

IN BRIEF

PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY



October 2019

Marines battle through the
Martial Arts Instructor course

Kent Navy Yard Memorialization

Women's equality day celebrates
99 years of 19th Amendment

Sunflowers lift Presidio fog



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The PoM InBrief is a command-authorized publication for the Monterey military community — published monthly by the Presidio of Monterey Public Affairs office.

We publish information of interest to members of our community — including all service members, military families, civilian personnel, & veterans who access services at our installation.

Story ideas and submissions of original material are always welcome.

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In this edition

Marines battle through MCMAP instructor course	4
IWTC Monterey dedicates Navy Yard	5
Women's equality day celebrates 99 years of acceptance	7
From the historian	9
Army veteran who translated at Nuremburg	10
Every Marine a rifleman at the Presidio of Monterey	12
Presidio has Mad Talent	14
Be here tomorrow	16
Sunflowers on the Presidio	18
Anti-terrorism month	21

Marines run in formation to Soldier Field on the Presidio of Monterey to practice weapons integrated free sparring during the culminating event of the Marine Corps Martial Arts Instructor course Aug. 9. PHOTO by Joseph Kumzak.

NEVER FORGET

09.11.2001

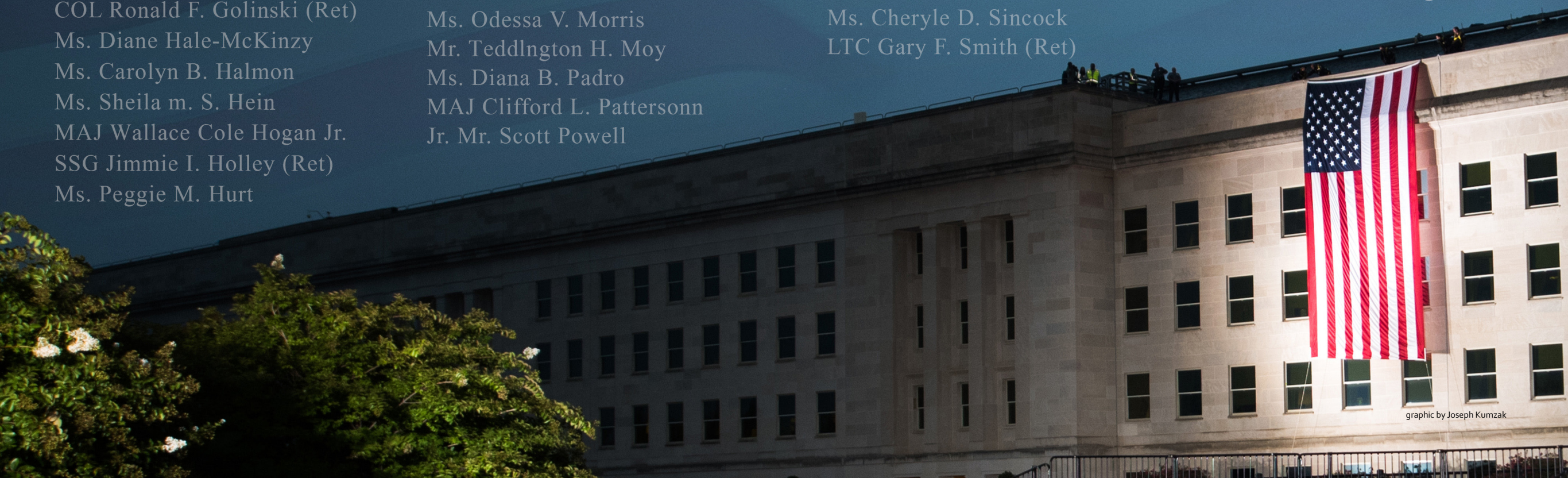
U.S. Army Soldiers and Civilians who died at the Pentagon September 11, 2001

SPC Craig S. Amundson
MSG Max J. Beilke (Ret)
Ms. Carrie R. Blagburn
COL Canfield D. Boone
Ms. Donna M. Bowen
SFC Jose O. Calderon-Olmedo
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Ms. Judy Rowlett
SGM Robert E. Russell (Ret)
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LTC Gary F. Smith (Ret)

