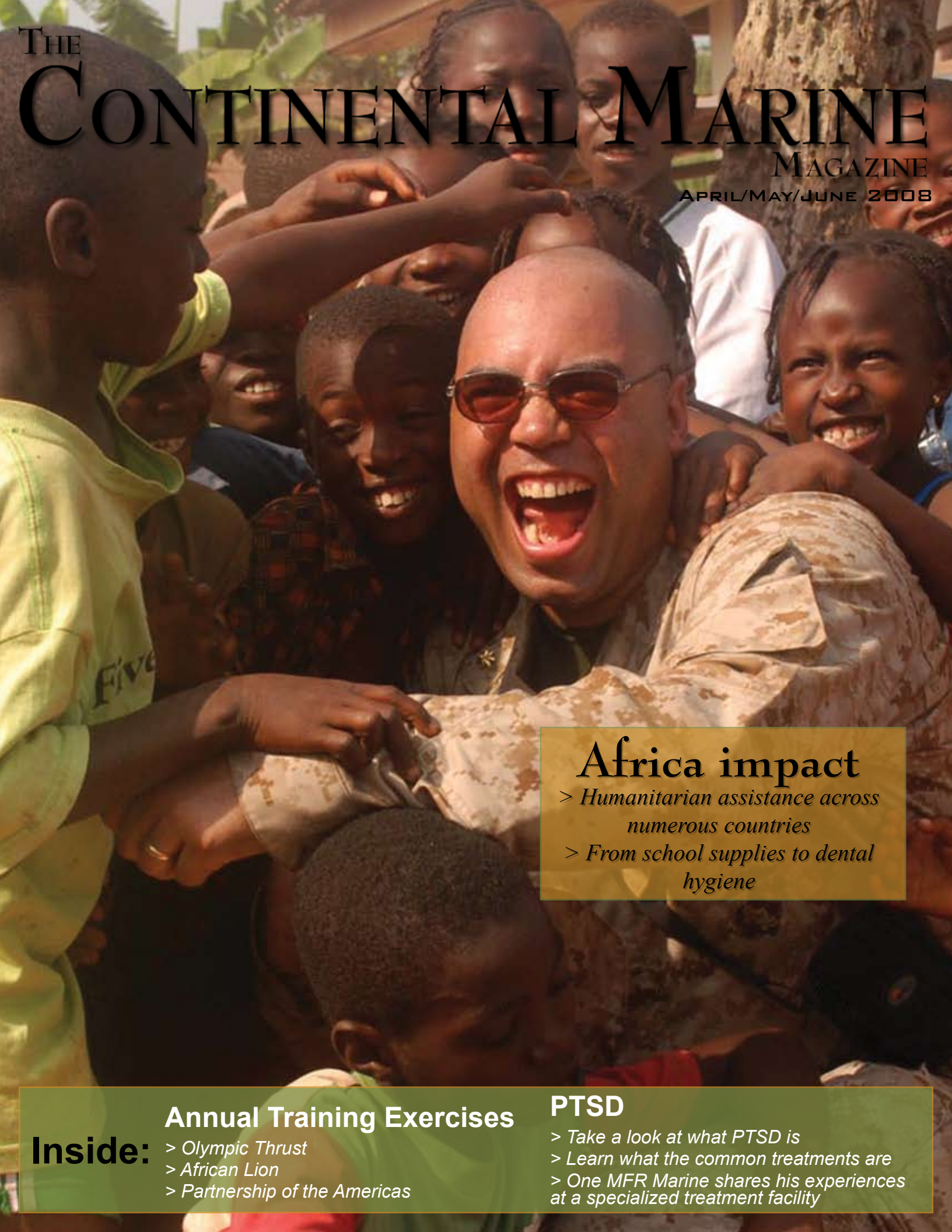




THE CONTINENTAL MARINE

MAGAZINE

APRIL/MAY/JUNE 2008

Africa impact

- > *Humanitarian assistance across numerous countries*
- > *From school supplies to dental hygiene*

Annual Training Exercises

Inside:

- > *Olympic Thrust*
- > *African Lion*
- > *Partnership of the Americas*

PTSD

- > *Take a look at what PTSD is*
- > *Learn what the common treatments are*
- > *One MFR Marine shares his experiences at a specialized treatment facility*

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

In this edition of the Continental Marine Magazine, we highlight some of the larger annual training exercises in which our units participated including Olympic Thrust 2008, which is the largest, most complex training exercise 4th Marine Logistics Group has conducted in recent memory.

But this won't be it; as I'm typing this, we have two highly trained, highly motivated combat correspondents deployed to the Republic of Georgia.

Also in this edition is a package on post-traumatic stress disorder, what it is and various treatments. The number of Marines and Sailors diagnosed with this disorder is going to continue to grow in the coming years, and knowledge of the disorder can help mitigate its crippling effects.

This edition also introduces the new faces in senior leadership roles across the higher echelons of Marine Forces Reserve. Officer and enlisted leaders are turning over their respective commands and posts, and inside, you'll find a run down on both the incoming and outgoing leaders.

I hope you enjoy this edition of your magazine.

Semper Fi,
Sgt. G. S. Thomas
Editor, Continental Marine Magazine

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COVER SHOT



Maj. Jason P. Smith, convoy commander and amphibious assault officer, takes time to interact with Liberian children during a convoy to deliver humanitarian supplies throughout the city of Monrovia, Liberia. Photo by Sgt. Rocco DeFilippis

Special Marine Air Ground Task Force 24 trained alongside many South American counterparts during Partnership of the Americas 2008. Here, Sgt. Kegan Crimes directs fire during training on the Brazilian Island of Marambaia.



Features

Olympic Thrust 2008

Marines from 4th Marine Logistics Group trained across the country in the largest MLG exercise in more than five years.

A patriotic farewell

Garden City, N.Y., recently bid farewell to about 300 Marines from 2nd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment.

Sea-based Marines deliver humanitarian supplies to Liberians

4th Landing Support Battalion Marines brought humanitarian assistance supplies to Monrovia.

Reserve MPs share experience, training with Moroccans ...

Military Policemen from 4th Marine Division focused on non-lethal training in Morocco.

PTSD

Clouds of mystery surround post-traumatic stress disorder. Learn what it is, common treatments for it, and take a look into a specialized treatment facility.

Commandant signs Service Vision and Strategy document

The Commandant of the Marine Corps recently signed a guiding document to steer the Corps through the future.

African experience impacts Ohio Marine

Ohio corporal shares his experiences while helping provide humanitarian aid in Africa.

African Lion humanitarian assistance supports Guelmim Province

Medical, optometric, and dental care were given to Moroccans during this humanitarian mission

Peru challenges won't stop mission

A multi-service task force overcame many challenges in accomplishing their mission.

Alaska unit mobilizes for deployment

Company D, Anti-Terrorism Battalion, 4th Marine Division, trains for an expected deployment to Iraq.

Columns

***In Brief*4**

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

***Marine Forces Reserve Band*5**

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

***Marines in the Fight* 12-13**

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

In Brief

Taking a look at
MFR Marines' accomplishments.

Co. K 3/23 officer wins Chambers award

A 3rd Battalion, 23rd Marine Regiment, captain's devotion to duty earned him the Col. Justice Marion Chambers Award in an announcement published April 8.

Capt. Thomas Gingles, company commander for Company K, was announced as the award's recipient after being selected by a board at Marine Corps Reserve Affairs.

This recognition identifies Gingles as the Reserve junior officer of the year and will be presented to him at the Ground Awards in Arlington, Va., Dec. 2.

"His outstanding leadership, initiative and motivation while serving as the executive officer for Company K, 3rd Bn., 23rd Marines demonstrates military virtues exemplified by Colonel Chambers," wrote Maj. Arthur Sladack, Inspector-Instructor for Headquarters Co., 3rd Bn., 23rd Marines, in Gingles' recommendation for the award.

The award is named after Col. Justice Marion Chambers who commanded the 3rd Assault Battalion Landing Team, 25th Marine Regiment, 4th Marine Division, on Iwo Jima and received the Medal of Honor for leading the battalion through "terrific casualties" during an 8-hour battle.

Marine receives award for community service

Staff Sgt. Cesar Infante, the supply manager for Intelligence Support Battalion, Marine Forces Reserve, received an award for community service from New Orleans Mayor C. Ray Nagin during the Armed Forces Day celebration at The National World War II Museum May 17. Infante took charge of a project and helped rebuild a playground for Pontchartrain Elementary School after Hurricane Katrina.



Kansas City Marine awarded Philip Pistilli Silver Veteran's Medal

The Truman Good Neighbor Award Foundation recently presented Sgt. James M. Amos the 2008 Philip Pistilli Silver Veteran's Medal during a luncheon at the Marriott Hotel in Kansas City, Mo. The medal pays tribute to the duty performed by veterans of war.

"I am honored and humbled to stand here today and receive such a prestigious award," Amos said. "It truly is a great honor."

Amos, a 27-year-old infantryman with the 24th Marine Regiment, accepted the award on behalf of all service members, past, present and future. "I am not standing here alone," Amos said. "I stand with all of the service [members] who have come before me, those currently serving, and those who will follow. This award represents all of the men and women, who have sacrificed so much to defend our great nation and our way of life."



4th MAW Marine receives LULAC Award

A leatherneck from the 4th Marine Aircraft Wing was announced as the recipient of the 2008 League of United Latin American Citizens Excellence in the Military Award May 30.

Gunnery Sgt. Joe Mares, the aide-de-camp for 4th Marine Aircraft Wing's commanding general, earned the nod for excelling above his peers in performance and proficiency since being mobilized in support of the Global War on Terrorism.

"He's truly deserving of it," said Maj. James K. Sellers, adjutant for 4th MAW. "He is a great father and Marine and is an excellent representation of Reserve Marines and the entire Corps."

Mares has earned the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, two Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medals and numerous community recognitions throughout his 18-year career.

"I'm in complete awe," said Mares, who is still surprised about receiving a nationally recognized award. "I never really thought about the prestige or magnitude of this recognition until recently."

Marine Forces Reserve Band

(Right) Members of the Marine Forces Reserve band perform in the streets of Lancaster, Ohio, in celebration of Independence Day July 4th. (Below) Members of the Marine Forces Reserve band warm up before a New Orleans Saints/ St. Louis Rams football game.



Photo courtesy of Marine Forces Reserve Band



Lance Cpl. Christopher J. Gallagher

The Marine Forces Reserve Band led by Chief Warrant Officer 3 Michael Smith and Gunnery Sgt. William Howe, travels extensively throughout the United States and abroad and offers a unique blend of traditional and contemporary music suitable for people of all ages and musical tastes. Playing everything from traditional compositions by composers like Percy Aldridge Grainger to modern compositions by Robert W. Smith to traditional marches by John Philip Sousa, the band set out from New Orleans on their summer tour to help bring out the true spirit of America.

