

MAR 31, 2015



The Convoy

DELIVERING QUALITY INFORMATION ON THE 1ST MARINE LOGISTICS GROUP



CLR-15 Marines host Colombian visit

7th ESB Supports JTF-N road project in El Centro

15th MEU Marines, Essex ARG participate in PMINT

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Marines from Bridge Company, 7th Engineer Support Battalion, 1st Marine Logistics Group, conduct a bridge exercise at Lake Elsinore March 24, 2015. This marked the first time since 2002 that a continuous span from shore to shore had been built.

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Combat Logistics Regiment 15 Marines host Colombian visit



Colombian visit



Top: Sergeant Juan Arguello, center, an Engineer Equipment Mechanic with 1st Maintenance Battalion, Combat Logistics Regiment 15, 1st Marine Logistics Group, explains current computer software procedures to Lt. Col. Andres Perdomo, the Chief of Logistics for the Colombian Marine Corps, during a three day tour around Combat Logistics Regiment 15, 1st Marine Logistics Group, aboard Camp Pendleton, California, March 3, 2015. Perdomo and Lt. Col. Fernando Fernandez, a Battalion Commander for the Support Command, 6th Infantry Brigade, Colombian Marine Corps, visited 1st MLG to allow members of both the U.S. Marine Corps and Colombian Armed Forces to build an understanding of services, share best practices and strengthen camaraderie and interoperability. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Cody Haas/Released)

Top Left: Lieutenant Col. Andres Perdomo, center, the Chief of Logistics for the Colombian Marine Corps, expresses his gratitude during a three day tour at Combat Logistics Regiment 15, 1st Marine Logistics Group, aboard Camp Pendleton, California, March 3, 2015. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Cody Haas/Released)

Bottom Left: Lieutenant Col. Andres Perdomo, center, the Chief of Logistics for the Colombian Marine Corps, expresses his gratitude during a three day tour around Combat Logistics Regiment 15, 1st Marine Logistics Group, aboard Camp Pendleton, California, March 3, 2015. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Cody Haas/Released)

INTEGRATED TASK FORCE KICKS MCOTEVA ASSESSMENT



Sgt. Hannah S. Jacobson, machine gunner with Weapons Company, Ground Combat Element Integrated Task Force, and her machine gun team maneuver to their support-by-fire position in preparation to engage targets during a Marine Corps Operational Test and Evaluation Activity assessment at Range 107, Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, March 10, 2015. From October 2014 to July 2015, the GCEITF will conduct individual and collective level skills training in designated ground combat arms occupational specialties in order to facilitate the standards-based assessment of the physical performance of Marines in a simulated operating environment performing specific ground combat arms tasks. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Alicia R. Leaders/Released)

Story and Photos by: Sgt. Alicia R. Leaders

**MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND
COMBAT CENTER TWENTYNINE
PALMS, Calif.**

— After completing five months of training at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, with more than 20 live-fire exercises and one week of trial runs at Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, California, the infantry Marines of the Ground Combat Element Integrated Task Force officially began the Marine Corps Operational Test and Evaluation Activity assessment, March 7, 2015.

More than 120 male and female volunteers are being assessed, individually and collectively, while executing the tasks as one of the following: Infantry rifleman (0311), machine gunner (0331), mortarman (0341), infantry assaultman (0351), and anti-tank missileman (0352). This assessment will help the Marine Corps develop more concise service-wide training and readiness standards for each MOS above.

Many of the volunteers going through the MCOTEA assessment come from a non-infantry background, such as Sgt. Hannah S. Jacobson, whose primary military occupational specialty is an intelligence analyst, and who is currently executing tasks as a machine gunner.