Ms. Patricia J. Statz
Ms. Edna L. Stephens
SGM Larry L. Strickland
LTC Kip P. Taylor
Ms. Sandra C. Taylor
SGT Tamara C. Thurman
SSG Willie Q. Troy (Ret)
LTC Karen J. Wagner
Ms. Meta L. Waller (Fuller)
SPC Chin Sun PAK Wells
SSG Maudlyn A. White
Ms. Sandra L. White
MAJ Dwayne Williams
Mr. Edmond G. Young Jr.
Ms. Lisa L. Young



Marines battle through the MCMAP instructor course

Joseph Kumzak
Presidio of Monterey

PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY, Calif. — Eight Marines from the Presidio of Monterey and Naval Air Station Lemoore graduated the three-week Marine Corps Martial Arts Instructor course Aug. 9 at the Presidio of Monterey.

The newly-minted instructors are now qualified to teach Marine Corps Martial Arts to fellow Marines.

“They’re making the Marine Corps more capable -- this is a finite skill that most units don’t have a great deal of capacity,” said Lt. Col. Jason Schermerhorn, Marine Corps Detachment commander. “We now have twice as many instructors who will have more contact with students at Lemoore and Presidio to teach these skills.”

Course instructor Sgt. Alexander Herold, an Arabic instructor at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, said “they learn the proper format -- how to instruct techniques -- they learn how to supervise free sparring -- and they learn how to administer belt tests, so Marines can belt up to the next level.”



Marines practice weapons of opportunity training during the culminating event of the Marine Corps Martial Arts Instructor course at the Presidio of Monterey, Aug. 9.

He added “We tie in Marine Corps history, character, morals and ethics discussions into the training.”

Student Sgt. Carl Schlosser, an F-35 avionics technician with VFA-125 at NAS Lemoore, said the course sets the new instructors up for success to pass on knowledge and skills to their fellow Marines.

“The course brought in a good amount of dynamics and stuff I can take back to the unit, so I can train Marines to be more dynamic with their fighting styles, and help belt them up so they can get to a new skill level,” said Schlosser.

The rigorous three-week course combined classroom academics and physical activities on ground fighting,

striking, weapons training and combat conditioning.

“They have been physically and mentally challenged – from sunup to sundown,” said Schermerhorn.

Sgt. Benjamin Fulbrook, operations chief with MWSS 473 Detachment A at NAS Lemoore, said the students had to get a little aggressive with each other during sparring sessions, but they all remained mature and professional. “We did a good job of mitigating injury and risk.”

“The MAI program is what you make of it, so a good Marine will make a great program and develop combat-effective Marines,” said Sgt. Christopher Ellis, Chinese and Tagalog platoon commander at DLI.



Marines practice ground fighting during the culminating event of the Marine Corps Martial Arts Instructor course Aug. 9 at the Presidio of Monterey.

IWTC Monterey Dedicates Navy Yard to Senior Chief Shannon Kent

By Chief Petty Officer Ian Wyatt
Information Warfare Training Command

PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY, Calif. — Information Warfare Training Command Monterey dedicated its command training stage and surrounding buildings in honor of Senior Chief Cryptologic Technician (Interpretive) Shannon Kent, Aug. 21.

The area is now formally known as the “Kent Navy Yard,” a small portion of the Presidio of Monterey and Defense Language Institute, which includes a number of Navy barracks buildings. A boulder with a bronze plaque was placed in front of the stage to permanently memorialize Kent, who was herself a graduate of the DLI.

In November 2018, Kent deployed to Syria as part of a highly skilled, multidisciplined armed forces task force involved in critical and demanding intelligence work. Kent was killed in action by an improvised explosive device detonated by a suicide bomber in the city of Manbij, Jan. 16, 2019.

“Today, we have the privilege of honoring Senior Chief Shannon Kent for her inspiring leadership, steadfast dedication, and ultimate sacrifice to the nation and Navy,” said Cmdr. Michael Salehi, commanding officer of IWTC Monterey, in his opening remarks. “From this day on, every Sailor that walks the decks of Information Warfare Training Command Monterey and the Defense Language Institute will remember her sacrifices as a Sailor, and also as a wife, mother, daughter, sister, and friend.”

The decision to dedicate the Navy Yard to Kent came



Hundreds of sailors stand in formation in front of the Kent Navy Yard at the Presidio of Monterey, Aug. 21.

very shortly after news of her death was announced.