The tour began in one of America's most historic towns, Gettysburg, Pa. The band participated in the debut of the 2008 Gettysburg Festival and performed on the main stage of the Gettysburg College Campus.

Following their appearance in Gettysburg, the band travelled to Delaware to join the citizens of Lewes for the Lewes Summer Music Series, where they performed at Stango Park.

The tour ended on the 4th of July in Lancaster, Ohio, where the band celebrated Independence Day with a parade followed by fireworks.

You can read about the Lancaster performance by visiting centralohio.com's article at <http://tinyurl.com/6xmzvtv>.

Olympic Thrust 2008

Editor's Note: This summer, more than 1,200 Reserve Marines participated in Olympic Thrust 2008, the largest and most complex training exercise conducted by 4th Marine Logistics Group in recent years.

The Marines, from multiple units within Marine Forces Reserve, conducted various elements of the exercise at several military installations throughout the United States during the month of June.

The logistics training evolutions included helicopter-supported supply missions, the conduct of long-range convoys, river crossing exercises and command center operations.

The exercise served as a way to assess participating units' capabilities to plan, control and conduct assigned missions through realistic

exercise scenarios. In addition to practicing command and control at the battalion level, the exercise stimulated coordination and collaboration with the other major subordinate commands within MFR - 4th Marine Aircraft Wing and 4th Marine Division.

Leaders were able to assess the capabilities and operational readiness of participating units, while also increasing their proficiency at core competencies, which will make participating units better prepared to conduct assigned missions in the future.

The exercise built upon experiences gained through Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom, and was the first battalion-level or higher exercise conducted within 4th MLG since the summer of 2002.

6th ESB builds bridges during Olympic Thrust

LANCE CPL. B.A. CURTIS

2ND MARINE LOGISTICS GROUP

CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C. – The Reserve Marines of Bridge Company, 6th Engineer Support Battalion, 4th Marine Logistics Group, conducted rafting and river crossing operations here, June 24, utilizing support from the 2nd MLG's own Bridge Company, a subordinate command of 8th ESB.

The operations were part of a larger 4th MLG exercise, Olympic Thrust 2008, which was conducted by 1,200 Reserve Marines at several locations throughout the U.S. during the month of June and is currently scheduled to be held annually.

Master Sgt. Kenneth Wertman, the Bridge Company operations chief, said the company supported the Reserve Marines of 6th ESB by supplying equipment as well as various training for the operation. He said this training will prepare the reserve Marines to successfully carry out their mission when deployed.

"If they get called upon to do any bridging missions such as rafting ... they'll be able to conduct those missions effectively to ensure that the MAGTF (Marine Air Ground Task Force) continues their support," he said.

The Reserve Marines, who do not always have the opportunity to take part in large scale exercises away from their home states, received instruction and guidance from 8th ESB Marines on how to conduct bridging and rafting operations over the past two weeks.

"Their improvement was greatly noticed from day one to where they are now," Wertman said. "At day one, they were just getting a feel of the boats and of the rafts, and understanding how they go together and how to actually



Lance Cpl. B.A. Curtis

Marines from Bridge Company, 6th Engineer Support Battalion, 4th Marine Logistics Group, load Humvees onto an Improved Ribbon Bridge while training aboard Camp Lejeune, N.C., June 24.

raft."

Wertman said that at the end of the training, the reserve Marines were more than ready to conduct the operations on their own.

After receiving instruction from 8th ESB, the Marines of 6th ESB practiced a successful retrograde river crossing; a maneuver used when either side of the river is in control of friendly forces.

The Marines moved about 15 vehicles and other supplies across the water using Improved Ribbon Bridges, large rectangular barges that can hold multiple vehicles and other cargo. The bridges, having no engine, were moved across the water using multiple M-III Bridge Erection Boats, small tugboat like craft, which attach to both sides of the bridges.

Eighth ESB's Bridge Company is ready to provide support to whatever unit may need it and is preparing for future operations with the 2nd MLG's Combat Logistics Battalion 22 and the 2nd Marine Division's 2nd Tank Battalion, as well other units. □



Lance Cpl. Monica C. Erickson

Reserve Marines from 4th Maintenance Battalion and 4th Supply Battalion conducted their annual training at Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center as part of Olympic Thrust 2008 which began June 1.

ESD gets an extra hand as Reserve Marines train

LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON
MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER

MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER, Twentynine Palms, Calif. – Reserve Marines with 4th Maintenance Battalion, based out of Charlotte, N.C., and 4th Supply Battalion, based out of Newport News, Va., traveled to the Combat Center from around the United States to conduct their annual two-week training at Exercise Support Division June 1.

The 25 Marines took part in the training evolution dubbed Enhanced Equipment Allowance Pool, Personnel Temporary Augmentation Program III, where they worked with civilians and Marines from ESD, learning and refreshing skills in their respective military occupational specialty.

“It is a great opportunity to reaffiliate myself with other Marines in my [military occupational specialty],” said Sgt. Daniel Williams, noncommissioned officer-in-charge of the Reserve Marines.

The maintenance and supply Marines worked with different elements of ESD alongside active duty Marines with the same MOS to ensure they received proper training.

The training gave Marines a chance to perform their assigned job while learning new skills and mechanical techniques from fellow Marines, said Williams, a Sacramento, Calif., native.

“This is the best training they will get all year round,” said Staff Sgt. Byron Lee, staff noncommissioned officer-

in-charge of the Reserve Marines. “It’s a good opportunity for Marines who dedicated their time doing what they would do if they were deployed or active duty.”

The Marines from 4th Maintenance assisted ESD’s primary mission by conducting initial inspections and making repairs on new equipment and vehicles before they are used by Marines taking part in training or Mojave Viper, a month-long pre-deployment training exercise.

It is difficult to ensure the mechanics maintain their training when there is rarely any vehicles that need to be repaired during their regular once-a-month training throughout the year, said Lee, a San Jose, Calif., native.

“The type of skills they learn here are the type of skills they would be using while deployed,” he continued. “These are skills they are expected to know.”

Marines from 4th Supply Bn. were in charge of sorting and issuing gear to Marines who are training, while keeping a record of all transactions and how much equipment is in the warehouse.

“Once these Marines have a chance to deploy, they will have the skills they need,” said Lee about how the training prepares the Marines to deploy.

The two-week training requirement for every Reserve Marine ensures they are maintaining the level of knowledge for their MOS to guarantee readiness for deployment. Those who worked with ESD were able to meet that training requirement at the Combat Center because of the wide range of equipment and vehicles they trained with and the Marines and civilians from ESD they worked alongside, said Lee. □

Commandant signs Service Vision and Strategy document

SGT. CLINTON FIRSTBROOK
DIVISION OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON – Gen. James T. Conway signed the Service Vision and Strategy document June 18 to guide the Marine Corps into an era beyond Iraq and Afghanistan.

The document, which has been in the works since late fall 2007, reinforces the Corps' role as the nation's expeditionary force-in-readiness and defines objectives for continued success.

"We brought in 25 lieutenant colonels and colonels from all of the operational commands and Headquarters Marine Corps to study past trends and patterns relevant to conflict in combat and make an assessment of what the world will look like in 2025," said Col. Steven Zotti, director, Strategic Vision Group. "This document reflects our findings, subsequent work, and will put us in a better position to deal with emerging challenges in the future."

Zotti also said every Marine should know that the service-level strategy plans to maintain a persistent Corps presence in volatile areas of the world. The Strategic Vision Group hopes this regional focus will better Marine Corps relationships with partners and minimize the learning curve for crises.

Marine units currently conduct two or three weeks of episodic training in foreign countries before deploying to another region.

"We've learned that's not as useful," Zotti said. "We need to be around to help other countries build their military forces and keep their problems below the combat level. This doesn't mean the Marine Corps won't still be globally capable, it just means we're going to prioritize our efforts to meet the combatant commander's demands."

Another highlighted item in the document involves capitalizing on successes in Iraq's Al Anbar province and acquiring specialized culture and language training for Marines.

"Operations in Basra showed us that Iraqi units trained by Marines did better than others," Zotti said. "That's because our Marines are very capable in taking their skills and teaching others. We just need more trained advisers. That's something we're going to work on in cooperation

with the Army and Special Operations Command." Expanding the Marine Corps' naval relationships and getting back to its expeditionary roots in terms of leaner and lighter equipment is another top priority for the Strategic Vision Group.

"We're getting way too heavy as a Corps and we know that," Zotti said. "But we have to stay lethal on future battlefields, so there's a balance there. We're not going

back to the ways of light naval infantry, but we can't continue with some of the heavier programs that we're currently invested in unless we have some other compensation for those investments."

Zotti also said bringing both services together should increase the number of Marines on ships, but only in a 21st-century point of reference.

"We're not going to be out there just guarding the ship's captain and being shipboard bellhops," he said. "We don't want to go back to that."

The document breaks down several aiming points for the next few years, but it's not a detailed operations order. However, Zotti said the Marine Corps must modify its battlefield approach and allocate resources in different areas to meet these objectives.

"We understand that future threats aren't going to be either irregular or conventional," he said. "We're going to be fighting in complex environments against hybrid threats, so the Marine Corps has to adapt and become more flexible in dealing with those complicated scenarios and situations. For example, we think in 2025 Pacific Command will have a higher priority than Central Command does today because of the shift in global competition and resources."

An electronic version of the document is available on www.marines.mil. The commandant also addressed it in a video posted on his Web page. Commands and retired general officers will receive hard copies this summer.

"We need to get on it and get about the business of making it a reality," Zotti said. "At the end of the day, we're still going to have multi-capable (Marine air-ground task forces) fighting and winning wars."

You can download the Service Vision and Strategy document from the Strategic Vision Group's Web site <http://tinyurl.com/65ko4f>. □



Gen. James T. Conway

4th Marine Air Wing to get new CG

NEW ORLEANS – The 4th Marine Aircraft Wing colors will change hands as Brig. Gen. John M. Croley takes the reins from Brig. Gen. Mark W. Bircher during a ceremony on the Medal of Honor Field aboard Marine Forces Reserve Aug. 9. Croley comes to 4th MAW from U. S. Marine Corps Forces South, while Bircher will take Croley's spot at U. S. Marine Corps Forces South.

Outgoing



Brig. Gen.
Mark W. Bircher

Schools: Graduate of the Naval Academy, Airborne, Topgun, Weapons and Tactics Instructor, Amphibious Warfare, Command and Staff, Landing Force Staff Planning, Reserve Components National Security, Naval War College Strategy and Policy, and the Basic and Advanced NATO Electronic Warfare Schools
Year of commission: 1976
Next assignment: Commander U. S. Marine Corps Forces South

Brig. Gen. Mark W. Bircher assumed the duties as commanding general for 4th Marine Aircraft Wing in July 2007.

