



# The Convoy

Delivering quality information on the 1st Marine Logistics Group

Feb. 28, 2014





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## Cover Page:



Cover Photo - A Marine with 1st Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company, 7th Engineer Support Battalion, checks the area for simulated Improvised Explosive Devices during pre-deployment training aboard Camp Pendleton, Calif., Feb 18, 2014. The Marines with 1st EOD have been training since September of last year in preparation for their up coming deployment to Afghanistan next month. (Photo by Cpl. Cpl. Laura Gauna)

To read the story and view more photos, see page 27.

## LIFE AS A MECHANIC

Corporal John Brady, an Automotive Organizational Mechanic, General Support and Motor Transportation Company, Combat Logistics Regiment 1, 1st Marine Logistics Group, talks about his job aboard Camp Pendleton, Calif., Feb. 6, 2014. (By Cpl. Timothy Childers)



## In this issue of **The Convoy**



Page 4



Page 8



Page 14



Page 24



Page 26



Page 28

4 ] DoD Deputy Comptroller visits Camp Pendleton

8 ] CLR-1 Marine keeps trucks running

14 ] Wounded warrior overcomes challenges

24 ] Marines hone their skills for upcoming exercise

26 ] 1st MLG Marine trains with UAVs

28 ] 1ST EOD prepares for upcoming deployment

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# Deputy Comptroller visits Camp Pendleton

Story and photos by: **Cpl. Laura Guana**

U.S. Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), Mike McCord, visited Camp Pendleton, Calif., Jan. 30-31, 2014, to speak with commanders from I Marine Expeditionary Force and 1st Marine Logistics Group, on budget issues pertaining to readiness, training and deployments.

McCord was interested in hearing how budget constraints at the Pentagon are impacting troops at the lower levels and how it's affecting training, the ordering of equipment, the maintenance of barracks, weapons training and overall readiness.

During his time on the West Coast, McCord attended a Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center commanders meeting, lunched with Marines and observed a live-fire sniper training exercise with Special Operations Training Group, I MEF.

McCord, along with Sandra Richardson, director, Resources Issues, Office of Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) and Military Assistant, spoke at the dedication and ribbon-cutting ceremony for the replacement facility Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton. Both were responsible for oversight of the funding of the hospital.



Brigadier Gen. Vincent A. Coglianese, 1st Marine Logistics Group Commanding General, and Mike McCord, Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), discuss funding concerns over lunch aboard Camp Pendleton, Calif., Jan. 30, 2014.



Mike McCord, Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) speaks with Capt. Zachary W. Graham, a Fire Support Coordinator with 1st Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, 1st Marine Division, about funding concerns during lunch.



Sergeant Major Jeffrey A. Young, Sergeant Major of 1st Supply Battalion, Combat Logistics Regiment 15, 1st Marine Logistics Group, salutes as the battalion colors are passed on from the outgoing commander, Lt. Col. Michael J. Fitzgerald (right), to the incoming commander, Lt. Col. Tiffany Harris (left), during a change of command ceremony aboard Camp Pendleton, Calif., Feb. 13, 2014.

Photo by: Lance Cpl. Keenan Zelazoski

# CONTINUING EXCELLENCE

## 1ST SUPPLY BN. WELCOMES NEW CO

Story by: Lance Cpl. Keenan Zelazoski

**M**arines with 1st Supply Battalion, Combat Logistics Regiment 15, 1st Marine Logistics Group, held a change of command ceremony aboard Camp Pendleton, Calif., Feb. 13, 2014.

Lieutenant Col. Tiffany Harris, of Lancaster, Pa., took command of the battalion. Harris graduated from Shippensburg University and was commissioned in May 1995. She now holds a Master of Arts in International Relations from Webster University.

Harris has experience in a wide variety of duty

assignments including supply detachment Officer-In-Charge while deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, and working with interagency programs at the United States Mission to the United Nations. Most recently, she served as the deputy operations officer for 1st MLG.

During the ceremony, Harris promised to do everything she could to support the Marines of the battalion and maintain the excellence that the prior commanding officer, Lt. Col. Michael J. Fitzgerald, has passed on to her.