“I volunteered because it’s going to help my job as an intel analyst to learn the different terrain that grunts operate in, and I don’t like when people say you can’t do something, especially when it’s gender-based,” said Jacobson, Machine Gunner with Weapons Company, GCEITF. “I figured I’m an average female Marine with a first-class combat fitness test and physical fitness test, and I figured if I can do it, I know there are females out



Top: Anti-tank Missilemen with Anti-Armor Section, Weapons Company, Ground Combat Element Integrated Task Force, fire the MK153 shoulder-launched multipurpose assault weapon (SMAW) during the enemy counter attack portion of a Marine Corps Operational Test and Evaluation Activity assessment at Range 107, Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, March 7, 2015.

there who are far superior than me when it comes to physical fitness who can. If I can’t make it, then I will have my own opinion on whether or not females can be in the infantry.”

Although the Marines have worked together back at Camp Lejeune, the assessment serves as a first-time experience for most infantrymen because the Integrated Task Force is the first unit they’ve been to where they work closely with female Marines.

“We’re learning how to work with females, and that’s a challenge, and it’s a challenge accepted because we have to learn how they work, and they have to learn how we work, and you have to learn how to get along with each other because we’re here for the same purpose,” said Cpl. Kevin A. Miller, Team Leader with 2nd Platoon, Company A, GCEITF.

In order for MCOTEA to collect data and gather research for the assessment, each Marine is equipped with a heart-rate monitor, GPS device, and a weapons-player pack attached to each weapon, which shows researchers the effectiveness of an individual’s firing accuracy. Male and female volunteers work hand-in-hand throughout the assessment. MCOTEA randomly selects the Marine volunteers, switching billets within their MOS, and rotating fire teams and squads.

“It’s a challenge to go ahead and have a new team each time, and get to learn how people move and how people bound together,” Miller said. “On the first day of the assessment, we assaulted through the initial three objectives, which was the one-click hike up to the conex box, movement to contact, and the casualty evacuation.”

For the infantry Marines, one full assessment cycle is a two-day event. It consists of a day of offensive operations immediately followed by a day of defensive operations. The Marines are on a four-day rotation, meaning two full assessments are conducted in a four-day period, with one day of rest during their time at Twentynine Palms.

During offensive operations, the Marines suit up with combat utilities, flak, Kevlar, a 36-pound combat load, and depending on their billet, carry one of the following weapons: M4 Modular Weapon System, M27 Infantry Automatic Rifle, or the M16 A4 Modular Weapon System. The assaultmen, machine gunners, mortar-men, and anti-tank missilemen carry their personal weapons, as well as their job-specific weapon system, and ammunition. During defensive operations, infantrymen carry a combat load of more than 50 pounds.

“To me, defensive operations [are] the hardest part of the whole assessment,” said Miller. “It’s a 7-kilometer hike with a sustainment load, weapon, flak, Kevlar, and full (personal protective equipment). You have to go as fast as your slowest person, which can make it even longer, and the

hike becomes very hard because you’re hiking over sand and it becomes exhausting. Once we reach the objective, we then spend two hours switching on and off to dig two-man fighting holes.”

Each MOS has its specific objectives during the assessment, both in the offense and in the defense. Miller and Jacobson both agree the assessment has its mental and physical challenges, but at the end of the day, they are here to finish what they started.

“I figure there is an end point to every start point,” Miller added. “At the end of the day, I know it’s going to make me stronger, and I know it’s going to make me better. When this whole thing is over, we’ll be able to look back and say ‘hey, look what we just did.’”

From October 2014 to July 2015, the Ground Combat Element Integrated Task Force will conduct individual and collective skills training in designated combat arms occupational specialties in order to facilitate the standards-based assessment of the physical performance of Marines in a simulated operating environment performing specific ground combat arms tasks.



Sgt. Hannah S. Jacobson, Machine Gunner with Weapons Company, Ground Combat Element Integrated Task Force, provides close supporting fires for her squad while engaging targets with the M240B Medium Machine Gun during a Marine Corps Operational Test and Evaluation Activity assessment.