Bircher was commissioned a second lieutenant in 1976. After flight training, he joined Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 451, based at Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, S.C., flying the F-4 Phantom. He held junior officer billets in the maintenance and operations departments during two unit deployments to Iwakuni, Japan.

During 1982-1984, Bircher was an exchange pilot with the U. S. Air Force flying the F-15 Eagle with the 58th Tactical Fighter Squadron, Eglin, Fla.. From 1984 until leaving active duty in 1988, he served with the Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron, the Blue Angels, Pensacola, Fla., flying the A-4 Skyhawk and the F/A-18 Hornet.

Transferring to the Marine Corps Reserve, Bircher flew the OV-10 Bronco from 1991 until 1994. He was the maintenance officer and then commanding officer of Marine Observation Squadron 4 based in Atlanta.

Following F/A-18 refresher training, Bircher served as commanding officer of Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 142, based in Cecil Field, Fla., from 1994 until 1997.

In 1998, he joined the Executive Support Center, Office of the Secretary of Defense, Policy, Pentagon, as a watch officer. During 1999-2001, Bircher served as deputy commander of Marine Aircraft Group 42, based in Atlanta.

In 2002, Bircher joined 4th Marine Aircraft Wing as assistant chief of staff for communications.

Upon recall to active duty in 2003, he augmented to 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing for deployment to Southwest Asia in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. When released from active duty, Bircher rejoined 4th Marine Aircraft Wing in 2004.

From 2005 to 2007, Bircher served as the deputy commanding general, I Marine Expeditionary Force (MOB), based in Camp Pendleton, Calif.

Incoming



Brig. Gen.
John M. Croley

Schools: University of South Carolina, Air Force Command and Staff Reserve Course; Marine Corps University Command and Staff; Joint Doctrine Air Campaign Course; NATO Amphibious Warfare Operations; Reserve National Security Course; NATO Joint Warfare Course; and the Senior Watch Officer TACC Course.

Year of commission: 1977

Previous assignment: Commander U. S. Marine Corps Forces South

Brig. Gen. John M. Croley comes to 4th Marine Aircraft Wing from duties as the commander of U.S. Marine Corps Forces, South based in Miami.

Croley graduated in 1977 from the University of South Carolina with a degree in Mathematics. He was commissioned a second lieutenant via the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps (NROTC) program in July 1977 and was designated a Naval Aviator in November 1979.

In December 1979, Croley commenced transition into the AH-1 Attack Helicopter at HMA-269, MCAS New River, N.C. He served in many squadron assignments from aviation ordnance to logistics and embarkation.

During 1981-1982, he served aboard an amphibious ready group during hostilities in the vicinity of Lebanon and Israel.

Released from active duty in May 1983, he remained a member of the Individual Ready Reserve.

In January 1985, Croley joined HMA-773, based at NAS Atlanta, and commenced refresher training in the AH-1J Attack Helicopter.

He served in a multitude of positions from ground training officer and various operations department assignments. In November 1990, the squadron was recalled to active duty for combat operations to support Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

In 1993, the squadron transitioned to the new AH-1W Attack Helicopter, added the UH-1 helicopter to the unit and in 1994 was redesignated as a light attack helicopter squadron. Croley was assigned as executive officer and later as a detachment commander. In January of 1996, he took command of HMLA-773 and led the squadron through five Weedeater counter-narcotic joint operations in four Caribbean islands.

In 1998, in a post command tour, he formed a team to recruit and educate the active duty sites on opportunities at 4th Marine Aircraft Wing. Later that year, as an Individual Mobilization Augmentee, Croley served as the plans officer for commander U.S. Forces Korea to support Operation Ulchi Focus Lens.

In January 2000, he was assigned as the deputy assistant operations officer. Promoted to colonel in July 2001, he went on to serve as the assistant chief of staff administration at 4th MAW.

In October 2001, he was assigned to the deputy commander position at MAG-42 in NAS Atlanta. In January 2002, the MAG-42 Marines were recalled to active duty in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He served as the Marine Expeditionary Force liaison officer in Kuwait and Iraq.

Relief and appointments

MFR Sergeant Major - Aug. 15



Sgt. Maj.
Kim E. Davis

Sgt. Maj. Kim E. Davis will relieve Sgt. Maj. Jimmy D. Cummings during a ceremony scheduled for Aug. 15 aboard Naval Support Activity New Orleans on the West Bank.

Davis comes to MFR from 4th Marine Logistics Group. Some of his previous assignments include: 2nd Forward Area Air Defense Battery at Cherry Point, N.C.; Marine Security Guard duty at the

American Embassies in Beirut, Lebanon, and Madrid,

Spain; detachment commander at the American Consulate General, Calcutta, India.

Cummings will retire after more than 30 years of service. During that time some of his previous assignments include: Marine Light Helicopter Squadron 167 at Marine Corps Air Station New River, N.C.; 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable); Co. D, 4th Combat Engineer Bn.; Co. I, 3rd Bn., 6th Marines.



Sgt. Maj.
Jimmy D. Cummings

4th MarDiv Sergeant Major - July 25

Sgt. Maj. George L. Shine relieved Sgt. Maj. Kenneth A. Elum as the sergeant major of 4th Marine Division during a ceremony on Marine Forces Reserve's Medal of Honor Field July 25.

Shine comes to the division from Marine Aircraft Group 29, and Elum is retiring after more than 30 years in the Corps.

Some of Shine's previous assignments include: Security

Forces Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico; Company H, 3rd Recruit Training Battalion, MCRD Parris Island, S.C.; 2nd Bn., 2d Marines; and Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 29.

Some of Elum's previous assignments include: 3rd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment; Company A, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, MCRD Parris Island, S.C.; Marine Aircraft Group 13; and Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 13, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing.



Sgt. Maj.
George L. Shine



Sgt. Maj.
Kenneth A. Elum

4th MLG Sergeant Major - July 12

Sgt. Maj. Alexander Williams relieved Sgt. Maj. Kim E. Davis during a ceremony at Marine Forces Reserve July 12.

Williams comes to 4th MLG from duties as the sergeant major of Marine Corps Recruit Depot/Eastern Recruiting Region Parris Island, S.C., and Davis is scheduled to assume duties as the MFR sergeant major Aug. 15.

Some of Williams's previous assignments include: 3rd Light Anti-Aircraft Missile Bn. Marine Air Command Group 28; instructor with Marine Corps Service Support School; Inspector-Instructor staff first sergeant of Co. A, 6th Communications Bn.; and the Inspector-Instructor sergeant major of 2nd Battalion, 14th Marines.



Sgt. Maj.
Alexander Williams



Sgt. Maj.
Kim E. Davis

A patriotic farewell



Approximately 300 Marines from the Garden City, N.Y., area flew to Twentynine Palms, Calif., May 26. They joined the rest of 2nd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment, for training at the Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center for several months in preparation for a fall deployment to Iraq. The reinforced battalion from 4th Marine Division is comprised of reserve and active-duty Marines and sailors from 18 companies and detachments in 12 states. This is the battalion's third mobilization since 2002 and will be their second tour in Iraq. (Photos courtesy of the Nassau County Fire Department)



MFR warriors take charge in Iraq

CPL. CHRIS T. MANN

REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM 1

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq – For many Marines who decided they wanted to transition into the civilian world and leave the Marine Corps, going on another deployment was the last thing on their minds.

Marines who leave the Corps after a four-year enlistment join the Individual Ready Reserve in inactive status for another four years as part of their eight-year contractual agreement coming into the military and can be called back to active duty at any given time within that period.

Marines such as Sgt. Donald M. Carmelitano, supply clerk, Headquarters Company, Regimental Combat Team 1, have answered that call and are making a difference while deployed.

“We are extremely lucky to have Sgt. Carmelitano who is a senior Marine and carries a lot of responsibilities in the shop,” said 1st Lt. Aaron E. Green, supply officer, Headquarters Company, Regimental Combat Team 1. “He sets the example for other Marines to follow, and our shop definitely wouldn’t be the same without him.”

Many units deployed to Camp Fallujah work around the clock to meet high operational tempos.

“I was doing construction work and going to school full time in architecture design, when I read a message from Military.com that said the Marine Corps was recalling 1,200 Marines from the IRR,” said Carmelitano, a 26-year-old from Poughkeepsie, N.Y. “That very same day, I received a FedEx package that had my orders from Mobilization Command recalling me to the Marine Corps.”

Carmelitano and many other Marines with the IRR were out of the Marine Corps for approximately two years and

started careers, college and families, only to have a FedEx package show up on their doorstep reminding them “Once a Marine, Always a Marine.”

“At first this seemed overwhelming and my family was upset, but they understood what I was doing,” said Carmelitano. “Marines never forget where they come from, and I personally know a lot of recalled Marines who are really strong leaders and are taking charge of the Marines they work with and those under them.”

“Being recalled has helped me reestablish my life and opened new opportunities for me,” said Carmelitano. “I was in debt before being deployed, and finishing my degree didn’t seem possible; now I can afford to pay off my bills.”

After a Marine is recalled from the IRR, their time they have to use their educational benefits or Montgomery GI Bill are reset for the next ten years.

Although a Marine is wearing civilian attire, they are required to maintain certain physical standards, abide by the Corps’ tattoo policy and keep in contact with the Marine Corps Mobilization Command until such time as their IRR duties on their contract has ended.

“I was out for about two years when I got recalled into the Marine Corps,” said Cpl. Joseph A. Walkowiak, a 25-year-old communications technician with Communications Platoon, Headquarters Company, RCT-1 from Bay City, Mich. “The good thing about being deployed is that I’m not spending money, and when I get back I will have a chunk of change to spend on my wedding.”

Although many Marines who decided to get out didn’t plan on spending another day in the Corps, these modern-day Spartans didn’t forget where they came from and still carry a warrior stance that keeps many deployed units running. □



Cpl. Chris T. Mann

Cpl. Joseph A. Walkowiak, a 25-year-old clerk from Bay City, Mich., with Communications Platoon, Headquarters Company, Regimental Combat Team 1, inventories and inspects gear inside the communications building at Camp Fallujah June 2. Walkowiak had been out of the Marine Corps for two years and was working for a federal agency when he was recalled.

CAG gunny keeps going and going

LANCE CPL. PAUL TORRES
REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM 5

ANAH, Iraq – There are many different reasons why people join the Marine Corps. Gunnery Sgt. Gary M. Gonzalez joined because he wanted to deploy and he wanted to make a difference in the world.

“I joined the Civil Affairs Group back in 1994 because one of my buddies was in it and I knew I would get to deploy,” said Gonzalez, 39, from Alhambra, Calif., who is the civil affairs staff noncommissioned officer in charge of Detachment 1, Civil Affairs Team 5, 2nd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 5.