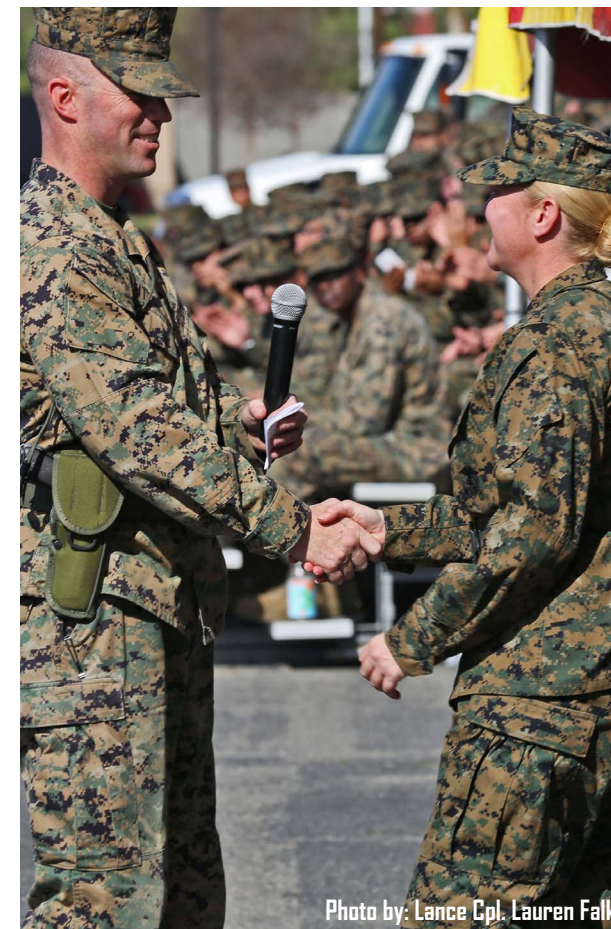


Photo by: Lance Cpl. Lauren Falk

The outgoing and incoming commanders, Lt. Col. Michael J. Fitzgerald (left) and Lt. Col. Tiffany Harris (right), of 1st Supply Battalion, Combat Logistics Regiment 15, 1st Marine Logistics Group, shake hands during a change of command ceremony.



Photo by: Lance Cpl. Lauren Falk



Photo by: Lance Cpl. Lauren Falk

**TOP:** Marines with 1st Supply Battalion, CLR-15, march the colors during a change of command ceremony aboard Camp Pendleton, Calif., Feb. 13, 2014.

**BOTTOM:** Marines with 1st Supply Battalion, CLR-15, render a salute during a change of command ceremony aboard Camp Pendleton, Calif., Feb. 13, 2014.



# CLR-1 MARINE KEEPS TRUCKS RUNNING

Story and photos by: Cpl. Timothy Childers

**C**orporal John J. Brady grabs his tool kit from a supply room before he heads to the vehicle bay. On his way, he greets other Marines donning the same grease and oiled stained uniforms and enters the high-ceiling maintenance bay. The 7-Ton truck he was working on that week is in the corner with its orange-painted diesel engine exposed. He sets his toolbox down, determined to get to work and get the truck back on the road.

Brady is an automotive organizational mechanic with General Support Motor Transportation Company, Combat Logistics Regiment 1, 1st Marine Logistics Group. He has the important task of repairing and maintaining tactical vehicles within his regiment.

“I like being a mechanic because you get to work outside and there is always something different,” said Brady, a 23-year-old native of Ranchester, Wyo. “You might work on some of the same problems, but you go about it differently every day. It’s the variety.”

Today, Brady is replacing the truck’s radiator with a new one because of a leak. His trained eye selects the tools he needs to complete the task and he sets them on top of the front bumper.

“Before the Marine Corps, I didn’t know anything about mechanics,” said Brady. “There’s also so much more you learn outside of mechanics that I learned in the Marine Corps, including electrical problems, pneumatics and hydraulics. You learn a lot of different trades in just this one job. It’s really



3521  
AUTOMOTIVE ORGANIZATIONAL MECHANIC

informative and useful outside of my [Military Occupational Specialty].”

As Brady unscrews a bolt from the radiator, he describes how being a Marine mechanic is different than being a civilian mechanic.

“In the civilian sector, when someone brings in a truck and they need an oil change, you change their oil; or their transmission is out and you just replace their transmission. [As a Marine] someone will bring in a truck and you will find everything that’s wrong with it and try to fix everything. There’s also definitely a lot of responsibility on your shoulders to do a good job; to do it the right way.”

Brady takes a break after removing the heavy radiator from the truck and wipes the sweat off his brow with his forearm. His music plays on the dusty radio as anti-freeze flows from the radiator onto the floor. He grabs a disposable rag to clean it up.

Apart from his job as a mechanic, Brady is also the Hazmat Noncommissioned Officer for his company. He usually cleans up spills made by other

Marines.

“As the Hazmat NCO, I deal with petroleum based lubricants, solvents and other hazardous or explosive substances,” said Brady.

With the Hazmat puddle contained, he fetches a new radiator. He gathers a couple of his fellow Marines to help him make room for the new component.

“Corporal Brady is one of my best mechanics,” said Sgt. Carlos A. Barbora, maintenance chief, GS&MT Company. “He has taken extra responsibility with his second billet, Hazmat NCO. He has a lot of junior Marines under him and as an NCO, he looks out for them and they respect him. This, and his performance as a Marine, make him stand out from other mechanics.”

Brady lifts the radiator in place with the help of another Marine. He begins to connect and fasten it into the truck’s engine bay and continues to work to finish the job. Tomorrow, another truck and another problem await him.



Corporal John J. Brady (right), automotive organizational mechanic, General Support and Motor Transportation Company, Combat Logistics Regiment 1, 1st Marine Logistics Group, and other mechanics with the company, push a Humvee into position aboard Camp Pendleton, Calif., Feb. 6, 2014.



Corporal John J. Brady, automotive organizational mechanic, General Support and Motor Transportation Company, Combat Logistics Regiment 1, 1st Marine Logistics Group, replaces a radiator at his regiment’s maintenance bay aboard Camp Pendleton, Calif., Feb. 6, 2014.