“It was a no-brainer,” said Master Chief Cryptologic Technician (Interpretive) Christopher Stevens, IWTC Monterey’s senior enlisted leader. “She was one of us. She began her career here and she exemplified everything we expect of our students and more. Now she will continue to be a role model for all future generations of Navy linguists.”

Senior Chief Cryptologic Technician (Interpretive) Scott Welker was the guest speaker for the ceremony. While his speech did include details from Kent’s life and career, the message was for the students in attendance. He described an early interaction with Kent in which he asked her if she wanted to take on a particularly dangerous duty. Her response was simple: “Send me.” This became a refrain to illustrate the selfless sense of duty displayed by Kent

throughout her career.

“It is because you do your job with pride, with drive, with positive attitude that fewer and fewer names are added to the walls of the various agencies and commands we support,” said Welker. “Senior Chief Kent knew this well, and seized every opportunity to accept risk and challenge, because it was necessary. If not her, who? ‘Send me.’”

“You will be asked to push your abilities to their limits, and beyond,” Welker continued. “Not for you, but for those who will never know you. This is the legacy into which you are being baptized. This is the legacy of Senior Chief Kent. ‘Send me.’”

Nearly all of the Sailors of IWTC Monterey are students of the DLI, engaged in some of the longest

Continued next page

Chief Kent cntd.

and most mentally challenging training in the Department of Defense. Learning about Kent and realizing how much they share in common with her has been an inspiration to many of them, pushing them to engage with their studies on a deeper level.

“I feel incredibly humbled,” said Seaman Makinna Olmstead. “I want to be the degree of change that she was in the lives of so many. She inspires all of us in the intelligence community to persevere, work hard, and always strive to be the very best.”

The ceremony concluded with the unveiling of the memorial plaque. The names of the team members killed in the Jan. 16 attack, including Kent, were read aloud. Each name was followed by two bells, a naval tradition to honor and say farewell to fallen shipmates.

Kent was posthumously promoted to senior chief petty officer. She was interred at Arlington National Cemetery, Feb. 25, 2019, and added to the National Security Agency’s Memorial Wall, Feb. 28, 2019.

Kent is survived by her husband and two young sons.



Master Chief Petty Officer Denise Vola hugs a fellow Sailor during a memorialization of the Kent Navy Yard at the Presidio of Monterey, Aug. 21



Sailors watch a memorialization of the Kent Navy Yard at the Presidio of Monterey, Aug. 21.



The memorial plaque for the Kent Navy Yard is seen at the Presidio of Monterey, Aug. 21.



Sailors view a memorial plaque during a memorialization of the Kent Navy Yard at the Presidio of Monterey, Aug. 21.

Women's Equality Day celebrates 99 years of 19th Amendment

Zack Frank
Presidio of Monterey

PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY, Calif. — The Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center and the Presidio of Monterey held an observance of Women's Equality Day Aug. 26. On the same date 99 years earlier, the 19th Amendment was certified as part of the Constitution. The amendment reads, 'The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.'

The ratification of the 19th Amendment was a major step in a changing America. At the time of the amendment's ratification in 1920, women served in temporary support roles for the military during war, but it wasn't until 1948 that the passage of the Women's Armed Services Integration Act granted women permanent status in the armed forces.



President of the Naval Postgraduate School and retired Navy Vice Adm. Ann Rondeau speaks at an observance of Women's Equality Day at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center and the Presidio of Monterey.

Photos by Marcus Fichtl



A line forms to ask questions to a panel of five women about their personal experiences and challenges at an observance of Women's Equality Day, Aug. 26.

"When I was at DLI as a student, my platoon sergeant was embarrassed to have women in the Marine Corps and made me sit on the curb while the 'real Marines' went to PT."

This year's Women's Equality Day observance celebrated women's roles in the military with an opening statement by President of the Naval Postgraduate School and retired Navy Vice Adm. Ann Rondeau. She spoke about her early career and how she fought to be seen as an equal while stationed at an air squadron in Hawaii.

The guys had no idea they were not authorized," admitted Rondeau about breaking uniform standards. "I did an inspection with an illegal uniform. The admiral came up and said 'Lt. Rondeau, you're looking very sharp today,' and I said 'yes sir!'"