Gonzalez has deployed several times with Civil Affairs to places such as the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Korea, Japan and Iraq.

“Each job we did was different in each area,” said Gonzalez. “There were some places where we had to act as a mediator between the people and the military, and with others we were providing aide to displaced refugees who had lost their homes or had been forced to leave.”

Gonzalez’s latest deployment to the Rawah and Anah areas of Iraq has focused a lot on helping the provincial government rebuild the infrastructure and reestablish stability to the people.

“Having experience in civil affairs just means you have learned to handle all types of missions,” said Gonzalez. “No matter how much training you have done, there is a huge difference in talking with an Iraqi role player



Lance Cpl. Paul Torres

Gunnery Sgt. Gary M. Gonzalez, 39, from Alhambra, Calif., who is the civil affairs staff noncommissioned officer in charge of Detachment 1, Civil Affairs Team 5, 2nd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 5, talks with a contractor and an engineer in the city of Anah, Iraq, May 29, about a project for the city. Gonzalez has been doing civil affairs work since 1994 and this is his second time to work in the Anah area.

at Mojave viper and standing in the streets of Iraq with a local contractors eating a falafel and discussing his progress on a project.”

The knowledge Gonzalez has brought to CA Team 5 has been beneficial in helping them accomplish their mission in Rawah and Anah.

“He is a great asset to the team, and he has made my job a lot easier,” said Lt. Daniel M. Thomas, 24, from Santa Barbara, Calif., who is the team leader for CA Team 5. “When we go out to do an assessment on a project or to meet with some one, he pretty much knows what it is that needs to be accomplished.”

This is Gonzalez’s second deployment to the Rawah and Anah area.

“I recognize some of the people I dealt with last time, and it is cool to come back here and see how things have improved,” said Gonzalez.

Gonzalez hopes to reenlist to continue working in civil affairs.

“I volunteered to go on this deployment and I feel like I have personally benefited by being on this team,” said Gonzalez. □

African experience impacts Ohio Marine

SGT. ROCCO DEFILIPPIS

MARINE FORCES EUROPE

Three weeks ago, Willoughby Hills, Ohio, native Cpl. Joseph Klepac was excited about the prospect of two jobs in fields near and dear to his heart: law enforcement and service in the United States Marine Corps.

While preparing for a four-week deployment with his Marine Corps Reserve unit, Klepac, a motor transportation specialist, had been steadily nearing the end of the interview process to become a police officer with the Highland Heights Police Department in Highland Heights, Ohio.

"Being a United States Marine has been immensely rewarding, and I have always wanted to serve in law enforcement," said Klepac, a 2002 graduate of Willoughby South High School. "During my five years in the Marine Corps, I have been focusing on preparing myself to succeed both in the Corps and as a police officer."

Klepac is a first generation American born to his Croatian parents, Ivica and Ana Klepac of Willoughby Hills. He graduated from Cleveland Heights Police Academy in June of 2007 and began interviewing with police departments in the Cleveland area.

"For most police departments, the interview process can take up to six months,"

Klepac said. "There is a lot of competition for law enforcement work in the Cleveland area, but I have been preparing for this job for many years. I've always known my hard work would eventually pay off."

One of the major steps Klepac took to prepare himself for law enforcement was when he stepped on the yellow footprints at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C. He has served his nation both overseas in Operation Iraqi Freedom and here at home with his unit, Landing Support Equipment Co., 4th Landing Support Battalion, 4th Marine Logistics Group.

"I would say that being a Marine has completely changed my life," Klepac said. "I've been given some

of the best military training in the world; I've had the opportunity to serve my country overseas; and overall, the Marine Corps has provided me with leadership and professionalism I know I couldn't find anywhere else."

Along with other Marines from elements of 4th LSB across the country, Klepac recently traveled to Liberia to participate in West African Training Cruise 2008, a maritime sea-basing and humanitarian assistance exercise off the coast of Monrovia, Liberia.

In Liberia, Klepac and the Marines of his unit drove vehicles onto the Navy's new Improved Navy Lighterage System, a series of floating platforms that allow for supplies, vehicles and Marines to transfer from ship to ship and from ship to shore.

"This is the first time that the Navy or Marine Corps has done this kind of operation at sea, in open waters," Klepac said. "It's impressive for me to think that in the future these operations will be standard operating procedures and I got to be one of first to ever do it."

... It's not every day that you get to fly to Africa and make a direct difference in people's lives.

Cpl. Joseph Klepac, motor transportation specialist, Landing Support Equipment Co., 4th Landing Support Battalion, 4th Marine Logistics Group

The WATC 08 trip wasn't just about transferring Marines and vehicles between ships. The vehicles that Klepac and his unit transferred were used to deliver more than \$58,000 worth of humanitarian assistance supplies to several schools and medical facilities in the city of Monrovia.

"It was definitely an eye opening experience," he said.

"It's not every day that you get to fly to Africa and make a direct difference in people's lives. The whole operation really hits the heart."

As Klepac prepares to return home to finish the interview process with the HHPD, he said he looks at his time in Africa as a character building experience.

"This exercise has benefited me both professionally and personally," he said. "I've been fortunate to see both sides of the Marine Corps; supporting Marines on the ground in Iraq and here, lending a helping hand to those in need. Not only did I get to sharpen my military occupational skills, but I also get to say that I made a difference." □

Sea-based Marines deliver humanitarian supplies to Liberians

SGT. ROCCO DEFILIPPIS

MARINE FORCES EUROPE

MONROVIA, Liberia – The streets were lined with hundreds of smiling faces and thumbs-up signs. Happy shouts of “Marines!” were directed towards a humanitarian assistance convoy of two seven-ton trucks and several Humvees laden with thousands of dollars worth of hospital and school supplies making their way slowly through the city here.

Marines from 4th Landing Support Battalion completed the first of two days of convoy operations March 25, delivering humanitarian assistance supplies throughout Monrovia as part of the exercise West African Training Cruise 2008 being held March 17 to April 5. The exercise is in conjunction with the ongoing African Partnership Station deployment and focuses on the delivery of humanitarian assistance supplies to various clinics and schools here from a sea based command.

Operating from aboard the High Speed Vessel-2 Swift, the Marines showcased sea basing and keeping a limited footprint ashore by returning each day to load the next shipment of supplies requested by the Liberian government and donated by United States European Command’s J4 Humanitarian Assistance Directorate.

“We’re working to establish those friendly relationships, while at the same time exposing the Marines to a new and different culture,” said Maj. Jason Smith, convoy commander. “I wouldn’t call [the supplies] luxury items, but these supplies will provide a definite improvement to the quality of life at these facilities.”

During the first day of convoy operations, the Marines delivered medical supplies to JFK Hospital, Monrovia’s main hospital, and Logan Town Clinic, a small clinic on the outskirts of the city. While in Logan Town, they also delivered school supplies to Arthur Askie School.

The supplies consisted of multiple disposable medical supplies, furniture, text books and other school supplies.

“Today is a day the Lord has made, because we have been long awaiting these supplies to come in,” said Rev. Elwood Jangaba, director of Agencies for Holistic Evangelism and Development International associated with the Logan Town clinic. “I think they are going to make a great impact to the community when we see the

health care delivery system in this community brought to life.”

“It’s not only a great training exercise, but it’s a good opportunity to experience something new working with another country in peace-time environment,” said Lance Cpl. Brandon S. Malone, 4th LSB heavy equipment operator.

Although the Marines of 4th LSB come from reserve units across the United States, Smith said the importance of the mission weighed heavily on the preparation training.

“Because of the magnitude of the exercise, the Marines knew that preparation for this mission would be key,” Smith said. “All of the Marines have put a lot of time into this outside their own regularly scheduled training. All of the Marines were really excited once they got this opportunity.”

The convoy fits into the larger picture of WATC 08, by serving as a component of a sea-basing exercise. During the first phases, equipment aboard Maritime Prepositioning Ships USNS 2nd Lt John Bobo and USNS LCpl Roy M. Wheat was linked up with forces from aboard the USS Fort McHenry (LSD 43), assembled at sea and then transferred between the naval platforms using the Improved Navy Lighterage System. Using the causeways and ferry system that makes up the INLS, the Marines were capable of moving vehicles from ship-to-ship in open seas for the first time.

“The importance of this phase for the Marine Corps is two fold,” said Lt. Col. Roy Edmonds, exercise support team officer-in-charge. “Not only does it show that we can operate from a sea base, transit through an austere port and execute a humanitarian assistance mission, but it also gives us an opportunity to conduct security cooperations with the Armed Forces of Liberia and establish positive relations through good will.”

A variety of international and inter-agency organizations aided the Marines such as the United Nations Mission in Liberia, the Liberian National Police, the Armed Forces of Liberia and numerous state department members who arranged security and traffic management, as well as other coordination during the convoy ashore.

“This event could not have occurred without the planning efforts of many different agencies,” Edmonds said. “Truly, this has been an international team effort.” □

African Lion humanitarian assist

SGT. ROCCO DEFILIPPIS
MARINE FORCES EUROPE

TAGHJIJT, Morocco – The value of acute medical and dental care can often be taken for granted for those fortunate to have access to basic care. But for those who lack such access, even the simplest medical procedures become a difficult hurdle to overcome.

In an effort to put Moroccan citizens face-to-face with Americans displaying compassion and to relieve human suffering, more than 30 U.S. personnel from various components of all four branches of the Department of Defense conducted humanitarian civic action projects in the Guelmim Province as part of exercise African Lion 2008.

According to Air Force Lt. Col. Paul Byrd, expeditionary medical group commander and Spokane, Wash., resident, the HCA team was able to provide basic medical and dental care in more than 9,000 patient encounters during a six-day period visiting six rural sights throughout the province.

The majority of the U.S. personnel are members of the Utah Air National Guard, although the team also had Marine Corps communications specialists, Navy dentists and dental technicians, Louisiana National Guard translators, Air Force Reserve physicians and

active duty optometrists. The Americans were also joined by more than 35 Moroccan medical professionals during the bi-lateral training and HCA portions of the exercise.

“Utah and Morocco are partners in peace,” Byrd, a member of the Utah Air National Guard, said. “We are the Partnership State, and this (exercise) provides us an opportunity to provide good will and communicate our concern and care for the Moroccan people and also a desire to work closely with the Moroccan military to promote stability and security here.”



Navy Capt. Edward Kassab (left), a dentist, and Seaman Cody Banks, hospital corpsman, are shown working on a badly decayed tooth from a young Moroccan during a visit to the village of Taghjijt June 17. Kassab is with the Dental Company, 4th Dental Battalion, 4th Air Force Medical Group, attached to a medical detachment of the U.S. Marine Corps, providing medical and dental care in Guelmim Province of Morocco.