Sergeant Major Richard D. Thresher, the Sergeant Major of 1st Marine Logistics Group, speaks on behalf of 1st MLG to thank The Good Guys of Morgan Run charity during a luncheon, at the Morgan Run Club and Resort in Rancho Santa Fe, Calif., Jan. 23, 2014.



Sergeant Christopher D. Farias, a Field Artillery Cannoneer with Wounded Warrior Battalion West, Wounded Warrior Regiment, shakes hands with George Moullos, the president of the Good Guys of Morgan Run charity at the Morgan Run Club and Resort in Rancho Santa Fe.

# WOUNDED WARRIORS

## Good Guys present donations to Marines with Wounded Warrior Battalion

Story and photos by: Cpl. Timothy Childers

**“We do it because we truly appreciate what these Marines have done for us. It’s just nice to give back to the people who are putting themselves in harm’s way for our nation.” - George Moullos**

The Good Guys of Morgan Run presented seven Marines from Wounded Warrior Battalion West, Wounded Warrior Regiment, with \$5,000 checks to spend as they wish, during a luncheon and grant ceremony at the Morgan Run Club and Resort in Rancho Santa Fe, Calif., Jan. 23, 2014. The Good Guys of Morgan Run is a nonprofit organization that provides aid to wounded U.S. servicemembers.

In addition, The Good Guys named Sgt. Christopher D. Farias, a Field Artillery Cannoneer with Wounded Warrior Battalion West, the organization’s honoree of 2014. He was selected by the Good Guys Review Board because of actions he took in Afghanistan in 2010 that earned him the Navy Cross.

“Our small community loves Marines,” said George Moullos, the President of The Good Guys of Morgan Run. “We’re a Marine community. People donate to The Good Guys because 100 percent of their donations go directly to wounded warriors.”

Wounded Warrior Regiment empowers wounded, ill and injured Marines and sailors and their families in order to assist them as they return to duty or transition to civilian life.

“We do it because we truly appreciate what these Marines have done for us,” said Moullos. “It’s just nice to give back to the people who are putting themselves in harm’s way for our nation.”

Since their charity began almost eight years ago, they have donated more than \$2,500,000 to help wounded warriors. A luncheon is held monthly to present grants to selected servicemembers.

Brigadier Gen. Vincent A. Coglianesse, the Commanding General of 1st Marine Logistics Group, accompanied Maj. Gen. Lawrence D. Nicholson, the Commanding General of 1st Marine Division, at the luncheon to present Moullos with a letter of appreciation from the Commandant of the Marine Corps.

“While we’re here to recognize these great Marines who have served their country, we are also here to honor the organization and its president, George,” said Sgt. Maj. Richard D. Thresher, the Sergeant Major of 1st Marine Logistics Group. “The work [his organization] has done has made a massive impact for those in need. The Marine Corps sees itself as a tight knit family, and we’re proud to think of [Moullos] as part of our family.”

# ALWAYS IN THE FIGHT

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## WOUNDED WARRIOR

# OVERCOMES CHALLENGES

Story and photo by: Lance Cpl. Kennan Zelazoski

**“I remember we would come by an Iraqi police checkpoint, and half an hour later, on our way back, [the Iraqi police] would all be dead,” said Gunnery Sgt. Pedro Aquino.**

The memory of his deployment to Iraq nearly a decade ago is engrained in his mind forever. As a young boy, Gunnery Sgt. Pedro Aquino, now the operations chief with Headquarters Company, Combat Logistics Regiment 17, 1st Marine Logistics Group, never thought he would be serving the country that took he and his family in during their time of need.

“In the ‘80s, El Salvador was in a deep civil war,” said Aquino. “My cousins, at 10 years old, were either taken by the rebels or fighting for the army. Those were the two choices.”

As the war progressed, Aquino’s mother became increasingly afraid as her son neared the age, nine, that he would be required to join the army. His father, a college student at the time, had already been forced to flee the country. The rebels did not want the people of El Salvador to be educated, and were murdering professors and students alike. Having had enough of the worry, Aquino’s mother fled the country with he and

his younger brother. Aquino was only eight years old at the time.

“I came into the country illegally,” said Aquino, a Hawthorne, Calif. native. “My father was pleading for asylum and eventually got it. That is how I got my residency here.”

Aquino went to school, and when he was of age, started seeing military recruiters after making the decision to serve. It was ultimately the Marine Corps that gained his attention, and he joined immediately following his final year of high school.

“They always looked really sharp,” said Aquino. “I also heard they get all the girls; so I joined.”

Throughout his time in the Corps, Aquino has served in five combat deployments, including Operation Enduring Freedom, and two humanitarian missions.

During his 2004 tour to Iraq, Aquino fought alongside his cousin, a soldier in the El Salvadorian Army, in the battle of An Najaf. El Salvador deployed 10

battalion-sized contingents in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom starting in 2003.

“I could not believe I was fighting next to my cousin. You hear about brothers and stuff sometimes, and this was kind of like that,” commented Aquino, who also mentioned it was truly a pleasure to serve with his family.