Marines with 7th ESB, 1st MLG, support JTF-N road project in El Centro, California



Major Gen. Vincent Coglianese, left, 1st Marine Logistics Group Commanding General, shakes hands with a combat engineer with 7th Engineer Support Battalion, 1st MLG, during a visit to El Centro, California, Feb. 26, 2015. Marines arrived during January to provide engineering support to construct an all-weather road in El Centro, California, along the United States-Mexico border to increase U.S. Border Patrol mobility and support the interdiction of transnational threats. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by 1st Lt. Thomas Gray/ Released)

EL CENTRO, CALIF. - Military combat engineers strive for perfection in every construction project. For Marines with 7th Engineer Support Battalion, 1st Marine Logistics Group, it is a daily goal.

Combat engineer Marines supported a Department of Defense road construction project at El Centro, California.

Marines arrived during January, providing engineering support to construct an all-weather road in El Centro, California, along the United

States-Mexico border to increase U.S. border patrol mobility and support the interdiction of transnational threats.

“The Marines constructed 2,400 feet of all-weather road, comprised of a main roadway and a 12-foot drag road with two low water crossings,” said Chief Warrant Officer 2 AJ Shanks, 7th ESB, and Officer in Charge of the El Centro project.

In collaboration with Joint Task Force North, based out of Fort Bliss, Texas, the Marines volunteered

Major Gen. Vincent Coglianesse, center, 1st Marine Logistics Group Commanding General, talks with a combat engineer Marine with 7th Engineer Support Battalion, 1st MLG, during a visit to El Centro, California, Feb. 26, 2015. Marines arrived in January to provide engineering support by constructing an all-weather road in El Centro, California, along the United States-Mexico border to increase U.S. Border Patrol mobility and support the interdiction of transnational threats. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by 1st Lt. Thomas Gray/ Released)



Major Gen. Vincent Coglianesse, left, 1st Marine Logistics Group Commanding General, talks with a combat engineer with 7th Engineer Support Battalion, 1st MLG, during a visit to El Centro, California, Feb. 26, 2015. Marines arrived in January to provide engineering support by constructing an all-weather road in El Centro, California, along the United States-Mexico border to increase U.S. Border Patrol mobility and support the interdiction of transnational threats. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by 1st Lt. Thomas Gray/ Released)



their labor and skills to expand the tactical mobility of the area's border patrol.

JTF-North, a joint service command comprised of active duty and reserve personnel from across the Department of Defense, supports federal law enforcement agencies in counter drug operations.

“The Marines built a road to civil engineer specification that has not seen vehicle traffic access since 1976,” said Shanks, a native of

Shrewsbury, Pa. “Every time someone is apprehended in this sector it justifies the time away from their family and their efforts.”

The road design was completed during March to specification ahead of schedule without any safety incidents, said Shanks.