“These medications and our time are the weapons we use to communicate to the Moroccans the good will and peaceful intentions of the U.S. ...”

Air Force Lt. Col. Paul Byrd,
expeditionary medical group commander

ance supports Guelmim Province



Sgt. Rocco DeFilippis

and Mount Joy, Penn., resident, and Gloucester City, N.J. resident, extract a boy during a humanitarian civic action. Seaman Cody Banks and Banks are both members of 14th Marine Logistics Group, and have been assigned to the 151st Medical Group, Utah Air National Guard to conduct medical operations for exercise African Lion 2008.

In addition to their role in providing medical and dental care, the exercise African Lion HCA Team was able to participate in bilateral training with their Moroccan counterparts.

Byrd said the training allowed both nations the ability to become familiar with each others medical systems.

Byrd also said the training was a good chance for the U.S. service members to experience Moroccan culture and gave the team a chance to interface with the Moroccan Ministry of Health.

“This has been a shared learning experience for both forces,” Byrd said.

According to Byrd, in addition to the other areas of specialty, optometry has been an important element of the medical care provided, as more than 4,000 pairs of prescription glasses were distributed throughout the exercise.

“A lot of these people are artisans and depend on their eyesight for their livelihood,” said Tech. Sgt. Micah Myers, a medic with the 151st Medical Group, Utah Air National Guard and Salt Lake City resident. “The environmental factors out here such as bright sun and dust can complicate things even worse. With the donated glasses we have, we can get close to what they need, and that make a big impact on their quality of life.”

In addition to the optometric care provided, Byrd said the joint Air Force, Navy dental team was able to make a significant impact in the quality of life for the Moroccans here.

“(This exercise) has not only given us the opportunity to make an impression on someone, but we can

really do a lot to affect their well being,” said Seaman Cody Banks, hospital corpsman with 4th Dental Battalion, 4th Marine Logistics Group and Gloucester City, N.J. resident. “It’s like the old thorn in the lions paw; a minor tooth problem can become extremely painful. If we can come in here and give them a relatively simple solution, we can make that pain go away, and it has a major impact on them.”

Overall, the service members here said the exercise was an excellent opportunity not only to provide care for those in need, but to also enhance their own ability to operate in joint and bi-lateral environments.

Byrd said the work accomplished here not only improved lives, but worked to strengthen ties between the U.S. and Morocco, as both countries share a long history of friendship and cooperation.

“Theater security cooperation involves operations that include weapons,” Byrd said. “These medications and our time are the weapons we use to communicate to the Moroccans the good will and peaceful intentions of the U.S. as we work to continue our friendship and strengthen our bonds.” □

Reserve MPs share experience, training with Moroccans during African Lion 08

SGT. ROCCO DEFILIPPIS

MARINE FORCES EUROPE

TIFNIT, Morocco – More than 55 Marines and sailors from Military Police Company, Headquarters Battalion, 4th Marine Division, participated in peace keeping operations training with members of the 7th Battalion, Brigade Infantry Mobile of the Royal Moroccan Army here as part of exercise African Lion 2008 from June 9-29.

Focusing on a variety of military police tactics, techniques and procedures, the Marines worked to continue forging partnerships with the Moroccan military through shared training that will aid both forces.

“(This exercise) has given us the opportunity to foster cooperation and teamwork between the U.S. and Moroccan forces, which strengthens our relationship,” said 1st Lt. Eric Kaltrider, inspector instructor for the Wahpeton, N.D., reserve MP detachment. “This is [also] a good opportunity for our Marines to get used to working with allied foreign militaries in general.”

The majority of the training here focused on non-lethal weapons, mounted and dismounted patrols, vehicle and personnel searches, control points, weapons familiarization fires and the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program.

The Marines said the training was also a good opportunity to learn about the cultural differences of working with other forces.

“A lot of (our real-world missions) are joint and bi-lateral, so our Marines need to be used to operating in this environment,” said Capt. Joe Keegan, MP Co. commanding officer. “This is what we do. We train and prepare our Marines to be ready for any situation.”

A special focus during the training was on non-lethal weapons, which Keegan said the Moroccans asked for specifically. With an important role in United Nations peace keeping operations, Keegan said the non-lethal weapons portion was beneficial to Morocco’s real-

world military operations.

“For the Moroccans, this training is applicable to what they are doing every day,” said Keegan, who is also a police officer with the Arlington, Texas, Police Department. “As military policemen, our mission is always changing, and non-lethal weapons give us a lot of flexibility so that we can accomplish the mission.”

According to Eric Damm, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Europe non-lethal weapons program, the non-lethal weapons portion of the training is designed to aid bi-lateral training by giving partner nations the ability to enhance their security and stability.

“We are working with our partner nations to give them the ability to carry out their law enforcement, security and military operational requirements without being oppressive or injurious to their population,” Damm said. “These non-lethal weapons give them a viable method of force escalation that allows them to control the situation without having to resort to deadly force.”

Although exercise African Lion is an annual training event that has given Moroccans and Americans the ability to train together for several years, this year marked the first time that military policemen from both services have trained in the Tifnit area.

“The training gives us an opportunity that we can use to expand our knowledge and it is a great benefit to our soldiers,” said Royal Moroccan Army Sgt. Adil Noman, a member of the headquarters of the RMA Southern Area Command. “We must be familiar with this training because of our work with the UN. Each year we gain a great benefit and get new information on how to work with foreign forces.”

In addition to the training here, Marines from Weapons Company, 1st Battalion, 23rd Marines; 4th Marine Logistics Group; 4th Medical Battalion; and Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 234 all worked with their Moroccan counterparts to conduct training.

Overall, both the Marines and the Moroccans said they enjoyed the opportunity to work and train with each other throughout the exercise.

“I think it is more about building and keeping good relations,” said Cpl. Dustin Kremer, military police officer with the Twin Cities Detachment of the reserve MP Co. “(Our actual company) might not ever work with these soldiers again, but both of us will remember the confidence that we have built throughout our time here.” □



PTSD treatment

Continued from page 29

Group therapy

Many people want to talk about their trauma with others who have had similar experiences.

In group therapy, you talk with a group of people who also have been through a trauma and who have PTSD. Sharing your story with others may help you feel more comfortable talking about your trauma. This can help you cope with your symptoms, memories, and other parts of your life.

Group therapy helps you build relationships with others who understand what you've been through. You learn to deal with emotions such as shame, guilt, anger, rage, and fear. Sharing with the group also can help you build self-confidence and trust. You'll learn to focus on your present life, rather than feeling overwhelmed by the past.

Brief psychodynamic psychotherapy

In this type of therapy, you learn ways of dealing with emotional conflicts caused by your trauma. This therapy helps you understand how your past affects the way you feel now.

Your therapist can help you:

- Identify what triggers your stressful memories and other symptoms.
- Find ways to cope with intense feelings about the past.
- Become more aware of your thoughts and feelings, so you can change your reactions to them.
- Raise your self-esteem.

Family therapy

PTSD can impact your whole family. Your kids or your partner may not understand why you get angry sometimes, or why you're under so much stress. They may feel scared, guilty, or even angry about your condition.

Family therapy is a type of counseling that involves your whole family. A therapist helps you and your family communicate, maintain good relationships, and cope with tough emotions. Your family can learn more about PTSD and how it is treated.

In family therapy, each person can express his or her fears and concerns. It's important to be honest about your feelings and to listen to others. You can talk about your PTSD symptoms and what triggers them. You also can discuss the important parts of your treatment and recovery. By doing this, your family will be better prepared to help you.

You may consider having individual therapy for your PTSD symptoms and family therapy to help you with your relationships.

How long does treatment last?

For some people, treatment for PTSD can last 3 to 6 months. If you have other mental health problems as well as PTSD, treatment for PTSD may last for 1 to 2 years or longer.

What if someone has PTSD and another disorder? Is the treatment different?

It is very common to have PTSD at that same time as another mental health problem. Depression, alcohol or substance abuse problems, panic disorder, and other anxiety disorders often occur along with PTSD. In many cases, the PTSD treatments described above will also help with the other disorders. The best treatment results occur when both PTSD and the other problems are treated together rather than one after the other.

What will we work on in therapy?

When you begin therapy, you and your therapist should decide together what goals you hope to reach in therapy. Not every person with PTSD will have the same treatment goals. For instance, not all people with PTSD are focused on reducing their symptoms.

Some people want to learn the best way to live with their symptoms and how to cope with other problems associated with PTSD. Perhaps you want to feel less guilt and sadness? Perhaps you would like to work on improving your relationships at work, or communication issues with your friends and family.

Your therapist should help you decide which of these goals seems most important to you, and he or she should discuss with you which goals might take a long time to achieve.

What can I expect from my therapist?

Your therapist should give you a good explanation for the therapy. You should understand why your therapist is choosing a specific treatment for you, how long they expect the therapy to last, and how they see if it is working.

The two of you should agree at the beginning that this plan makes sense for you and what you will do if it does not seem to be working. If you have any questions about the treatment your therapist should be able to answer them.

You should feel comfortable with your therapist and feel you are working as a team to tackle your problems. It can be difficult to talk about painful situations in your life, or about traumatic experiences that you have had. Feelings that emerge during therapy can be scary and challenging. Talking with your therapist about the process of therapy, and about your hopes and fears in regards to therapy, will help make therapy successful.

If you do not like your therapist or feel that the therapist is not helping you, it might be helpful to talk with another professional. In most cases, you should tell your therapist that you are seeking a second opinion. □

Bravo Company braves

MAJ. WINSTON
JIMENEZ

24TH MARINE
REGIMENT

ILHA MARAMBAIA,

Brazil – For two weeks during April to May, the Marines of 1st Platoon, Company B, 24th Marine Regiment, trained with Brazil's Corpo De Fuzileiros Navais (CFN), as part of Partnership of the America's 2008.

Flying nonstop for 18 hours each way from Grand Rapids, Mich., to Rio De Janeiro, Brazil, to train in the Island of Marambaia with the Brazilian Marines, the Marines of Bravo Company faced an ambitious schedule.

Participating in Partnership of the Americas 2008 (POA 08) as part of the Special Marine Air

Ground Task Force 24 (SPMAGTF 24), 1st Platoon trained on Marambaia which provided the Marines the realism expected from jungle terrain - hot, humid weather, steep ridges and thick jungle vegetation.

"The platoon is made up of many veterans from operations in Fallujah, and although having plenty of combat experience, the platoon held few with experience in amphibious operations," said Maj. Jeffery O'Neill, inspector instructor, Company A, 1st Battalion, 24th Marine Regiment, from Grand Rapids. "This deficiency was eliminated in the first phase of the exercise by training with the Brazilian Marines."