Aquino also served with, then, Brig. Gen. Dennis Hejlik’s personal security detachment. Hejlik was the commanding general of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force at the time. It was during this time, Aquino saw the remains of slain Iraqi police killed by insurgents. When he returned from his last deployment, he was diagnosed with a severe case of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. In addition to PTSD, Aquino had difficulty walking due to a compressed spine he developed from injuries sustained throughout his various deployments.

“I remember being in the hospital, and a representative from Wounded Warrior Battalion talked to me,” said Aquino, who was reluctant to bring attention to his symptoms for fear of ending his career. “I was pretty shocked. I used to think they only talked to people with missing limbs, but it turned out that wasn’t the case.”

Rendered unable to carry out his duties efficiently, Aquino joined the Wounded Warrior Battalion where he entered a phase of recovery.

“I was a mess,” said Aquino. “I needed the help, but what I really wanted was to get better so I could go back to full duty status and retire after 20 [years of service].”

During his time with WWB, Aquino found ways to cope with his PTSD and received the medical attention he needed for his back. Some of the things he found helpful were wood turning and photography. Aquino makes pens with the wood-turning skills he learned and says that taking photos helps him relax and sleep better. With the help he



Gunnery Sgt. Pedro Aquino, nearly ten years after his tour in Iraq began, poses for a photo aboard Camp Pendleton, Calif., Jan. 1, 2013.

## Aquino found ways to cope with his PTSD and received the medical attention he needed

received at WWB, Aquino has reintegrated to an operational unit.

“It is commendable that he was able to make it back to the fleet,” said Gunnery Sgt. Joanna Mendoza, company gunnery sergeant, Headquarters Company, Combat Logistics Regiment 17, 1st Marine Logistics Group, adding that in the face of challenges, he still inspires and motivates Marines with his invincible spirit.

Even with the challenges he still faces, Aquino wakes up and puts his uniform on every morning to serve the country he has grown to love. About a year from now, Aquino’s dream of retiring after providing 20 years of service will become a reality.

Story and photos by: Sgt. Sarah Fiocco

# FACE OFF

# CLR-15 HOLDS UNIT COMPETITION

**A** physical training competition between Combat Logistics Regiment 15 units came to blows when 1st Maintenance Battalion brawled their way to victory in all contact-oriented events aboard Camp Pendleton, Calif., Jan. 24, 2014.

Marines completed a boots and utilities formation run to the pugil-stick ring where they faced rivals of similar weight, jabbing and thrusting their opponents into three feet of water in order to win the round.

The water added difficulty to the event, said Maj. William Frazier, Jr., operations officer, 1st Maintenance Battalion, CLR-15, 1st Marine Logistics Group. “Most of the Marines haven’t done this since boot camp.”

This uncommon PT routine came together thanks to a handful of Marines from Maintenance Battalion.

“The regimental commanding officer tasked our battalion to plan this event, and one of the only stipulations tasked to us was that we had to have pugil sticks...over water,” explained Frazier of Lanett, Ala. “That’s when we started asking ourselves, ‘how in the world are we going to do that?’”

After toying with numerous ideas on how to get water to the location, the committee finally came up with an idea to employ the help of personnel who never have an issue transporting tons of water.

“One of the Marines asked why we couldn’t just get the fire department to do it,” said Frazier. “We called them up, and they were more than happy to help.”

Pugil sticks was one of several events where Marines walked away drenched. Immediately following the bout with sticks, competitors participated in a unique relay race.



Marines sprinted across a wet tarp with a unit-decorated refrigerator boxes over their heads during the body-jousting event, but the water wasn’t the only thing making the surface slick.

“The tarp had a very, very, very large amount of dish soap mixed with the water,” said Sgt.

**“WE HAD TO HAVE PUGIL STICKS... OVER WATER.” - MAJ. WILLIAM FRAZIER**

Michael Ounanian, chief Mine Resistant Ambush Protected Vehicle Instructor, Motor Transport Maintenance Company, 1st Maint. Bn., CLR-15, 1st MLG. “Not only can the Marine not see through the refrigerator box as he runs across the tarp, it’s also very slippery. It kind of adds to the fun and makes it a little bit harder.”

This wasn’t the first time Ounanian, a planner of the event, witnessed the humour that occurs during the race.

“I used to do things like

this before I joined the Marine Corps when I was part of a large youth group with my church. We would have huge field meets. One of the games we would play was body jousting. In that situation, there was probably about 13 boxes – so more people fell and ran into each other,” said Ounanian of Detroit. “I thought it would be something the Marines would like. I think everyone enjoyed it. It got a great laugh.”

Ounanian guessed right. As the event came to a close, body jousting was a popular favorite.

“The jousting was a blast,” said Cpl. Dillan Fryling, a participant of the event and floor mechanic, MTM Co., 1st Maint. Bn., CLR-15, 1st MLG, of Grand Rapids, Mich. “I couldn’t see anything. I had my hands up in front of me inside the box, just in case I fell or hit something. When I first tried to run across, I slipped and fell immediately. The whole day was entertaining. I had a lot of fun.”



Marines with Combat Logistics Regiment 15 compete in body jousting, an event in which Marines raced across a wet and soapy tarp with unit-decorated refrigerator boxes over their heads during the regiment’s physical training contest.