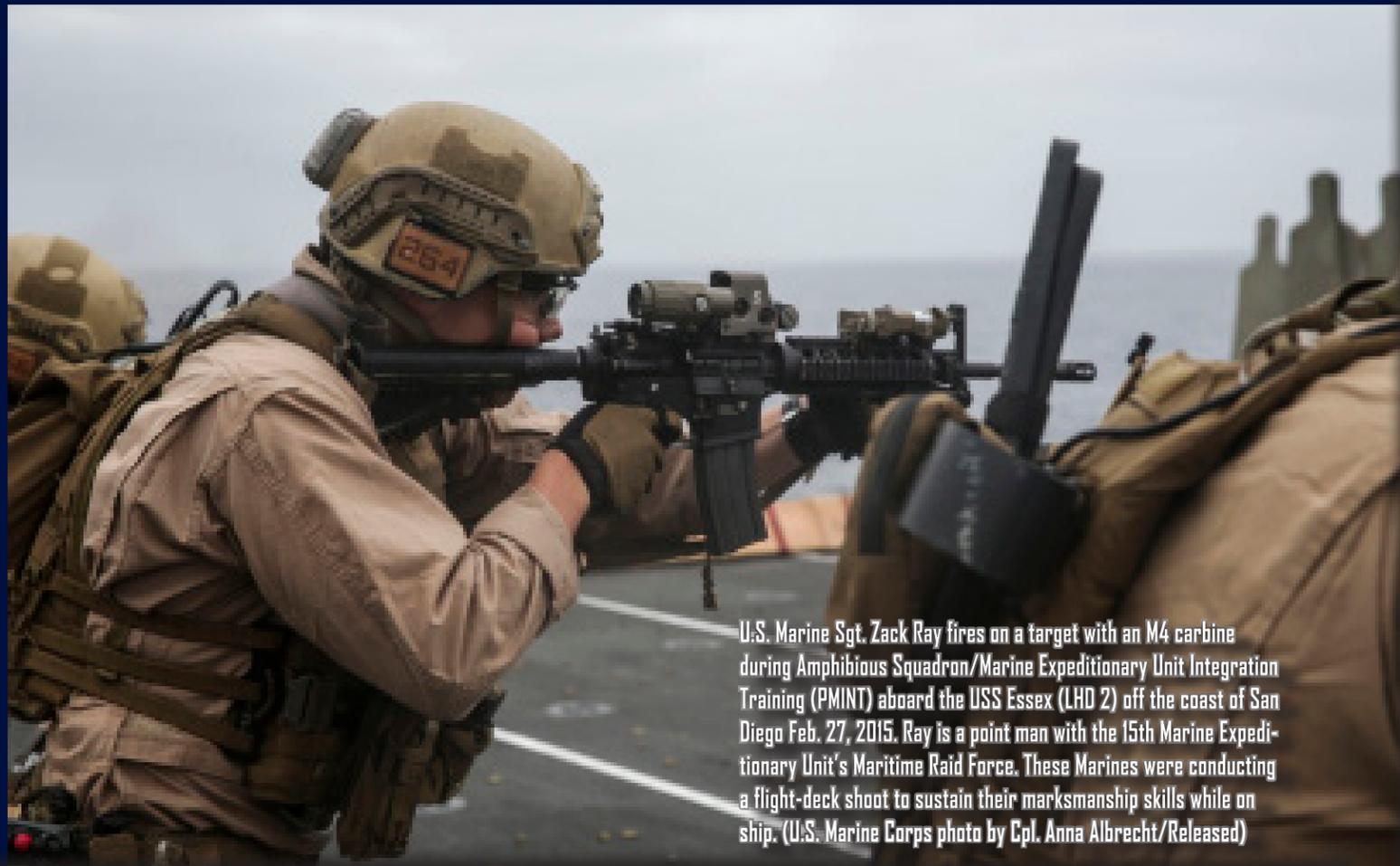
Marines with 7th ESB will continue to prepare for future operations including range improvements and additional road projects.

15th MEU Marines, Essex ARG participate in PMINT



Story by: Cpl. Anna Albrecht

U.S. Marines with the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit's Maritime Raid Force depart the USS Essex (LHD 2) on a combat rubber raiding craft during Amphibious Squadron Three/Marine Expeditionary Unit Integration Training (PMINT) off the coast of San Diego March 4, 2015. The MRF used CRRCs during a precision raid exercise in preparation for their deployment later this spring. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Elize McKelvey/Released)



U.S. Marine Sgt. Zack Ray fires on a target with an M4 carbine during Amphibious Squadron/Marine Expeditionary Unit Integration Training (PMINT) aboard the USS Essex (LHD 2) off the coast of San Diego Feb. 27, 2015. Ray is a point man with the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit's Maritime Raid Force. These Marines were conducting a flight-deck shoot to sustain their marksmanship skills while on ship. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Anna Albrecht/Released)



U.S. Marine Sgt. Eric Maehler shoots at a target with an M1911 .45-caliber pistol during Amphibious Squadron/Marine Expeditionary Unit Integration Training (PMINT) aboard the USS Essex (LHD 2) off the coast of San Diego Feb. 27, 2015. Maehler is a team leader with the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit's Maritime Raid Force. During the deck shoot, Marines transitioned from shooting with rifles to pistols. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Anna Albrecht/Released)

USS ESSEX, At sea – U.S. Marines with the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit embarked aboard the Essex Amphibious Ready Group's three ships for Amphibious Squadron/Marine Expeditionary Unit Integration training, or PMINT, off the coast of San Diego Feb. 23 - March 8.