After her opening statement, Rondeau

"I had uniforms made that were slacks.

Continued next page

Women's Equality Day cntd.



The Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center and the Presidio of Monterey held an observance of Women's Equality Day, Aug. 26. A panel of five women featuring (left to right) retired Navy Vice Adm. Ann Rondeau, President of the Naval Postgraduate School; Col. Stephanie Kelley, commander 517th Training Group; Master Chief Petty Officer Danica Dwyer, DLIFLC provost senior enlisted leader; Master Sgt. Ann Sagebiel, occupational field sponsor for Marine Corps linguists; and Dr. Mina Lee, Ph.D., Professor & Dean, Asian School II, DLI spoke about their personal experiences and challenges.

joined a panel also featuring Col. Stephanie Kelley, commander 517th Training Group; Master Chief Petty Officer Danica Dwyer, DLIFLC provost senior enlisted leader; Master Sgt. Ann Sagebiel, occupational field sponsor for Marine Corps linguists; and Dr. Mina Lee, Ph.D., Professor & Dean, Asian School II, DLIFLC. The panel fielded questions from an audience of women and men representing each service branch. Questions ranged from challenges each panelist had overcome and progress they'd seen over their careers, to the future of the armed forces with the integration of women on the front lines of battle.

Sagebiel addressed her personal history as a female Marine at DLIFLC, "When I was at DLI as a student, my platoon sergeant was embarrassed to have women in the Marine Corps and made me sit on the curb while the 'real Marines' went to PT."

The Marine Corps now showcases a noticeable change in comparison to Sagebiel's experience. This year's observance was organized by Staff Sgt. David Golob, the equal opportunity representative for the Marine Corps Detachment.

"The reason I think Women's Equality Day is so important," said Golob, "It recognizes the enfranchisement of

half the population of our country. No other equal opportunity observance encapsulates 50 percent of the population, so this is applicable to everyone."

Less than 100 years after the federal government recognized a woman's right to vote, the five female panelists demonstrate the ongoing successes of the women's rights movement. Today, women play important roles in the military as a whole, and in shaping the education and proficiency of everyone stationed at POM and DLIFLC.

"If we are competent to the need, and the mission, and our skill set," said Rondeau, "we can make the team better. That's what is important."

"Today, every American can be proud that our military will grow even stronger with our mothers, wives, sisters, and daughters playing a greater role in protecting this country we love."

-President Barack Obama



This is the flag of the National Woman's Suffrage Congressional Union, carried by Alice Paul as she lobbied Congress for the passage of the 19th Amendment. Paul and her fellow suffragist Lucy Burns felt they should adopt the tactics of spectacle and political pressure employed by the British "suffragettes." Their new National Woman's Party used parades, petitions, protests, and eventually pickets in an ambitious campaign for woman's suffrage. Today this flag, and the achievements it represents, are part of the permanent collection at the National Museum of American History of the Smithsonian Institution.

FROM THE HISTORIAN

The Great Monterey Oil Fire

Cameron Binkley
Command Historian

Ninety-five years ago, on September 14, 1924, lightning ignited a massive petroleum storage container in a “tank farm” adjacent to the lower Presidio of Monterey.

The U.S. Army played a major role in fighting what became the worst fire in Monterey history when Col. Herbert J. Brees committed his entire command.

Troopers of the 11th Cavalry and the 76th Field Artillery rushed down fire hoses and uprooted nearby fences to shield themselves against the withering heat. Hoping to prevent the fire’s spread, Presidio Fire Marshal Maj. Charles D. Daly called for volunteers.

PFC Eustace Watkins bravely agreed to crew a hose from a high position – then tragically fell into the fire when a “sea of burning oil” exploded over the rim of the melting container. PFC George Bolio, attempting to save an Army truck, was also engulfed and burned alive near the gate that bears his name today.

PFC Roy Piña, who survived the fire, earned a citation “having turned back into the face of terrible heat and the danger of being burned to death to save a fallen comrade” – PFC William Mellow.

Only feet from the boil over, both had dropped their highly pressurized hoses to flee. Mellow became entangled because the hoses lacked shut-offs and flailed wildly. Ultimately, the entire tank farm, its wharf, two canneries, an Army warehouse, and several homes were destroyed. The fire took a thousand men three days to contain.