Marines with Combat Logistics Regiment 15 face off in a pugil-stick match over three feet of water during the regiment’s physical training competition.

# GIVING BACK

Story and photos by: **Cpl. Timothy Childers**

## Servicemembers give back to community by providing hot meals at local homeless shelter

Oceanside, Calif.

**N**ine Marines and one sailor from Camp Pendleton joined forces with local civilian volunteers to lend a helping hand at the Bread of Life Rescue Mission by preparing and serving a free dinner to local homeless and others in need in Oceanside, Calif., Jan. 28, 2014.

Many of the servicemembers who attended are members of the Prince Hall Masonic Society which organized the event with other civilian society members. The group volunteers their time to various community service activities in the San Diego area. This was the second occasion in which they volunteered at the Mission.

“Today we came here to give back to the homeless and needy and show the community that we are the kind of people with good hearts,” said Cpl. Andrew T. Gibson, Motor Transportation Operator, Motor Transportation Company, Combat Logistics Battalion 5, 1st Marine Logistics Group, who has experienced similar hardships. “It’s only right that I give back now that I’m able to,” added the 21-year-old Orlando native.

By coordinating with local churches, county social services and volunteer groups, the Bread of Life Rescue Mission offers religious services,

counseling and shelters offering support services to the homeless of Northern San Diego County. For these servicemembers, community outreach and volunteering is as important as the military service they conduct overseas. They view active engagement with the community as a way to communicate who they are to the people they have sworn to protect.

“It’s always important for [Marines] to help the community,” said Staff Sgt. Dederick L. Brooks, Supply Chief, 1st Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company, emphasizing the importance of volunteer work in communities that support military organizations.

The servicemembers also enjoy volunteering and giving back to the commu-

nity on a personal level.

“This is the second time we have come out here to assist these individuals, and it’s pretty motivating for us,” said Brooks, a 31-year-old native of Lufkin, Texas. “You feel good on the inside. Giving back to the community and giving assistance is something that always makes me feel better. I recommend any individual who wants to do community service, whether that’s here or somewhere else, to come out and do it.”

**“Today we came here to give back to the homeless and needy, and show the community that we are the kind of people with good hearts.” - Cpl. Andrew T. Gibson**



**Sergeant Harold Lambert, Career Planner, Combat Logistics Battalion 1, Combat Logistics Regiment 1, 1st Marine Logistics Group, cleans tables at the Bread of Life Rescue Mission in Oceanside, Calif., Jan. 28.**



**Servicemembers from Camp Pendleton, and local volunteers, serve food at the Bread of Life Rescue Mission in Oceanside, Calif., Jan. 28.**

Sergeant David Perry, a Motor Transportation Mechanic with 1st Medical Battalion, 1st Marine Logistics Group, plays tether ball with a student during a morning workout at Jefferson Elementary School.



# 1st MLG Marines volunteer at local elementary school

Story and photos by:  
Cpl. Laura Gauna

CARLSBAD, Calif. - Hundreds of shouts rang through the air as students raced alongside Marines during a morning workout at Jefferson Elementary School, Feb. 13, 2014.

Marines with Combat Logistics Regiment 1 and 1st Medical Battalion, 1st Marine Logistics Group, volunteered their time to support more than 500 students in their new fitness program known as "Motion."

"We started the Motion Fitness Program this year and it has gone every single day," said Chad Lund, Jefferson Elementary School principal and native of Carlsbad, Calif. "Today was cool. The number one thing for me would be inspiring the kids and that's where [the Marines] come in. They were really motivated to have the Marines here."

Inspired by the book, "Spark," Lund realized how important exercise is to the body and mind. The goal of "Motion" is to improve fitness thus improving focus.

"I hope they see the lifelong benefit of this," added Lund. "People are sick; people have [heart disease] and are overweight. You look at this and think why are these things happening and then why aren't we doing something to reverse it. If kids see others, like these Marines here today, working out and being active they can realize that they can get up and move too and their life can be a lot better."

Marines led various events during the program, such as

push-ups, squats, soccer and basketball. By the end of the workout not only did all the students have smiles on their faces, but the Marines as well.

"I just wanted to come and motivate the kids," said Sgt. Donovan Collins, a Field Wireman with Communications Company, CLR-1. "It's awesome to be here. They have a lot of questions and are so open minded. It puts a smile on my face and makes me feel great and proud to be a Marine."

Since its development, Lund invited several other guests to participate in the program, including local olympians, paralympic olympians, firefighters and local businessmen and women interested in helping the cause.

For many of the Marines, it was a chance to influence their local community.

"This experience has been very cool because we don't know them and they don't know us, but they still look up to us because they know what we stand for and what we mean to the country," said Sgt. Ebony Tatum, a Telecommunications Supervisor with CLR-1 and a native of Fort Washington, Md. "I think Marines should get out here because it's a great opportunity to get involved with your community, to build good relationships and to help out people who may not have good role models in their life."



Corporal Elijah Williams, a Motor Transportation Mechanic with 1st Medical Battalion, 1st Marine Logistics Group, shows a student how to properly do a squat during a morning workout at Jefferson Elementary School.



