

appreciate their brothers, sons, and husbands."

Sgt. Maj. James Bushway, sergeant major of 3/5, sounded final roll call by reciting the full names of each of the 25 Marines killed in action. The silence after each name symbolizes that while the Marine is absent, they will live on in the unit and Corps.

A 21-gun salute and taps paid final homage to those who willingly gave their lives.

"Each loss hurts, but we must remember how they lived," Morris said. "In life and death, they lived with the ultimate patriotism, courage, and passion for life."



Marines and families of 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, bow their heads during a memorial ceremony, April 29. The ceremony honored the 25 Marines of Darkhorse who were killed in action during a recent deployment to Sangin, Afghanistan.



Sergeant Maj. James Bushway, sergeant major of 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, recites the final roll call during a memorial ceremony, April 29. Final roll call symbolizes that while Marines are no longer present, they will forever be a part of the unit and Marine Corps.

Marines Remembered:

- Lance Cpl. John Sparks, 23, Chicago
- Cpl. Justin Cain, 22, Manitowac, Wisc.
- Lance Cpl. Phillip Vinnege, 19, Spokane, Wash.
- Lance Cpl. Joseph Rodewald, 21, Eugene, Ore.
- Pfc. Victor Dew, 20, Hayward, Calif.
- Lance Cpl. Irvin Cenicerio, 21, Clarksville, Ark.
- Lance Cpl. Alec Catherwood, 19, Byron, Ill.
- Lance Cpl. Joseph Lopez, 26, Tarzana, Calif.
- Lance Cpl. James Boelk, 24, Longview, Texas
- Sgt. Ian Tawney, 25, Dallas
- Lance Cpl. Brandon Pearson, 21, Arvada, Colo.
- Lance Cpl. Matthew Broehm, 22, Williams, Ariz.
- Lance Cpl. Randy Braggs, 21, Sierra Vista, Ariz.
- 2nd Lt. Robert Kelly, 29, Tallahassee, Fla.
- Lance Cpl. James Stack, 20, Arlington Heights, Ill.
- 1st Lt. William Donnelly IV, 27, Picayune, Miss.
- Sgt. Matthew Abbate, 26, Honolulu
- Cpl. Derek Wyatt, 25, Akron, Ohio
- Pfc. Colton Rusk, 20, Orange Grove, Texas
- Sgt. Jason Peto, 31, Vancouver, Wash.
- Lance Cpl. Jose Maldonado, 21, Mathis, Texas
- Lance Cpl. Kenneth Corzine, 23, Bethalto, Ill.
- Cpl. Tevan Nguyen, 21, Hutto, Texas
- Sgt. Jason Amores, 29, Lehigh Acres, Fla.



A bagpiper performs "Amazing Grace," during a memorial ceremony, April 29. The Marines and families of 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, honored the 25 fallen Marines during a recent deployment to Sangin, Afghanistan.

REPEAL

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"The way Marines are quartered has not changed," said Janiczek. "It is not by sexual orientation, age or job; it's by gender and will stay that way."

The Department of Defense only recognizes marriage as defined by the Defense Marriage Act. Same-sex couples will not receive housing allowances or any extra entitlements in the military. The Defense Marriage Act states that marriage is a legal union between

one man and one woman for purposes of all federal laws.

Janiczek believes the repeal will change very little in the Marine Corps.

"I remember back in the 90s when the Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy was going into effect, because it was a big national debate at the time," said Janiczek. "I was a series commander at Paris Island. I came in, physically trained with the recruits, went to chow and carried out a normal day, and every day since then has been the same."

"I don't think the change will be much of a problem in the military," said Lance Cpl. Armando Coronado, a motor vehicle operator,

with Truck Company Alpha, Headquarters Bn. "I've grown up with homosexuals in my family, and it never really affected me."

According to Marine Corps Order 1000.9, officer, enlisted and civilians are obligated to uphold and protect the dignity of all Marine Corps personnel.

Janiczek said harassment of military members because of their beliefs or sexual orientation will still not be tolerated in military service.

"When you go out and deploy, you're relying on that Marine to your left and right. There's no time to worry about something as small as this repeal," Janiczek said.

REBOOT

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staff sergeant. "A day or a week isn't enough time to transition. You need time to learn who you are, where you come from, and what you want to do and how to do it."

Former Navy and Marine Corps service members created NTVSI and all class instructors are former or retired military.

"Being a Marine helps me understand and relate to the position in which Marines find themselves in," said Bowen, from Brooklyn, N.Y. "I can then better help them get to where they need to be."

Now Marines and sailors have the opportunity to receive more assistance from former Marines like Bowen, who are assigned to offices located near Marine Corps bases.

"It helped us a lot to have an instructor who knows what we were going through," said Lance Cpl. Casey Nowlin, a machine gunner with Baker Company, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment. "We didn't have to struggle trying to explain something they don't know, because they knew exactly what we meant."