Top - Soldiers of the 76th Field Artillery battle the Great Monterey Oil Fire moments before tank 6 above boiled over, spreading a lethal “sea of burning oil.”

Bottom - Onlookers flee after multiple oil storage tanks explode near the Presidio of Monterey. The fire killed Privates Eustace Waktins and George Bolio for whom Pvt. Bolio Road (shown in photo) is named.

Photos courtesy of the Command History Office



The 92-year-old Army veteran who translated at Nuremburg

Zack Frank
Presidio of Monterey

A World War II veteran who translated the testimony of Nazi war criminals during the Nuremburg trials visited the Presidio of Monterey, Aug. 29. Alfred Loikits of Santa Cruz, now 92 years old, met with Defense Language Institute Commandant Col. Gary Hausman, Assistant Commandant Lt. Col. Stephanie Kelley, Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Donehue and Command Historian Cameron Binkley.

Loikits told stories about serving in the Army in France and Germany, as well as his later experiences in the Air Force while serving in Korea. Several of his stories were reflections on his time in Germany after victory was declared. German-speaking American troops in Nuremburg were recruited as translators for the historic war trials.

“Every day we had to look at the bulletin board,” said Loikits. A communal bulletin board detailed not only who would attend the trials each day, but also who would translate the trials. Every few weeks Loikits was designated to translate several hours of courtroom testimony. During his time, he witnessed a review of photographs depicting the horrors of the concentration camps.

“Hermann Göring and Rudolph Hess were sitting in front of me,” Loikits remembered. During the review of the photos, Göring put his hand on Hess’s head and said, “Don’t believe it.”

This private comment was not recorded by the court, but Loikits overheard it because of his proximity.

Hess had been captured by British forces during a secret mission to the United Kingdom in 1941. He was attempting to negotiate peace with the British

government without Hitler’s knowledge, and his capture resulted in him being absent for the remainder of the war. Göring was attempting to keep the truth of the atrocities committed in the intervening years from Hess. In the end both men were convicted of war crimes.

Months earlier, while en route to Nuremburg, Loikits made his way through Germany in a train box car. Along this journey he learned for himself that Göring’s denial to Hess was a lie. Even before reaching the concentration camps, the devastation was apparent.

“You could smell the concentration camps - we got there and I couldn’t stand the smell,” said Loikits. “I could see the people. They were dead. There (were) piles of them.”

On another occasion, Loikits translated the testimony of a wealthy German factory owner who produced the gas canisters for the concentration camps that resulted in countless deaths.

“Don’t you know what you’ve made?” Loikits translated for the prosecution.

Reflecting on the general indifference displayed by many of the witnesses, Loikits added, “He could have refused to make it, but he didn’t.”

In addition to translating, Loikits also managed a group of eight German citizens in manufacturing tank shells for allied forces. He carried out all of his duties at Nuremburg while living in a building that had been blown open by ordnance.

Born and raised in eastern Pennsylvania, Loikits grew up speaking German at home with his parents. He was drafted into the Army in 1945 when he was 18



Alfred Loikits, a 92-year-old Army veteran who translated testimony at the Nuremburg Trials, stands in front of sections of the Berlin Wall during a visit to the Presidio of Monterey, Aug. 29

Photos by Zack Frank

Continued next page



View of the defendants in the dock at the International Military Tribunal trial of war criminals in Nuremberg, Bavaria, Germany.

Nuremburg cntd.



Alfred Loikits, a 92-year-old Army veteran who translated testimony at the Nuremberg Trials, recounts moments he witnessed during World War II with Defense Language Institute Commandant Col. Gary Hausman, Assistant Commandant Lt. Col. Stephanie Kelley, and Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Donehue during a visit to the Presidio of Monterey, Aug. 29.

years old. Initially he was sent to Ft. Bragg for tank destroyer training. But upon arriving in Europe his German language skills contributed to documenting one of the defining moments in world history.

As the heroes and first-hand witnesses of the Second World War fade into history, these opportunities to meet with them and listen to their experiences become more and more important. The mission of the Defense Language Institute and the work of translators like Loikits are vital to conveying our words, ideas and humanity with others around the world.

Every Marine a rifleman at the Presidio of Monterey

Marcus Fichtl
Presidio of Monterey

PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY, Calif. - Marines rucked, applied face paint, and trained on infantry skills during their annual battle skills training at the Presidio of Monterey, Aug. 30.