Marines with Combat Logistics Regiment 1, 1st Marine Logistics Group, play goalie during a morning workout at Jefferson Elementary School.

# The Bridge Chronicles:

## Marines hone their skills for upcoming exercise

Story and photo by: Lance Cpl. Keenan Zelazoski

Marines with Operations Platoon, Boat Company, 7th Engineer Support Battalion, 1st Marine Logistics Group, navigate a Bridge Erection Boat during training in the Del Mar boat basin.

# C

AMP PENDLETON, Calif. - Marines milled about, preparing for a week of training when... SPLASH. Ripples disturbed the otherwise still water's surface in the Del Mar boat basin as an Improved Ribbon Bridge, a four-piece mobile bridge, used as a raft to transport equipment, was inserted into the water during a

training exercise aboard Camp Pendleton, Calif., Feb. 11 to 14, 2014.

"Today, and the rest of this week, my Marines are preparing for a much larger exercise," said 1st Lt. Patrick Moran, Platoon Commander of Operations Platoon, Boat Company, 7th Engineer Support Battalion, 1st Marine Logistics Group. "We are planning an exercise in Nevada to get the Marines a real-world chance to train in an [arduous] environment."

During the exercise in Nevada, Marines

will ferry equipment up and down the Colorado River. The IRB that Marines will use as a raft is capable of transporting heavy equipment across rivers and other bodies of water, making it a vital asset if there is a body of water preventing the transportation of equipment on a deployment.

"One of the challenges we will be facing in Nevada is the current of the river," said Cpl. Anderson Krieger, Licensing Noncommissioned Officer for Operations Plt. "We are training all week out here so our new Marines can get stick time on the equipment in a relatively safe environment before they do it in the river."

**"We are training all week out here so our new Marines can get stick time on the equipment in a relatively safe environment before they do it in the river."**

**- Cpl. Anderson Krieger**

the current to work with," said Moran. "I'm excited to see the planning process come to life."

This is the last week of preparation training that the platoon will have before their exercise in mid-March.

"It is extremely important that we get the Marines the training they need so that they are confident before we have



# Eyes in the sky

## MLG Marine trains with UAVs

Story and photos by:  
Lance Cpl. Keenan Zelazoski

CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. – Part of being a Marine is finding ways to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of your unit, so most units have training noncommissioned officers that find beneficial courses and classes for their subordinates and peers.

One little-known course available to Marines is the Unmanned Aerial Vehicle course. Sgt. Cynthia Zermeno, Training Noncommissioned Officer with 1st Medical Battalion, 1st Marine Logistics Group, recently participated in one of the UAV courses aboard Camp Pendleton, Calif., Jan. 30, 2014.

The purpose of this training is to familiarize Marines and sailors with the knowledge and equipment necessary to operate a UAV. The drones are remote controlled and are used for general surveillance and reconnaissance.

“Not many people know about these courses,” said Zermeno, a Torrance, Calif., native. “As the training NCO, I want to find out what types of courses are available for my Marines and how each course can benefit them, and this one would be useful for everyone.”

Throughout the first three days of this course, students learn how to work with the systems that control the UAVs. They learn vital skills such as plotting a course, and how to launch and land the systems. After they learn the basics, they start practical application. Flying the drones is an



Staff Sgt. Juan-Ricardo Ortega, an Infantry Unit Leader with Marine Corps Security Forces Battalion, launches an unmanned aerial vehicle during a two-week long course aboard Camp Pendleton, Calif., Jan. 31, 2014.

art that requires practice.

“A lot of people in a logistics unit might not see the benefits of these skills,” said Bill Peek, the Senior Instructor for the Remote Audio Visual Engagement

Network course. “The capabilities of a UAV are limited only to battery life and your imagination.” said Peek.

With a UAV, Marines and sailors conducting convoy

operations can silently observe potential hazards, up to a few miles away, on their planned route prior to leaving friendly lines. During the course, students also train to do covert operations and silent surveillance.

According to Peek, UAVs can also be useful in planning operations.

“Being able to get eyes on an objective, without actually having to send a person into a dangerous area that you don’t know much about, is a huge asset to have in an expeditionary environment,” said Peek.

Marines prepare for the worst case scenario, said Zermeno. Often times, Marines will encounter unexpected situations while deployed, and this training provides an additional life-saving skill to take with them overseas.



Staff Sgt. Juan-Ricardo Ortega, an infantry unit leader with Marine Corps Security Forces Battalion, inspects an unmanned aerial vehicle after a landing during a UAV training course aboard Camp Pendleton, Calif., Jan. 31, 2014.



# 1ST EOD PREPARES FOR DEPLOYMENT

Story and photos by: Cpl. Laura Gauna

Since the beginning of the “Global War on Terror,” Marines have deployed to Southwest Asia and the Middle East for combat and support operations.

Explosive Ordnance Disposal Marines have been thrust into a central role to combat explosives and improvised explosive devices, the primary threat to U.S. forces in the region.