The program also helps all military members who still have ties to their service, whether they are active duty, reserve or retired.

"As a civilian, there is a program to convert you into a Marine, which is boot camp, but there wasn't a program to transition you back into civilian life, and now there is. This is your boot camp to switch back," Bowen said.

Like all boot camps, this one instructs the service members how to set a goal and the course of action to accomplishing it, Bowen added.

"The course helped me better visualize and set specific goals to adjust my mindset toward the future, instead of the present," said Nowlin, from Tucson, Ariz. "I think it helps out a lot for infantry Marines, because in my case, I don't have all the typical job skills."

With former service members willing to help Division Marines, they can now look forward to having a smoother transition back to civilian life.

1st Marine Division Band hosts annual concert in Escondido



Chief Warrant Officer 4 Michael Edmonson, the band officer of the 1st Marine Division Band, conducts the 1st Marine Division Band during the Escondido Arts Center Concert, April 26. The ceremony was dedicated to 12 of the band Marines who returned from a yearlong deployment in Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

*Story and photos by
Lance Cpl. Glen Santy*

First Marine Division Band performed before more than 2,500 in attendance, during the Escondido Arts Center Concert, April 25-26.

The concert was dedicated to 12 of its members who recently returned from Afghanistan, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The ceremony also recognized Chief Warrant Officer 4 Michael Edmonson, the band officer of the 1st Marine Division Band, who conducted his last formal ceremony with the band.

"This being my last concert, it really pulled at the heart strings," said Edmonson. "As I was conducting tonight, I was really seeing history unfold from when I first arrived here in 2000, and thinking about the people that I have seen come through 1st Marine Division."

Some of the songs the band played during the concert were marches and patriotic-themed songs like "Battle Hymn of the Republic," and "George Washington's Bicentennial March." The band also played a song for each service and ended the concert with the "Stars and Stripes Forever."

Both active duty and retired service members of all military services were in attendance.

"This concert was very emotional," Edmonson said. "The audience was fantastic, and we really fed off that energy they provided. I was really pleased with how it turned out!"

The band does more than just play in concert halls and parades for active duty and retired service members.

"The 1st Marine Division Band represents the more than 25,000 Marines and sailors of the division with the great distinction," said Maj. Gen. Michael Regner, commanding general, 1st Marine Division. "Each member of the band is first and foremost a Marine, receiving the same training and performing the same duties as their fellow Marines. Many of the musicians performing tonight returned from service in Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom."

Band Marines from all ranks enjoyed performing the concert and took pride in being the face of the Marine Corps.

"I think it all went really well," said Cpl. Cory Balcorta, a flutist with 1st Marine Division Band. "We had people clapping and laughing. There was a wide spectrum of emotions tonight, and it really put a smile on my face."



Retired service audience members stand to be recognized by their service tune during the Escondido Concert that included the 1st Marine Division Band at the Escondido Arts Center, April 26. After playing the songs for each service, the band ended the concert with "Stars and Stripes Forever."



The 1st Marine Division Band plays "Battle Hymn of the Republic," during a concert at the Escondido Arts Center, April 26. Band Marines from all ranks enjoyed performing the concert and took pride in being the face of the Marine Corps.



1/5 Marines win Afghans with COIN



Sergeant Richard D. Schimkat, a squad leader for the 81mm Mortar Platoon, Weapons Company, 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, shakes hands with a local Afghan boy next to a wheat field in the village of Sareagar, April 16.

Story and photos by Cpl. Benjamin Crilly

FORWARD OPERATING BASE INKERMAN, Helmand Province, Islamic Republic of Afghanistan -- The Marines and sailors of the 81mm Mortar Platoon, Weapons Company, 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, conducted an atmospheric and security patrol, April 16.

The patrol route took the Marines down Route 611 and through the village of Sareagar, allowing interaction with local residents while maintaining a strong presence in the area.

Upon reaching an intersection known as the "bus stop," the squad-sized element and its Afghan National Army counterparts conducted a vehicle checkpoint.

Six months ago this would have been impossible to do, since the route was an unpaved road heavily laden with improvised explosive devices. Today, the 611 is a primary route used by the residents to get to the bazaar and move freely through Sangin.

"At the end of the day it is imperative that we are always out there," said 1st Lt. Patrick B. O'Shea, the platoon commander. "The simple fact is that if we

are out there conducting patrols and VCPs, the enemy is forced to go underground and cannot intimidate the local population."

Collectively, they stopped and searched more than 100 motorcycles and vehicles. The Marines and ANA soldiers were able to interact with the local residents and show a presence in the area. The Marines knew their presence was important to creating a safe environment for the people of Sareagar and show insurgents they are not going anywhere.