“Battle skills training provides the skill set any Marine should possess at any time,” said Staff Sgt. Curtis Raney, ‘Academic’ Company’s acting first sergeant. “We pride ourselves on the motto, ‘every Marine, a rifleman.’”

After a 5 a.m., six-mile hike in the woods, Raney said the Marines then took on a gauntlet of skills training at Presidio’s Soldier Field, including: infantry tactics, detainee handling, medical care, the military justice system and Marine Corps history. The company’s non-commissioned officers provided evaluation and on the spot feedback - including extra exercise when potentially deadly mistakes were made during infantry patrols.

“As a Marine, you’re expected to always be ready for the fight,” said Lance Cpl. Olivia Aviles, from Murrieta, California, an Indonesian language student at the Defense Language Institute.

The 19-year-old said the average Marine at the Presidio is two years removed from a traditional Marine environment and they need training events like BST to instill into each Marine that “they are capable for the fight.”

Photos by Marcus Fichtl



Continued next page

rifleman cntd.



A Marine assigned to 'Academic' Company assaults a defensive position during battle skills training at the Presidio of Monterey, Aug. 30, 2019.

Raney called BST one of the building blocks needed to create signals intelligence warriors. He said his Marines shouldn't expect to sit in windowless rooms at some three-letter agency, but to be sent to fleet, working alongside Marines who need their capabilities on the battlefield.

"When we deploy, we attach to infantry units," he said. "We have to be able to match them and know these basic skills to keep up with them."

Raney added that the early morning ruck, the infantry training, and the impromptu ground fighting was more than building better junior Marines, but fulfilling a promise.

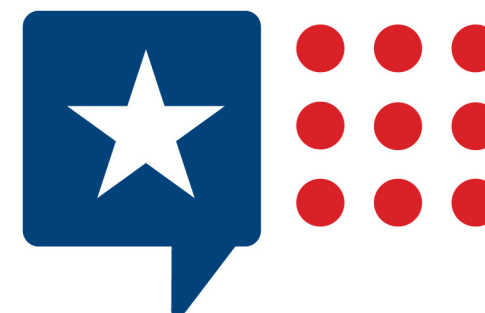
"[This training] gives them the life they were expecting when they signed on the dotted line to become Marines," Raney said.

Aviles called it her "why," for joining the Corps.

"The Marine Corps has a brotherhood and sisterhood that no other branch has," she said. "The pride of belonging is something that I really wanted and a lot of people here aspire to have."



Veterans Crisis Line



1-800-273-8255
PRESS 1

Presidio has Mad Talent



Photos by Marcus Fichtl



Marine Lance Cpl. Kamari Walker, 'Academic' company raps during the Presidio has Mad Talent competition at the Presidio of Monterey, Sept. 6.

Marcus Fichtl
Presidio of Monterey

PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY, Calif. - Service members played guitar, twirled rifles, and even commanded floating sticks. But it was a Marine whose gymnastic-infused contemporary dance routine flipped him to a first place finish and a \$250 check at the annual Presidio has Mad Talent competition, Sept. 7.

Lance Cpl. Anthony Sierra-Denelsbeck, assigned to the Marine Detachment's 'Academic' Company, won the competition while fellow Marine, Lance Cpl. Kamari Walker, placed second with an original hip-

hop performance, and Army Pfc. Makenzie Viens, 229th Military Intelligence Battalion, took third with a mesmerizing ribbon dance.

A three-judge panel provided half of the vote, while the audience at the Hobson Center provided the other half. It's also the first night of a three-night competition that will pit the post's best singers against each other Sept. 13 and 20.

Sierra-Denelsbeck who wowed the 100 service member strong crowd with a high-flying choreographed dance number called it a humbling

experience to hear his name called as the night's winner; but with seven years of experience under his belt - not unexpected.

"Since I've been 15, I've always loved the performing arts," said Sierra-Denelsbeck.

That's when the 22-year-old from New Jersey began hitting the dance floor at his adopted family's dance studio. Soon after he became a competitive cheerleader, adding its gymnastic elements into his routines. Later in college he coached and choreographed dance teams and now at the Presidio teaches a contemporary dance class every Sunday.