Gen. James Conway, Commandant of the Marine Corps, has publicly stated

our current war against terrorism has strained the United States Marine Corps, and the training being conducted by the SPMAGTF 24 throughout Latin America does not come quite often.

"Current wartime deployments dictate an almost singular focus on preparing units for their next rotation to Iraq and Afghanistan," said Conway. "As a result, the skills Marines need for combined-arms maneuver, mountain warfare, amphibious, and jungle operations have suffered."

The training gained in Marambaia, alongside the CFN, provided the Marines of 1st Platoon with superb training, training which has taken a backseat to combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"We now have a generation of young Marines ... that have not been onboard ship," said Conway. "They're combat-hardened, but they don't know much about amphibious operations, because we just haven't been there for the last four years or more."

The training curriculum in Brazil also included amphibious training, offensive and defensive operations, conducting an amphibious landing from the Brazilian amphibious ship Rio De Janeiro (G31), where 1st Platoon crammed into two Amphibious Assault Vehicles (AAVs), conducted company day and night attacks, live fire using M-16A4s, M249 Squad Automatic Weapons, and the M240B medium machine gun, while also

s Brazilian backcountry

finding the time to conduct patrols and martial arts training.

“Partnership for the Americas Brazil, the first of 24th Marine Regiment’s many exercises in South America this summer, provided a superb opportunity for a Marine platoon to train alongside the finest jungle warriors of the Southern Hemisphere, the Corpo de Fuzileiros Navais,” said O’Neill.

The Brazilians also had plenty to gain from the training.

For many Brazilians, the most anticipated day of training was working with the Simunition kits. Simunition is a trademark for training ammunition produced by General Dynamics. Simunitions encompasses many types of training rounds, the best

known is the FX Marking Cartridge.

“Fusiliers, following training at Camp Lejeune in 2006, described to their comrades the unmatched realism and thrill of training with the non-lethal Simunitions blue barrels and marking rounds,” said O’Neill. “A suite of 43 Simunitions kits was transported aboard the USS Farragut (DDG-99) and used extensively by Marines and Fusiliers.”

Simunition rounds are designed to be fired through service weapons. Most Simunition cartridges require slight modification to the weapon to ensure normal service rounds cannot be fired during training and to simulate full recoil which gives users a highly realistic training experience.

Brig. Gen. John Croley, commanding general of Marine Forces South, and Adm. Leita, Corpo de Fuzileiros Navais Amphibious Division Commander, witnessed the masked squads engaging in battle while peppering “the enemy” with bright red and blue splotches.

The Brazilian portion of Partnership for the Americas was an unqualified success, with the Marines of Company B honing their jungle warfare skills and testing the limits of their endurance.

For these Saginaw, Mich. Marines, the only “fighting” on Marambaia Island ended with combatants shaking hands, exchanging gifts, and eating churrasco, a typical Brazilian barbeque.

The Marines of 1st Platoon are now

demobilized, attending college or working long hours in different professions, awaiting the next time they are afforded the chance to train in far off climes and places.

POA is an annual U.S. Marine Corps Forces South multi-national exercise in support of the Theater Security Cooperation Plan and UNITAS, a U.S. Southern Command-sponsored, multi-national naval exercise executed by U. S. Naval Forces Southern Command. POA 08 focuses on interoperability and theater security cooperation events, at sea and on shore. U.S. maritime forces work jointly with partner nations throughout the Caribbean, Central and South America to develop the relationships needed to ensure maritime security in the region. □

Peru challenges won't stop mission

TECH. SGT. KERRY JACKSON

TASK FORCE NEW HORIZONS, PERU

HUAMANGA, Peru – The air is a bit thin in the mountainous region of Ayacucho, Peru, where Air Force, Army, Navy and Marine service members participated in New Horizons-Peru 2008, a humanitarian mission set on improving the quality of life of underprivileged Peruvians.

The altitude in Huamanga is more than 9,000 feet above sea level; almost double the elevation of Denver - not something many service members are used to experiencing

proactive approach to caring for task force personnel by watching for symptoms and encouraging commanders to practice the same vigilance.

“An individual’s starting point increases or decreases the possibility of developing altitude sickness,” said Navy Capt. Peter Amato, the New Horizons-Peru senior medical doctor and a reservist assigned to 4th Marine Aircraft Wing at Westover Air Reserve Base, Mass. “Individuals traveling from the oxygen-rich environments will have a greater chance of developing altitude sickness than someone traveling from areas where there is less oxygen and higher altitudes.”

The best prevention is to be in good health, the doctors said. Acute mountain sickness tends to exacerbate health problems.

Physical fitness is another variable in determining whether or not an individual develops AMS as active service members are better able to endure low air pressure environments. However, being fit does not make an individual invincible to extreme altitudes.

“We have a military member participating in the exercise who recently ran a marathon but was so limited by the environmental effect of the altitude she could only run one and half miles the first few days,” said Capt. Ronald Khoury, the New Horizons-Peru medical commander, from Nellis Air Force Base, Nev.

The time needed for an individual to adjust to changing altitudes varies, but studies suggest one to two weeks, Doctor Khoury said.

Slowly increasing your activities and paying attention to how your body responds to high altitude environments is the best defense.

One of the treatments doctors have used for those patients who suffer from AMS has been pure oxygen consumption. This treatment required a dual effort from both the medical team, as well as the task force contracting officer who went to great lengths in locating oxygen tanks.

“The altitude definitely presents challenges, but we won’t let it get us down,” said Maj. Matt Joganich, the Task Force New Horizons-Peru commander. □



Tech.Sgt. Kerry Jackson

Air Force Capt. Ronald Khoury (right) and Navy Capt. Peter Amato care for a patient with a severe cut June 6 at a clinic in the mountainous region of Ayacucho, Peru. The doctors are participating in New Horizons-Peru 2008, a U.S. Southern Command-sponsored humanitarian mission set on improving the quality of life of underprivileged Peruvians. Khoury is deployed from Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., and Amato is deployed from Westover Air Reserve Base, Mass.

especially while working at completing heavy-duty construction projects.

It’s common for people traveling to extreme altitudes to have difficulty breathing, fatigue and insomnia. These are symptoms of acute mountain sickness, or AMS, a pathological condition caused by exposure to low air pressure.

To combat these issues from preventing a successful mission, the New Horizons medical team maintained a

24th Marines makes history

MAJ. WINSTON JIMENEZ

24TH MARINE REGIMENT

MONTEVIDEO, Uruguay – In keeping with the “in every clime and place” mantra, four Marines from 24th Marine Regiment recently boarded the USS Farragut and departed Rio De Janeiro, Brazil, for the nearby shores of Montevideo, Uruguay, and in the interim, made history.

The four-Marine team marks the first time in nearly 50 years that Marines have embarked and disembarked a U.S. Navy destroyer to or from foreign shores.

“I don’t think any of us realized the significance of our presence aboard Farragut until someone started researching the last time Marines were actually on a destroyer. We were all excited to be part of Navy/Marine Corps history,” explained the assistant operations officer for 24th Marines, Maj. Bill Sablan, 37, from Kansas City, Mo.

The historic voyage took place during Partnership of the Americas 2008 (POA 08), an exercise in support of Caribbean, Central and South American nations, and unfolded on the decks of the USS Farragut, a ship named after the son of hispanic immigrants from Spain and one of the greatest admirals in U.S. naval history.

“The purpose of this exercise was to conduct a subject matter expert exchange with the Uruguayan Fusileros Navales as well as integrated training with the U.S. Navy enroute to Uruguay,” said Sablan.

The Uruguayan Marine Corps, Cuerpo de Fusileros Navales, is a battalion-sized unit consisting of four company-size brigades.

Sablan explained the training is designed to enhance security cooperation, one of the primary goals of POA 08.

“The overall idea is to enhance the capability sets of everyone involved in the training,” Sablan said. “We’ll take turns throughout the training, showing each other our different tactics, techniques, and procedures. This type of face-to-face exchange is designed to build camaraderie between partner nations.”

The Marine detachment also provided martial arts training to the ship’s Maritime Interdiction Operations (MIO) teams including Marines from 3rd Force Recon Company out of Mobile, Ala., and assisted Farragut personnel MIO teams in providing training to a contingent of Uruguayan Navy and Marine officers.

“The training aboard the ship went extremely well, and I think both the Marines and Sailors got a lot out of the interaction,” said Master Sgt. Jim Dinwoodie, 39, from Rhode Island.

Although the entire Uruguayan Marine Corps is the size of a battalion, and its Army numbers about 14,000 active-duty members, Uruguay provides support to United Nations commitments in Haiti and the Sinai Peninsula among other peacekeeping missions.

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Cpl. Dustin T. Schalue

Maj. Bill Sablan observes while the Uruguayan Marines learn MCMAP skills. The 2008 Uruguay SMEE (Subject Matter Expert Exchange) is in support of Partnership of the Americas 2008, a U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) sponsored operation designed to strengthen regional partnership and improve multi-national interoperability, while enhancing the operational readiness of all assigned units.

forces throughout the Caribbean, Central and South America to develop the relationships needed to ensure maritime security in the region. □

Special MAGTF-24 conducts amphibious assault in Peru

MAJ. WINSTON JIMENEZ

24TH MARINE REGIMENT

SALINAS, Peru – “He who wishes peace, should prepare for war; he who desires victory, should carefully train his soldiers.”

The above quote is universally attributed to Publius Favius Vegetius Renatus, a Roman military writer during the 4th century.

Centuries later, those words inspired the motto for the 24th Marine Regiment, “si vis pacem, para bellum” – if you want peace, prepare for war.

Living up to their motto, Marines of Special Marine Air Ground Task Force 24 (SPMAGTF 24), comprised mainly of Marines from the 24th Marine Regiment, headquartered in Kansas City, Mo., conducted an amphibious assault with Peruvian Marines on the beaches of Salinas as part of Partnership of the Americas 2008.

For most of the 500-plus Marines, this assault, the largest of its kind conducted on a regimental level, was the first time they have conducted an amphibious assault and for many the first time on a ship.

“It’s been a long time since Marines have even done amphibious operations at this level,” said Maj. Bill Sablan, assistant operations officer, SPMAGTF 24. “With everything that’s been going on over the last seven years, we’ve gotten away from our core capabilities ... this allows them to see where the Marine Corps started.”

Lt. Col. Russell Scott, SPMAGTF 24 operations officer, parallels Sablan’s sentiments. “Ninety percent of the Marines of the SPMAGTF 24 are combat veterans from operations in Iraq, but most have never been on a ship, much less an amphibious assault.”

There is another aspect to why we train with our allies.