"We have to be out there so the people can see us and feel safe," said Sgt. Richard D. Schimkat, a squad leader for the 81's platoon. "If the people see the (insurgents) out there more than they see us, then people feel like the (insurgents) dominate the area."

With the spring offensive underway, the Marines recognize stopping vehicles alone will not accomplish their mission in Sangin. They learned from their predecessors with 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines, the importance of employing counterinsurgency tactics to win the trust of the Afghans.

"We can run around and beat the bad guys in every firefight, but at the end of the day we won't

win that way," said O'Shea, from Oakdale, N.Y. "We have to figure out the causes of instabilities and why there are problems if we are going to ensure the efforts in Sangin are sustainable."

Mingling with local residents and developing rapport with them does not just save lives, said Schimkat it also enables them to stand up for themselves and work with the Marines to keep the area safe. On top of that, going out and meeting with local residents also improves the Marines' morale.

"I like to get to know the people, and after so many patrols you learn who lives where," said Schimkat, from Lake Havasu City, Ariz. "Seeing the kids all the time out on patrols and getting to hang out with them just motivates me."

Despite the challenges they face day in and day out, the Marines of the 81mm Mortar Platoon know they must remain vigilant on patrol and employ counterinsurgency tactics in order to ensure a safe environment for the people of Sareagar.



1st Lt. Patrick B. O'Shea, right, the platoon commander for the 81mm Mortar Platoon, Weapons Company, 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, speaks to local farmers about an irrigation problem and what the Marines can do to improve the situation in the Village of Sareagar, April 16.



Lance Cpl. Daniel R. Ferree, a sniper in support of the 81mm Mortar Platoon, Weapons Company, 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, is greeted by a group of Afghan children at the edge of a wheat field in the village of Sareagar, April 16. Mingling with Afghans and developing rapport with them saves lives and enables them to have the confidence to stand up for themselves.

1st MARDIV CG speaks on leadership, combat stress

Maj. Gen. Michael R. Regner, commanding general of 1st Marine Division, speaks to attendees about the role of leadership during the Navy and Marine Corps Combat and Operational Stress Control Conference at the Town & County Resort and Convention Center in San Diego, April 27. Regner spoke as a part of a panel about Marine Corps Family Resilience with his wife, Mary Regner. Regner also participated in a panel entitled Medical and "Mental Health Preparations: 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment's Return." The conference's purpose is to bring together subject matter experts in the combat and operational stress control process. Various speakers, panels and clinics aim to present, examine and inform these subject matter experts on COSC policies, programs and practices, specifically tailored for Marines, sailors and their families.



Marines and sailors kick back during Lake Day

Story and photos

by Lance Cpl. Alfred Lopez

The sunny and warm weather provided a perfect setting for Marines and sailors of Headquarters Battalion, 1st Marine Division, and their guests during the battalion's Lake Day at Mission Viejo, April 30.

Participants brought their family and friends to Lake Mission Viejo to enjoy the warm weather and participated in catch-and-release fishing, boating and various beach sports. Warriors liv-

ing in the barracks were given a free bus ride to the lake.

"We are so grateful for what Marines do," said Elaine Baker, a volunteer for Mission Viejo's adoption committee. "This is just a small way that we can say thank you."

Mission Viejo has supported HQBn. as their adopted unit for the past four years. The city hosts various fundraising events for a wide range of causes throughout the year, Baker added.

"I've been coming here for the past three years, and it's definitely grown a lot every year," said 1st Sgt. Rogelio Cervantesosorio, the company first sergeant of Headquarters and Support Company, HQBn. "It's a great event all around. The people of Mission Viejo get to show their support to us, and we also get to show them our support."

More than 200 Mission Viejo citizens volunteered to grill food, set up picnic areas and clean up during the event. The volunteers included retired service members, Mission Viejo adoption committee members and Teens for Marines, which provides opportuni-



Marines and sailors from Headquarters Battalion, 1st Marine Division, line up for burgers and hotdogs during the battalion's Lake Day at Mission Viejo, April 30. Marines and sailors brought their family and friends to Lake Mission Viejo to enjoy the warm weather and participated in catch-and-release fishing, boating and various beach sports. Mission Viejo has supported HQBn. as their adopted unit for the past four years.



Retired service members man the grill during Headquarters Battalion, 1st Marine Division's Lake Day at Mission Viejo, April 30. Teens for Marines and Mission Viejo adoption committee volunteers also donated their time to help with Lake Day. Marines and sailors brought their family and friends to Lake Mission Viejo to enjoy the warm weather and participated in catch-and-release fishing, boating and various beach sports. Mission Viejo has supported HQBn. as their adopted unit for the past four years.

ties for Orange County teenagers to support local Marines.

"The volunteers are citizens who appreciate the Marine Corps and what we do," said Sgt. Maj. Anthony Sammartino, battalion sergeant major of HQBn. "We're grateful for the citizens who come out here and support their troops."