Sierra-Denelsbeck, a Korean language student at the Defense Language Institute said the talent show gave him and all the other competitors a rare moment away from the regimented military lifestyle and brought together a sense of comradery amongst the artistically inclined.


"[Presidio has Mad Talent] was just a room full of people who just want to express themselves," he said.

But don't expect the Marine to be dancing in front of Simon Cowell on NBC's America's Got Talent anytime soon.

"I'm going to try to get better at Korean first," he laughed.



Lance Cpl. Kamari Walker, 2nd place (left), Lance Cpl. Anthony Sierra-Denelsbeck, 1st place (middle), and Army Pfc. Makenzie Viens, 3rd place (right), stand with their checks at the annual Presidio has Mad Talent competition at the Presidio of Monterey, Sept. 6.

A photograph of Kevin Hines, a man with a shaved head and a goatee, wearing a black t-shirt and blue jeans. He is standing in the foreground, holding a microphone in his right hand and gesturing with his left hand. He is addressing a large audience of military personnel, mostly men in camouflage uniforms, who are seated in rows behind him. The background is filled with the audience, creating a sense of a large-scale event. The text is overlaid on the top half of the image.

‘Be here tomorrow’

Kevin Hines talks suicide prevention at the Presidio

Photos by Marcus Fichtl

Marcus Fichtl
Presidio of Monterey

PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY, Calif. - Nineteen years ago Kevin Hines jumped off the Golden Gate Bridge hoping to end his life. On Sept. 6 he asked thousands of people at the Presidio of Monterey to stand up and commit to themselves and those around them to “be here tomorrow.”

Hines is one of only 39 people to survive the fall from the iconic California landmark and only one of five with full function of their body. He credits his survival to an immediate decision to keep living, quickly flipping from a head-first dive to a feet-first landing, and to a nearby sea lion who kept him afloat until rescuers came.

He told the audience at the Price Fitness Center, if someone had just said, ‘Hey kid are you OK?’ to the then-19-year-old Hines, he wouldn’t have made the fateful jump; but the only interaction he had as he walked along the edge of the bridge was a couple asking him to take their photograph. They ignored the tears streaming down his face and he jumped 20 feet from where he took the photo.

After his story of survival, Hines asked them not be like the dozens that passed him as he walked to his ill-chosen fate 19 years ago and to “voice their pain” if they began to think of suicide as a solution.

Hines’ visit comes a year after the active-duty military suffered its deadliest year in number of suicides. A report recently published by the Defense Suicide Prevention Office said that in 2018 there were 325 active-duty suicides, an increase of 40 deaths from 2017, surpassing the previous high of 321 in 2012. The latest Veterans Affairs report on suicide, published in 2018, reported that veteran suicide is 1.5 times the rate of the general population.

Airman 1st Class Haylee Miesse, 517th Training Group, has heard Hines twice now and as a bay chief - a junior enlisted peer leader - she’s noticed the impact he makes on her fellow Airmen.



Kevin Hines speaks to service members and civilians about suicide prevention at the Presidio of Monterey, Sept. 6.

“There’s a whole line of Airmen lined up to talk to him,” Miesse said mentioning the 30 person deep procession of troops lined up to speak with Hines after his presentation.

“He could have very easily helped them today,” she added.

Hines told Presidio Public Affairs he relishes the opportunity to speak to the military. “It’s my favorite thing to do in suicide prevention,” said Hines. “I really find solace in reaching our military service members who are in pain because often they aren’t talking about it and they keep it inside.”

Hines called his visit a success. He said multiple people sought out health care professionals after his presentations including one on the verge of suicide.

He added that after he leaves the Presidio he hopes those who hurt don’t suffer in silence while considering suicide as a solution.

“Turn to anyone near you and tell them ‘I need help now,’ and say it over and over until someone gives you that help,” he said.

If you need to speak to someone, call the Military Crisis Line at 800-273-8255, press 1, for assistance, or text 838255.

Sunflowers on the Presidio



Photos by Marcus Fichtl

Marcus Fichtl
Presidio of Monterey

PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY, Calif. – Bright yellow sunflowers are piercing the fog at the Presidio of Monterey thanks to a pair of green thumbs at the post's legal office and a gardening tradition that dates back nearly 100 years.