“This is the number one killer right now in theater,” said Gunnery Sgt. Mark Smith, 2nd platoon sergeant, 1st Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company, 7th Engineer Support Battalion. “We have been training for a long time now and I know these Marines are ready for

skills and will be able to run the robot efficiently in country and handle an IED safely without getting any one else harmed.”

The TALON robot is a military ordnance disposal robot that is used by EOD and bomb squads in the U.S. and deployed environments to neutralize improvised explosive devices in areas like Iraq and Afghanistan.

With millions of unexploded ordnance in and around Afghanistan, insurgents have the opportunity to use explosives against coalition forces if they are not found and properly destroyed. This is why EOD technicians play a vital role in ensuring the safety of U.S. ground forces, and why the training is vital to their own and fellow service members’ survival.

will not be using in country, was just one of the challenges of this training, the scenarios were another.

“[The instructors] have been running several different IED scenarios,” said Sgt. Jason Cheng an EOD technician with 7th ESB. “They are placing IEDs in different locations and in different ways, drawing upon their own experiences so we can be built up as a team.”

The course enabled the Marines and sailors to see what some of the

latest IEDs may look like and how they may be concealed on a trail.

Throughout the week, Marines and sailors take cultural classes to give them a better understanding of the people, geography and traditions of the southwest Asian country. They also learn a few basic phrases in Dari and Pashto - the two languages most predominantly spoken in Afghanistan. Included in the training are administrative and first aid classes, vehicle rollover training, as well as a day on the rifle range to refresh and sharpen their

combat marksmanship. All sessions are loaded with vital information.

Marines say that although rewarding, their job can be very difficult.

“This is my first time deploying as an EOD Technician and it’s an entirely different experience,” added Cheng, a native of San Jose, Calif., who previously deployed as a chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear defense specialist. “I feel pretty confident, but at the same time there is still a little bit of fear. It’s okay though because they tell

me fear is good because it will keep me alive.”

The team deploying is comprised of 1st EOD Platoon and augments from Marine Wing Support Squadron 373, out of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., Motor Transportation Company, Combat Logistics Regiment 1, and Communications Company, Combat Logistics Regiment 17.

More than 60 EOD Marines are slated to deploy on this rotation in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.



any situation.”

The Marines with 1st EOD have been training since September of last year in preparation for their upcoming deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom next month, ensuring their newest group of technicians is ready for the daunting task ahead.

“Right now we are focusing on refining our skills for the IED fight that is still going on in the country,” added Smith, a native of Sacramento. “[The team leaders] are observing and making sure the Marines have good [EOD] robot

Instructors also worked on the teams’ combat casualty care training and played out various scenarios simulating injuries to see if the Marines could get to and treat the casualties safely and efficiently. They assessed tactics to see if they are effectively executing the mission. This is particularly important because the team will embed with infantry units while deployed, where often, multiple skills in their repertoire can be tested in a single mission.

Training with minimal equipment and vehicles that they



Marines with 1st Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company simulate applying a tourniquet to an improvised explosive device victim during pre-deployment training aboard Camp Pendleton, Calif., Feb. 18, 2014.

# 1ST MLG CONDUCTS COMMUNICATIONS TRAINING

Story and photo by: **Cpl. Timothy Childers**

**M**arines with 1st Marine Logistics Group began a two-week lane training evolution that included hands-on instruction on communications systems aboard Camp Pendleton, Calif., Feb. 3, 2014.

The training included academics and practical application on communication equipment to prepare for the 1st MLG's Combat Operations Center Exercise slated to begin later this month. Marines in the communications field from Combat Logistics Regiments 1, 15 and 17, along with 7th Engineer Support Battalion, came together to participate in the training.

"We have an MLG communications exercise coming up. We do lane training to prepare for the upcoming year and refresh the Marines on new equipment and other equipment the communication companies have," said Staff Sgt. Michael J. Dilling, Platoon Sergeant, Communications Company, CLR-17. "It's good training for the Marines that are just coming from communication schools and don't receive enough training or are put in different billets later on. This training provides the opportunity for them to [learn the skills] they may have missed."

The COCEX focuses on the passing of information between units within the MLG, making experienced and capable

communications Marines vital to completing the mission. Communications Marines provide the interface between commanders in the rear and forward operating areas, or between a headquarters unit in one location and its subordinate units that may operate across the globe. Reliable and expedient communications may be a matter of mission success or failure; life or death. They can also provide a morale boost for Marines away from home.