Thanks to the faithful support and dedication of Mission Viejo's citizens, more than 1,000 Marines, sailors and their guests were able to enjoy a day off under southern California's beautiful weather.

"It seems like everybody had a good time," said Sammartino, a native of Miami. "And I did, too!"

Bravo Co., 1/5 sweeps for safety

Story and photos by
Cpl. Benjamin Crilly

FORWARD OPERATING BASE INKERMAN, Helmand province, Islamic Republic of Afghanistan – Lance Cpl. Matthew J. Mistretta, a team leader for 3rd Platoon, Company B, 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, first heard, “slow is smooth, smooth is fast” long before he arrived in the Sangin District of Afghanistan. Now he understands why his instructors at the School of Infantry-West wanted their students to adhere to the simple principle.

“The more you rush anything, the more likely it is to get messed up,” said Mistretta, 20, from Reno, Nev. “When things get messed up in a combat zone on patrol, there are serious consequences.”

Mistretta and the Marines of 3rd Platoon ensure they keep that mantra on the tip of their tongues every time their platoon steps off on one of their patrols.

They are starting to see more and more people coming to the area, preparing for the harvest season. The end of the harvest season can turn full-time farmers into part-time fighters as the enemy tries to re-ignite the insurgency in the area. This is always on the minds of the Marines and sailors of Company B. With an enemy that could be around the next corner, they must prepare to move slowly, but with aggression, when the situation warrants.

The platoon’s slow, smooth movement is also



Petty Officer 2nd Class Jonathan G. Booton, a corpsman from 4th Civil Affairs Group attached to 3rd Platoon, Company B, 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, climbs out of a wadi while on patrol through the green zone of Sangin, April 17. Booton, who has been deployed since December 2010 with CAG, goes out with the platoon as a regular member of their patrols.

important in countering the improvised explosive device threat in the area by sweeping with detectors and always being on the lookout.

Third unit’s predecessors in the area, Marines from 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines, learned a lot about the counter-IED fight and passed that knowledge on to Company B to help Marines in the unit remain safe while on patrol, said Pvt. Cory A. Malone, a point man for 3rd Plt.

“Taking your time as you clear that area is important because you don’t know where the IED is at,” said Sgt. Christian A. Marlow, a squad leader for 3rd Plt.

As point man, the 20-year-old Malone is responsible for determining the safest course for the patrol and has to remain vigilant for indicators along the patrol route.

“I sweep the area to save the lives of the Marines behind me,” said Malone, from Cerro

Gordo, Ill. “It makes me feel good. Everyone looks to me for the safe route.”

The slow steps the Marines of 3rd Platoon take now by sweeping the area and establishing a solid baseline will allow them to quickly accomplish their mission and return home safely.

“You really just have to take it one step at a time,” said Marlow. “‘Slow is smooth, smooth is fast’ is going to play in huge once they harvest the poppy and we start to see the kinetics to follow.”



Sgt. Christian A. Marlow, a squad leader for 3rd Platoon, Company B, 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, speaks to a motorcyclist in the village of Sareagar, April 17. While on patrol the Marines must remain engaged in the counterinsurgency fight.



Sgt. Christian A. Marlow, a squad leader for 3rd Platoon, Company B, 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, provides security from a rooftop of an abandoned compound in the green zone of Sangin, April 17. It is important the Marines learn their area of operations so they are familiar with the terrain.

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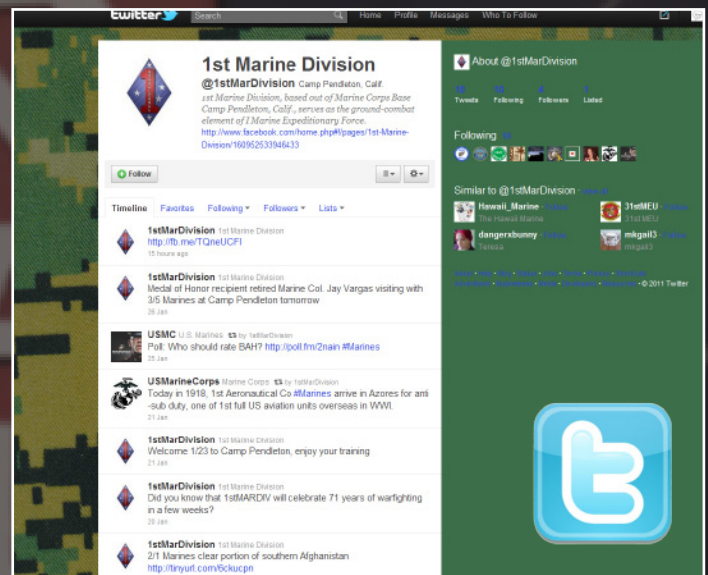
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