“Training scenarios and bilateral exchanges address key aspects of multinational and combined operations such as technology standardization and common operating procedures that are vital to improving interoperability throughout Latin America,” said Col. Brent Dunahoe, commanding officer, SPMAGTF 24. “Only by working, communicating, knowing each other’s processes and procedures, can we hope to have the relationships we need in the event of a crisis requiring a multinational effort.”

U.S. Marines in Peru exchanged squads embedding them into each other’s assault forces reinforcing a requirement to understand processes between the allied nations while conducting combined operations.

“Living aboard a Peruvian ship and working hand-in-hand with the Peruvian Marines was a once in a life time experience,” said 2nd Lt. Michael Becker, officer in charge of the embedded squad of Marines aboard the BAP Paita.

The SPMAGTF, comprised mainly of Marines from the 24th Marine Regiment, has the support of detachments from 3rd Force Reconnaissance Battalion, 4th Anti-Terrorism Battalion, 4th Combat Engineer Battalion, 4th Intelligence Support Battalion, 6th Communications Battalion, Marine Corps Systems Command and Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 764.

From April 18 to June 22, SPMAGTF 24 was in the U.S. Southcom Area of Operations to conduct operations and exercises with Partner Nation military forces. The goal of the operations was to train a multinational force in combined naval operations with the objective of raising the level of joint operations, as well as seeking mutual confidence, cooperation and friendship.

It also contributed to the regional stability via interaction, the exchange of professional experiences when it comes to planning, defense, combat doctrine, crisis management, logistics, communications and other themes of mutual interest.

“This is why we are here to train with our Peruvian allies, ‘Si Vis Pacem, Para Bellum.’ If you want peace we have to prepare for war,” Dunahoe said.

POA is an annual U.S. Marine Corps Forces South multi-national exercise in support of the Theater Security Cooperation Plan and UNITAS, a U.S. Southern Command-sponsored, multi-national naval exercise executed by U. S. Naval Forces Southern Command. POA 08 focuses on interoperability and theater security cooperation events, at sea and on shore. U.S. maritime forces work jointly

With partner nation governmental forces throughout the Caribbean, Central and South America to develop the relationships needed to ensure maritime security in the region. □

SMAGTF-24 builds skills, friendships

MAJ. WINSTON JIMENEZ

24TH MARINE REGIMENT

SAN CLEMENTE, Peru – Marines from Special Marine Air Ground Task Force 24, under the command of Marine Corps Forces South, completed humanitarian action here recently in an area slowly recovering from a devastating earthquake. The Marines, invited by the Peruvian government to remove debris from San Clemente, worked with the aid of the city government of San Clemente and with the Peruvian Marine Corps.

“We are here to help improve the lives of the citizens of San Clemente. We removed more than 2,500 cubic meters of debris from the city,” said Lt. Col. John Klink, Special Marine Air Ground Task Force executive officer and officer in charge of the humanitarian action here.

“We fixed the school’s playground, we cleaned the local clinic, and we provided medical exams to the citizens of San Clemente,” said Klink. “The entire area of San Clemente looks devastated, but it shows the resilience of the people still here - there’s plenty to be done for them.”

“Here’s where we have suffered the most,” said Isabel Quince Prada, of San Clemente.

The humanitarian aid is part of a military exercise called Partnership of the Americas 2008, which aims to improve relations with partner nations and to increase the operational preparedness of naval forces participating in the exercise.

“We were not expecting the help of individual citizens of San Clemente. However, they also came out to clear debris, picking up rocks and basically helping us to remove debris once they saw us cleaning their city” said Klink.

The humanitarian aid also included basic medical exams given to the community of San Clemente.

“We administered exams to check blood pressure, vital systems check ups, heart and lung check ups,” said Navy Corpsman Pat Stanosheck. “We also orally administered Motrin for back aches and Tylenol for fevers.”

Cpl. Anthony Eskew, 21, from New Oxford, Pa., spent his free time playing with the kids of San Clemente. “I felt wonderful helping the community,” Eskew said. “But I especially liked cleaning the school and playing with the kids. The kids attacked me with joy in their faces. Playing soccer, running, playing in the playground.”

During May, SPMAGTF 24 completed projects in Colombia, Brazil, Guatemala, and El Salvador.

Partnership of the Americas aims to train a multinational force in combined naval operations with the objective of

elevating joint operations, as well as mutual confidence, cooperation, and friendship.

“Look how the children are crying because the Marines are leaving. The kids are staying behind crying,” said Prada when the Marines pushed out of San Clemente. □

Lance Cpl. Anthony Eskew, 21, from New Oxford, Pa., enjoying a break from the humanitarian action in San Clemente, Peru. Eskew took part in Partnership of the Americas 2008. A detachment from the Special Marine Air Ground Task Force 24, under the leadership of Lt. Col. John Klink, SPMAGTF 24 executive officer, helped the citizens of San Clemente by removing debris from the city streets as well as lending a hand at a local school by fixing the school playground. San Clemente was devastated last year when the city suffered an earthquake registering an 8.0 in the Richter scale.

Maj. Winston Jimenez



Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

STORY AND ILLUSTRATION BY
CPL. FRANS E. LABRANCHE



For some, the toughest
battle may be at home.

A little-heard-of program developed by the clinical staff at Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow offers service members a big opportunity to overcome issues related to combat stress and PTSD.

Leathernecks often return from deployments with horrible images of war playing over and over in their heads and try to go about their normal lives only to be met with stresses and emotional issues they haven't encountered before. Those who seek help are widely successful but are usually Marines on large installations with medical facilities for their recuperation on hand.

For reserve Marines who return to small Inspector-Instructor staff detachments, however, life is expected to continue on, and information about recovery processes may be very limited.

"Every reserve command should know about this program," said Master Sgt. Gordon Roy, Marine Forces Reserve technical control chief. "Marines that need help need to know where to get it."

The program uses several methods of helping Marines reconnect with their pre-PTSD selves and offers a peaceful 10 days away from the pressures of life.

"When I got there, it was like the film kept on playing in the front of my head, and the real me wasn't connected anymore," said Staff Sgt. Ronaldo Sereal, a radio chief at MFR who went through the Barstow program in May.

Using a series of treatments including eye movement desensitization and reprocessing, neuro-linguistic programming and clinical hypnosis, the clinic weans Marines off medication and into healthfully healing the stress of combat.

"The hypnosis is not like you see on TV where a doctor comes in and swings a watch in front of you and tells you, 'you're getting sleepy,'" said Sereal. "It gives you a chance to relive and re-evaluate the situations that bother you and the problems that you brought back; it really helped me to re-

connect."

The Warrior Strengthening Program's neuro-linguistic programming is a set of guiding principles about real-life which allow an individual to change, adopt or eliminate behaviors, according to the program overview. This allows the patient to choose the state and level of their own well-being.

"The treatment worked and I haven't looked back," Sereal said.

The program makes three follow-up evaluations by calling the patient, their commanding officer, and family and friends. One 30 days after the program, another at six months, and a final evaluation after one year.

This method of evaluation allows for the program to ensure the full recovery of each Marine, and it seems to be working.

The program managers boast a 98 percent success rate, and senior leadership is pleased.

"I am excited that such a program exists for our Marines," said Sgt. Maj. Robert E. Roberts, Marine Forces Reserve Headquarters Battalion's sergeant major. "This is an excellent opportunity, and it's unfortunate that more don't know about the benefits it offers."

And the benefits are astronomical for Sereal.

When I got there, it was like the film kept on playing in the front of my head ...

**Staff Sgt. Ronaldo Sereal,
Radio Chief, MFR Communications**

"I didn't think that the stress was as bad as it was before I went," he said. "I got there really wanting to get better. The course was 10 days long, but I think I was better after three."

If the Warrior Strengthening program has been this successful for those who know about it, more PTSD recovery programs may be needed.

"They (the programs) work," said Sereal. "I think every Marine that has troubles when they get back from Iraq should do the right thing and get help."

Many commands are starting to realize the importance of treating PTSD.

In July, Marine Forces Reserve counselors, medical

personnel and command leadership were invited to a Combat Operational Stress Control Training seminar given by Lt. Cmdr. Peter Bauer, officer in charge at Behavioral Health Medical Task Force, Camp Shelby, Miss.

The seminar helps attendees recognize signs and minimize the negative impact of combat operational stress on service members and their families.

Seminars like this will provide better, more up-to-date information to leadership, who, in-turn, can give their warriors the proper weapons to fight the war on PTSD.

For more information on the Combat Operational Stress Control Training seminar, contact Janie Beers at Janie.beers@navy.mil. □

What is Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder?

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Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) develops after a terrifying ordeal that involved physical harm or the threat of physical harm. The person who develops PTSD may have been the one who was harmed, the harm may have happened to a loved one, or the person may have witnessed a harmful event that happened to loved ones or strangers.

PTSD was first brought to public attention in relation to war veterans, but it can result from a variety of traumatic incidents, such as mugging, rape, torture, being kidnapped or held captive, child abuse, car accidents, train wrecks, plane crashes, bombings, or natural disasters such as floods or earthquakes.

People with PTSD may startle easily, become emotionally numb (especially in relation to people with whom they used to be close), lose

interest in things they used to enjoy, have trouble feeling affectionate, be irritable, become more aggressive, or even become violent. They avoid situations that remind them of the original incident, and anniversaries of the incident are often very difficult. PTSD symptoms seem to be worse if the event that triggered them was deliberately initiated by another person, as in a mugging or a kidnapping. Most people with PTSD repeatedly relive the trauma in their thoughts during the day and in nightmares when they sleep. These are called flashbacks. Flashbacks may consist of images, sounds, smells, or feelings, and are often triggered by ordinary occurrences, such as a door slamming or a car backfiring on the street. A person having a flashback may lose touch with reality and believe that the traumatic incident is happening all over again.

Not every traumatized person

develops full-blown or even minor PTSD. Symptoms usually begin within 3 months of the incident but occasionally emerge years afterward. They must last more than a month to be considered PTSD. The course of the illness varies. Some people recover within 6 months, while others have symptoms that last much longer. In some people, the condition becomes chronic.

PTSD affects about 7.7 million American adults, but it can occur at any age, including childhood. Women are more likely to develop PTSD than men, and there is some evidence that susceptibility to the disorder may run in families. PTSD is often accompanied by depression, substance abuse, or one or more of the other anxiety disorders.

Certain kinds of medication and certain kinds of psychotherapy usually treat the symptoms of PTSD very effectively. □

Treatments span gamut

LIFELINES SERVICES NETWORK

Today, there are good treatments available for PTSD. When you have PTSD dealing with the past can be hard. Instead of telling others how you feel, you may keep your feelings bottled up. But talking with a therapist can help you get better.

Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) is one type of counseling. It appears to be the most effective type of counseling for PTSD. There are different types of cognitive behavioral therapies such as cognitive therapy and exposure therapy. There is also a similar kind of therapy called eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR) that is used for PTSD. Medications have also been shown to be effective. A type of drug known as a selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor (SSRI), which is also used for depression, is effective for PTSD.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

What is cognitive therapy?