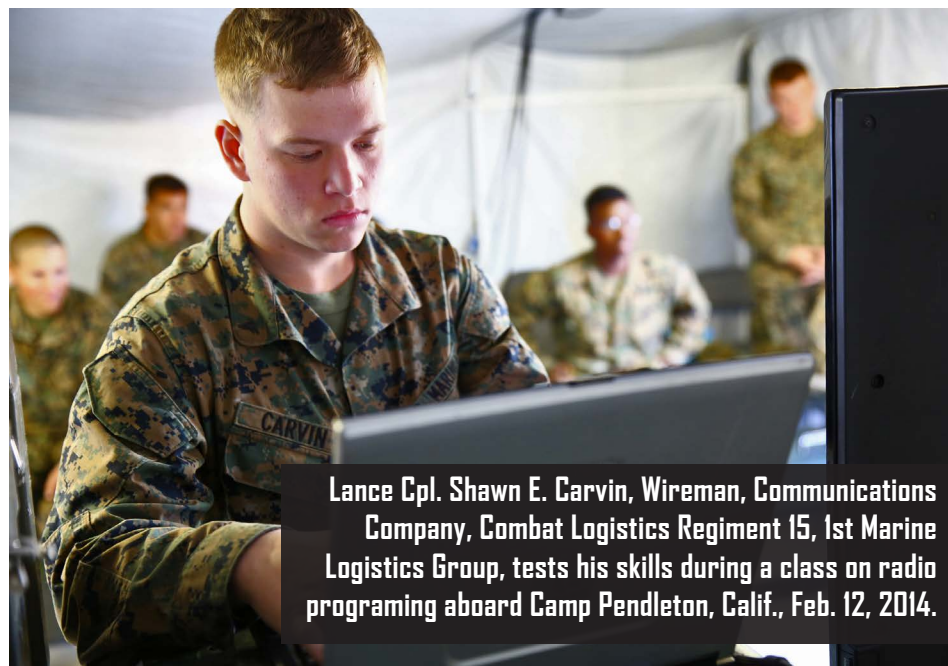
"This equipment is essential to the MLG," said Dilling, 28. "Without the equipment, we may not be able to make phone calls back to the rear for [mission requirements] or make morale calls back home."

The skills the Marines learned from their military occupational specialty schools are perishable.

Without continuous training on the variety of communication systems the Marines are required to operate, they may lack the ability to perform their tasks.

"Today we're going over programing," said Lance Cpl. Adam J. Sellar, Wireman, Comm. Co., CLR-17. "This is a refresher for me. A lot of the time, we don't get enough practice [in our MOS schools], and when we do, it can be hard to remember what we're taught. You need to constantly [rehearse] because it's easy to forget," added the 20-year-old native of Hampton, N.H.

The lane training is scheduled to be completed Feb. 14. The communications Marines by then, we will have additional knowledge and sharpened skills to bring to the table during the COCEX and potential operations across the globe.



**Lance Cpl. Shawn E. Carvin, Wireman, Communications Company, Combat Logistics Regiment 15, 1st Marine Logistics Group, tests his skills during a class on radio programing aboard Camp Pendleton, Calif., Feb. 12, 2014.**

## AROUND THE GROUP

### **March Madness:**

Everyone is invited to stop by the driving range at the Marine Memorial Golf Course at 1 p.m. every day. Register one week in advance. The entrance fee is \$5 and includes one hour of golf, range balls, instruction and use of golf clubs. For more information and to register, call 760-725-4653.

### **FMEAP Ongoing:**

The Family Member Employment Assistance Program (FMEAP) is seeking motivated volunteers who are interested in assisting while building skills in the following areas: clerical, customer service & public speaking. For more information visit [www.mccscp.com/family-member-employment](http://www.mccscp.com/family-member-employment)

### **Pertussis vaccine available at NHCP, Branch Health Clinics:**

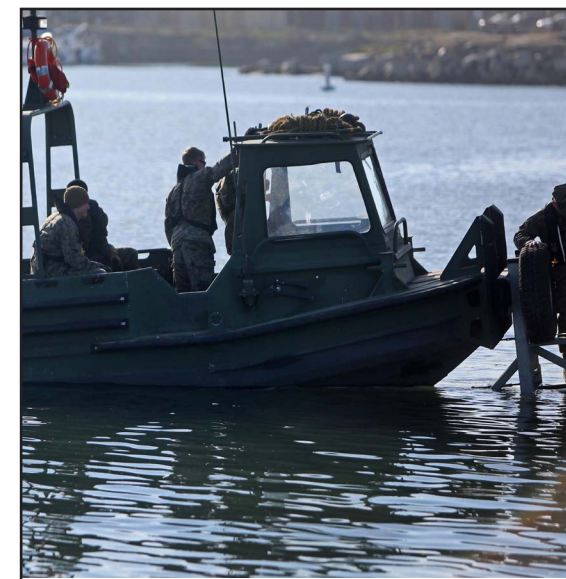
The Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton medical staff encourages all children enrolled at the hospital, and its clinics, to get vaccinated to prevent pretussis. In addition, parents, family members and caregivers of infants should be vaccinated, or get a booster shot, if needed. For more information, please call 760-724-4357.

### **Marine Corps Marathon:**

The Marine Corps Marathon active duty and reserve registration has begun. Limited quantity of entries will go quickly. Remember, only a confirmation email assures registration status. For more information, visit <https://mcmregistration.com/Register/?event=25488>.

### **Wounded Warrior Trials:**

Events will be held throughout Camp Pendleton March 4-12. For more information go to [www.woundedwarriorregiment.org](http://www.woundedwarriorregiment.org)



**Marines with Operations Platoon, Boat Company, 7th Engineer Support Battalion, 1st Marine Logistics Group, prepare a Bridge Erection Boat during training in the Del Mar boat basin aboard Camp Pendleton, Calif., Feb. 11, 2014.**

# PARTING SHOT

By Sgt. Sarah Fiocco