PMINT gave PHIBRON 3 and the 15th MEU an opportunity to integrate at all levels and execute full-mission profiles while aboard the USS Essex (LHD 2), USS Anchorage (LPD 23) and USS Rushmore (LSD 47).

"The amphibious force brings a host of flexible, responsive options across the spectrum of military operations in support of our interagency or joint force commanders," said Col. Vance L. Cryer, Commanding Officer of the 15th MEU.

The ARG/MEU training continues to push both the Navy and Marine Corps towards a state of readiness as they prepare for their deployment in the spring.

"We've been conducting amphibious assaults, reconnaissance and surveillance inserts, raids, and humanitarian assistance training," said Sgt. Wayne Miller, a Marine Air-Ground Task Force Planner with the 15th MEU's command element.

Miller said PMINT was one of the first times the MEU and the PHIBRON went to sea to conduct training and work as a team. As their training continues before the deployment, the Navy and Marine Corps will work towards a common objective.

"Practically every brief that goes on, if [the MEU] or [the ARG] is hosting it, there are always representatives from each side," Miller said. "I think that's one of the purposes of PMINT: working with the Navy, learning each other and just building that basic relationship with them. When we get to more complex situations, we will know how each other works and know how to get each other to the goal."

Working so close with the Navy gave the Marines and Sailors a chance to learn how each other operates and understand each other's traditions to build the relationship between the services.

Lance Cpl. Blake Tickle, a ground support equipment mechanic with Combat Logistics Battalion 15, 15th MEU, worked side-by-side with the Navy. Together, they ensured their equipment was maintained and safe. Since this was their first time working so closely together, they had to learn how to work and integrate

with each other in order to get the best outcome.

"We pretty much do their same schedule; work when they work and on exactly what they work on," Tickle said. "We're learning a new way of doing things. The gear we have on land is completely different than the gear they use on ship. We're learning how to work on the ship version of our land gear."

Another purpose of PMINT focuses more on an operational standpoint with different types of missions and training happening off the boat itself and on nearby islands and beaches.

"The PHIBRON/MEU integration training period is the foundation on which the Essex ARG/MEU will build our operational capabilities by exercising the well decks and flight decks, rehearsing the operational skills and training required for amphibious missions. These skills are critical as we learn both Navy and Marine Corps planning and battle rhythm processes," Cryer said. "This integration training allows the Commodore and I to posture the force and set the conditions for success for the upcoming deployment to U.S. Central Command."

As different scenarios play out during the deployment, Marines must remain vigilant and ready at a moment's notice to go from ship to shore.

"This training makes us focus on how to get the Marines from the boat to the shore," Miller said. "That whole process, to get the Marines from A to B, requires a lot of planning, training and a lot of understanding of how both sides work."

These pre-deployment at-sea periods also help the Marines get familiar with living on a ship. For some Marines, this was the first time being on ship. These exercises let the Marines learn their way throughout the ship and get used to ship life before deploying.

"Ship life is a lot different than what I'm used to," Tickle said. "There're very confined spaces and we pretty much live where we work."

The 15th MEU will have two more at-sea exercises like PMINT before they deploy this spring. During each exercise they will have a better understanding of what to expect and will be able to operate and integrate together more smoothly than the time before. Constantly improving and growing as a team will ensure that the MEU and ARG are prepared for whatever may come their way.