In cognitive therapy, your therapist helps you understand and change how you think about your trauma and its aftermath. Your goal is to understand how certain thoughts about your trauma cause you stress and make your symptoms worse.

You will learn to identify thoughts about the world and yourself that are making you feel afraid or upset. With the help of your therapist, you will learn to replace these thoughts with more accurate and less distressing thoughts. You also learn ways to cope with feelings such as anger, guilt, and fear.

After a traumatic event, you might blame yourself for things you couldn't have changed. For example, a soldier may feel guilty about decisions he or she had to make during war. Cognitive therapy, a type of CBT, helps you understand that the traumatic event you lived through was not your fault.

What is exposure therapy?

In exposure therapy your goal is to have less fear about your memories. It is based on the idea that people learn to fear thoughts, feelings, and situations that remind them of a past traumatic event.

By talking about your trauma repeatedly with a therapist, you'll learn to get control of your thoughts and feelings about the trauma. You'll learn that you do not have to be afraid of your memories. This may be hard at first. It might seem strange to think about stressful things on purpose. But you'll feel less overwhelmed over time.

With the help of your therapist, you can change how you react to the stressful memories. Talking in a place where you feel secure makes this easier.

You may focus on memories that are less upsetting before talking about worse ones. This is called "desensitization," and it allows you to deal with bad memories a little bit at a time. Your therapist also may ask you to remember a lot of bad memories at once. This is called "flooding," and it helps you learn not to feel overwhelmed.

You also may practice different ways to relax when you're having a stressful memory. Breathing exercises are sometimes used for this.

What is Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing?

Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR) is a fairly new therapy for PTSD. Like other kinds of counseling, it can help change how you react to memories of your trauma.

While talking about your memories, you'll focus on distractions like eye movements, hand taps, and sounds. For example, your therapist will move his or her hand near your face, and you'll follow this movement with your eyes.

Experts are still learning how EMDR works. Studies have shown that it may help you have fewer PTSD symptoms. But research also suggests that the eye movements are not a necessary part of the treatment.

Medication

Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) are a type of antidepressant medicine. These can help you feel less sad and worried. They appear to be helpful, and for some people they are very effective. SSRIs include citalopram (Celexa), fluoxetine (such as Prozac), paroxetine (Paxil), and sertraline (Zoloft).

Chemicals in your brain affect the way you feel. When you have or depression you may not have enough of a chemical called serotonin. SSRIs raise the level of serotonin in your brain.

There are other medications that have been used with some success. Talk to your doctor about which medications are right for you.

Other types of treatment

In addition to CBT and SSRIs, some other kinds of counseling may be helpful in your recovery from PTSD.

See PTSD treatment on page 19

Alaska unit mobilizes for deployment

RENÉE NELSON

MARINE FORCES RESERVE

ELMENDORF AIR FORCE BASE, Alaska – Alaska and Hawaii take the titles of the U.S. states located farthest north and farthest south, respectively. Perhaps less well known is the fact that Alaska can claim both farthest east and farthest west as well.

Although not the farthest north Air Force installation, Elmendorf is home to the northernmost post serving the U.S. Marine Corps' Company D, Anti-Terrorism Battalion, 4th Marine Division. The company is comprised of 43 Reserve Marines and Sailors, as well as a small cadre of active-duty Marines who operate the Marine Corps Reserve Training Facility. However, the battalion and its mission stretch across the globe.

Company D was stood up Sept. 28, 2006. Previously, the unit was Company E, 4th Reconnaissance Battalion, which was relocated to Joliet, Ill., as part of the Marine Forces Reserve's Force Structure Review Group initiative.

Members of Company D mobilized May 19 for deployment to Iraq. They will join infantrymen of four other Anti-Terrorism Battalion sites stretching across the

United States: Billings, Mont.; Lafayette, La.; Chicopee, Mass.; and Bessemer, Ala.

"Although they are all part of the Anti-Terrorism Battalion, the Marines from the other sites will expand our capabilities during deployment," said Marine Maj. Arcelio Albizo, Company D commanding officer, who will lead the 150 Marines of the battalion during training and deployment. "Each gives us added specialties and expertise to employ in the field."

For example, the technical knowledge combat engineers from Bessemer have with improvised explosive devices will provide added capability in defeating IED threats, and Chicopee infantrymen will supply highly skilled machine gunners to the team.

"The other option was to give our folks additional training on these requirements," Albizo said. "However, this alternative gives us expert capability within the company itself without adding to the training obligation."

The responsibility for the administration, training, and equipment and vehicle maintenance-related issues for the members of Company D falls to the Inspector-Instructor staff at Marine Corps Reserve Training Facility. Comprised of about 10 active-duty Marines and one Navy corpsman,



the staff coordinates, facilitates and assists in executing training. Requirements include annual and semiannual qualifications such as firing on the rifle range, performing physical fitness assessments, operating military vehicles, and training in the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program.

“We inspect and instruct Reserve Marines so that when they’re called to deploy they’re prepared,” said Marine 1st Sgt. Marvin Magcale, instructor-inspector staff, Company D. “Then, once mobilized, they complete extensive training on active duty at an intermediate location or ILOC.”

The unit will travel to Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., to continue training in areas such as advanced rifle range and grenade qualification, communications classes for gear from hard-mounted equipment to portable personal radios, medical and first aid training and driving instruction specific to military convoy operations.

Following two months at Camp Pendleton, the Marines will then test those skills during Cajun Viper, a three-week exercise at Fort Polk, La.

“This exercise will give them the opportunity to operate together to carry out their mission of convoy security during live-fire training,” said Albizo. “It’ll also give company leadership the chance to control the platoons downrange.”

After one final week back at Camp Pendleton, the members will have two weeks of block leave - one last chance before deployment to spend time with families and friends.

“We have a pretty young crew,” said Marine 1st Sgt. Doug Rines, who will return to Iraq and act as Albizo’s senior enlisted adviser. “Many of these Marines have never been mobilized, and they could be nervous going into an area when they don’t know what their going to face.”

He said his biggest concern is training.

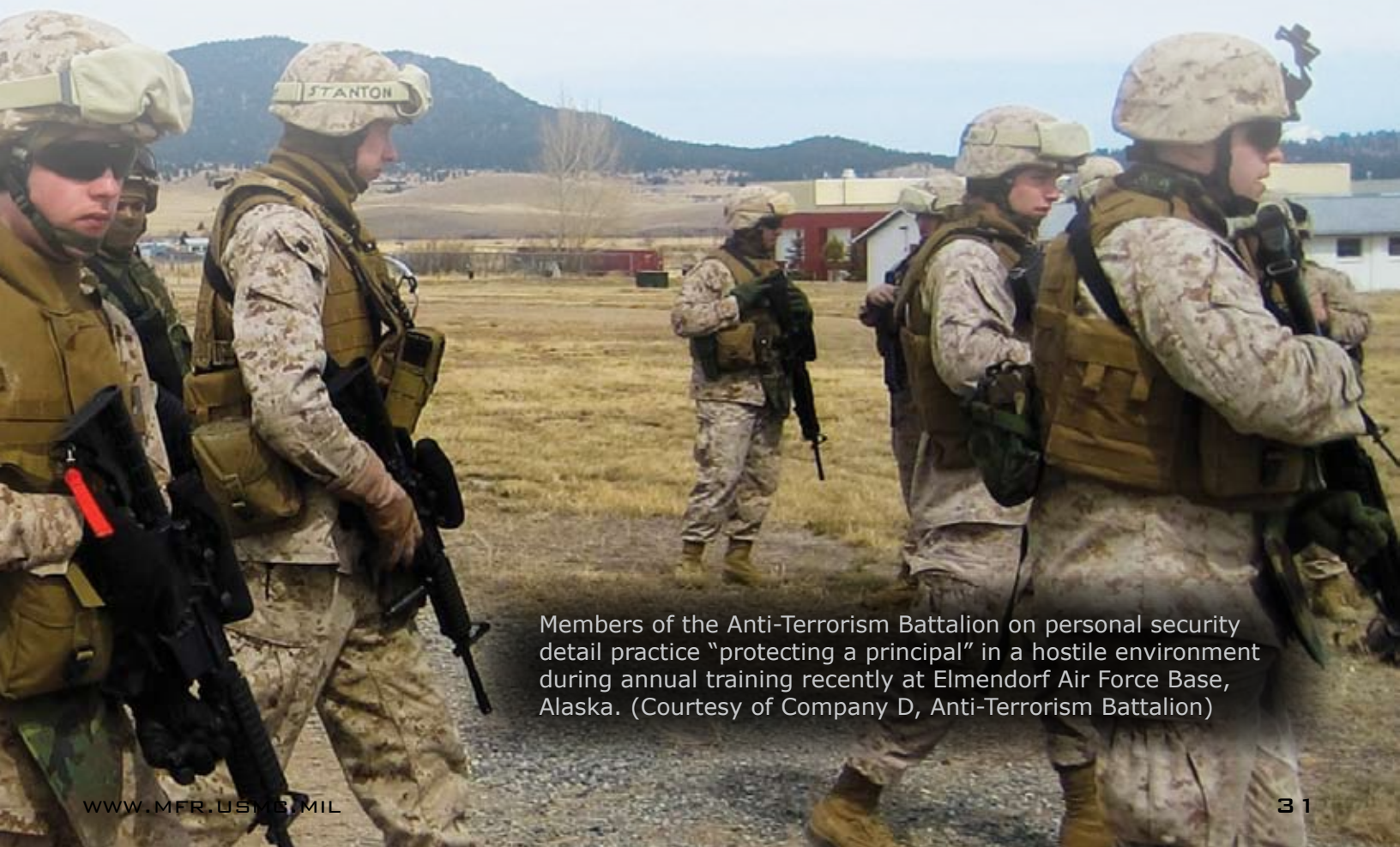
“I want to make sure they gain confidence during their training,” said Rines. “Tough and realistic training is the only way we can do that. Then they’ll be ready for any challenge.”

According to both the company commander and first sergeant, the greatest challenge may be adjusting to the changing environment in the deployed area.

“It may be a challenge to stay focused on the mission and remember that the enemy is out there,” said Albizo. “With the reduced activity and fewer enemy engagements, the younger Marines may need to learn that this will take a calculated response, with stricter rules of engagement.”

The first sergeant echoed that message.

“We train to prepare for combat,” said Rines. “It’s possible the biggest thing we’ll fight is complacency.” □



Members of the Anti-Terrorism Battalion on personal security detail practice “protecting a principal” in a hostile environment during annual training recently at Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska. (Courtesy of Company D, Anti-Terrorism Battalion)

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