U.S. Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Kelsy Colvin engages targets on the deck of the USS Rushmore (LSD 47) during marksmanship qualifications with the Mossberg shotgun during Amphibious Squadron/Marine Expeditionary Unit Integration Training (PMINT) off the coast of San Diego Feb. 28, 2015. Colvin is an electronics technician with the USS Rushmore. During the qualifications sailors must quickly transition from various shooting positions, as well as conduct speed and tactical reloads. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Emmanuel Ramos/Released)

An AH-1Z Viper with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 161 (Reinforced), 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit, sits aboard the USS Anchorage (LPD 23) during Amphibious Squadron/Marine Expeditionary Unit Integration Training (PMINT) off the coast of San Diego March 2, 2015. The pilots of VMM-161 (Rein) practiced take-offs and landings at night to maintain proficiency aboard ship. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Jamean Berry/Released)



AROUND THE MEF

(Right) Brigadier General David Creagh, the Australian Army Military Attaché, speaks to the Marines of Company B, 1st Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment at a meet and greet aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., March 5, 2015. Creagh also observed a competition between the squads of Marines who will be deploying to Australia. The Marines with Marine Rotational Force-Darwin will conduct unilateral and bilateral training with the Australian Defence Force throughout the six-month rotation.



Photo by: Cpl. Joshua Murray

(Left) Marines from Bridge Company, 7th Engineer Support Battalion, 1st Marine Logistics Group, conduct a bridge exercise at Lake Elsinore March 24, 2015. This marked the first time since 2002 that a continuous span from shore to shore had been built.



Photo by: Sgt. Adam Leyendecker

(Below) Marines with Force Company, 1st Reconnaissance Battalion, 1st Marine Division, maintain security during a training exercise aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., March 16, 2015. The Marines were inserted into the training area by a CH-53E Super Stallion and immediately assumed their positions in the formation.



Photo by: Pfc. Alvin Pujols



Photo by: Sgt. Melissa Lee

(Left) Female pilots with 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing pose for a photo with Afghan Capt. Nilofar Rahmani, the first female fixed-wing pilot in the Afghan Air Force, during a visit to Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., March 9.

(Below) Herschel Walker, former NFL running back, poses with a Marine after discussing the importance of seeking help for mental illness and substance abuse with Marines March 24, 2015, aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif. Walker now provides emotional and motivational support to service members, veterans and military families by conducting public speaking engagements at military installations nationwide.



Photo by: Lance Cpl. April Price

#InTheNews



(Above) - Vietnam veteran, Larry Stevanus and his Marine Corps squad are pictured in this photo taken in December 1966. His friend Freddie Pitts is in the top row, far right. Stevanus is on the far left in the second row from the bottom. Three men in the photo were killed in action in Vietnam. Stevanus and his wife recently traveled to northwest Florida to "say his final goodbye to Freddie," his team leader and friend he lost more than 47 years ago in Khe San.

(Right) - Army and Marine Corps shooting teams test the new Kongsberg Electronic Target System installed at the soon-to-open CMP Talladega Marksmanship Park. The teams compete against each other at shooting competitions around the world but came together as one team to help the CMP thoroughly evaluate the new target system.



(Below) - Jeff Fowler hikes down Clingmans Dome Road toward Newfound Gap while detouring from the Appalachian Trail due to heavy rains on Thursday, March 19, 2015, in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Fowler and Don Nguyen, both former Marines, are thru-hiking to raise money for Higher Ground, a nonprofit rehabilitation program for military veterans.



(Above) - Wounded Warrior Chuck Sketch lets out a holler after receiving his second gold medal of the day for swimming. The double amputee, who is also blind, won a gold medal Wednesday for vision-impaired shooting during the 2015 Marine Corps trials.



(Above) - Gov. Chris Christie has ordered all state flags to fly at half-staff on Monday to honor a New Jersey Marine killed in a Black Hawk helicopter crash last week. Capt. Stanford Henry.



(Right) - The Marine Corps Drum and Bugle Corps, based at Marine Barracks in Washington D.C., stopped in Algiers during a national tour to perform for the Marines, Sailors and others who work at the reserve headquarters on Tuesday, March 17, 2015.



With Sgt. Shawn C. Cavanaugh

Sgt. Shawn C. Cavanaugh has a passion for helping Marines. As the platoon sergeant for the 1st Marine Logistics Group's Headquarters Regiment Inbound Platoon, he takes an active role in helping to set Marines up for success as they transition into their new units aboard Camp Pendleton.

Q: Who or what inspired you to be a Marine?

A: "My mentor Master Sgt. Tyron Francis. He was my recruiter. I needed to get away from environment circumstances in my hometown."

Q: Why did you want to be a Marine?

A: "Educational opportunities, travel and adventure, professional development and opportunities."

Q: What was your hometown like?

A: "In two words: extremely rough. There was poverty and struggle. The streets where I grew up had drugs and other negative influences."

Q: Was there anything you took away from growing up in your hometown that made you more prepared for your Marine Corps career?

A: "Streets smarts. I know how to take the good from bad situations. I try to capitalize by maintaining positive awareness and maneuverability in negative situations."

Q: Why is your current job important to you?

A: I have a passion for helping Marines. I have liked seeing this program, which I helped design, grow. It really helps set Marines up for success.

Q: What kind of an impact do you have on junior Marines?

A: I hope it is a strong impact due to the nature of the Inbound Platoon. We receive Marines as soon as they depart from [military occupational specialty] schools and previous duty stations, and we ensure they have everything they need...they check in, get their annual training done, get counseled on promotion and family care plans, if that is what they need. We hope to have an impact on future command climate.

Q: What have you noticed about the Marines you work with?

A: These Marines work very hard and are probably the closest to a family environment that I have seen, with the exception of recruiting duty.

Q: In what ways do you help or improve the Marines in your unit?

A: As the platoon sergeant, I assist all Marines with any and all personal and professional issues or concerns

including housing, entitlements, marriage counseling, vehicle purchase, billeting concerns, any and all administrative and medical concerns.

Q: What do you hope your legacy will be on the Marine Corps and 1st MLG?

A: I hope it will be all the Marines I have put into the Marine Corps as a recruiter, and the passion I have had for the Corps. Most importantly, I hope it's the impact of the Inbound Platoon to other MLG's and the rest of the Corps.

Q: How does your role at 1st MLG impact other units?

A: Tremendously, for Marines of HQ Reg, who support the entire MLG, to be able to go to their company or battalion ready to work, without issues, has a great impact on their effectiveness and ability to accomplish their missions.

Q: What mission does your unit fulfill?

A: One Phrase, we help define 'Sustaining the Transformation' by setting the expectation that we need them ready to deploy or accomplish their mission.

Marines from Bridge Company, 7th Engineer Support Battalion, 1st Marine Logistics Group, conduct a bridge exercise at Lake Elsinore March 24, 2015. It was the first time Marines have built an improved ribbon bridge and medium girder bridge in the same day.



Photo by: Sgt. Adam Leyendecker

AROUND THE GROUP

APR 5:

Easter Brunch

Pacific Views Events Center 1400-1900.
Reservations Required (760) 725-2231

APR 6-10:

**Science, Technology, Engineering and Math Camp
Oceanside YMCA. 0900-1600**

Extended hours available

Contact Camp Director, Tim Stong (760) 758-0808, ext. 14030 or
by email at tstong@ymca.org

APR 10:

**CONCERT- For The Leathernecks IV - Featuring Weezer
Active Duty Event**

Hanger 4 - Marine Corps Air Station Camp Pendleton
Doors Open @1300

Food and drinks will be available for purchase.

Learn more: mccsCP.com/SMP

APR 25:

Father-Daughter Dance 1830-2030

Learn more: <http://www.camppendletonsymca.org/>

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PARTING SHOT

By: Lance Cpl. Jenna Loofe

Marines learn the basics of Helicopter Rope Suspension Training during the ANGLICO Basic Course. Marines with 1st and 6th ANGLICO participate in HRST during a three-week ABC, a three-section course implementing the basics of motor transportation, communications and call-for-fire techniques aboard Camp Pendleton, Calif., March 9, 2015.