Mike Sutton, an attorney-advisor at the Presidio, has been growing sunflowers with the enthusiasm, he says, of a burgeoning hobbyist. The sunflowers dot along the yellow-on-tan legal building, with their necks twisting toward the sun, some multi-headed, others the more traditional singular flower head. Inside the snake-like interior of the legal offices, another sunflower sits alone on the break room's windowsill.

Sutton said the sunflowers came about for two reasons. First, they were easy to grow, requiring nothing more than a little dirt, water and some sun. Second they grow out of reach of the Presidio's notorious deer population.

"Sunflowers seem to work because the wildlife can't get to it," Sutton laughed as he pointed to the seven-foot flower he's staked to the building.

This year Sutton wasn't alone growing sunflowers, as Aleshchai Herndon, a legal assistant, brought back a pack of seeds from Monticello, the Virginia home of Thomas Jefferson. A seasoned gardener, Herndon was hoping her Jeffersonian-sunflower seeds would be a simple addition to the office, but she forgot to read the fine print.

"I thought they would be really cute window sunflowers," Herndon said. "But then they grew and grew," The sunflowers quickly outgrew the office and Herndon relocated the plants outside.

That's when she enlisted the help of Sutton, and now like his plants, Herndon's are also growing vine-like along the building's edges. The two even have a friendly competition to see who can grow the best sunflowers, but they said everyone seems to admire



Aleshchai Herndon, legal assistant, speaks on the phone as her sunflowers are seen through her window at the Presidio of Monterey, Aug. 28.

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all the flowers. Sutton said a language teacher at the Defense Language Institute even donated a sunflower seedling to legal team's gardening corps.

Sutton added that growing plants just made sense in the unique environment presented by the Presidio.

"How often do you get an opportunity to work in an office that has a porch?" Sutton mused.

Continued next page



A sunflower sits on the windowsill in the legal office's break room at the Presidio of Monterey.



Like many of the buildings on the lower part of the Presidio, the legal offices are in one of the many 100-year-old barracks structures. It's easy to picture a cavalryman in 1905, after a long day of riding, taking in the sunset over Monterey Bay on the same porch. It's also easy to imagine them enjoying the view with flowers – because there's proof.

An old photo dated 1930 shows the 11th Cavalry Regiment in formation on Soldier Field. In the background stands the building with a trio of colorfully planted window boxes.

Nearly a 100 years apart, the old cavalrymen probably felt the same as Herndon does about the colorful plants when the fog rolls in.

"It's nice to see a bit of bright yellow when it's grey outside," Herndon said.

TOP: The 11th Cavalry Regiment stands in formation on Soldier Field, Presidio of Monterey, 1930.

RIGHT: Aleshchai Herndon's sunflowers stand on the legal office's porch at the Presidio of Monterey, Aug. 28.



Presidio wraps up anti-terrorism month

Staff
Presidio of Monterey



In August, the Presidio of Monterey observed anti-terrorism month -- a month dedicated to training and awareness on potential terrorist threats to the Presidio or threats aimed at its service members and civilians.

The month kicked off with the command teams from both the garrison and Defense Language Institute signing a pledge to promote anti-terrorism awareness.

Throughout the month the anti-terrorism team conducted small unit training sessions with various directorates across the Presidio. The team also hosted a training seminar for the Northern California Regional Intelligence Center -- an anti-terrorism fusion cell. The training brought Kevin Smith as the guest speaker, an expert on mass shootings and the characteristics of the shooters. Along with the garrison team more than 150 law enforcement agents from across the region participated in the seminar.

Two major drills in August exercised garrison anti-terrorism functions, the first tested evacuation plans, emergency operating center procedures and the new mass alert system. The second brought a first-ever collaboration between Presidio police, gate security, Marines and the garrison anti-terrorism team for an active shooter drill at the new Pyeatt Barracks.

While August and anti-terrorism month will come to a close, the Presidio anti-terrorism team urges everyone to stay vigilant. See something, say

Photos by Marcus Fichtl

anti-terrorism month cntd.



Col. Greg Ford, garrison commander and Col. Gary Hausman, Defense Language Institute commander, sign a pledge to promote anti-terrorism awareness at the Presidio of Monterey, July 31.



A Presidio of Monterey Police car sits outside the Marine barracks on post during an active shooter drill, Aug. 28.



Kevin Smith, a homeland security expert, speaks about the characteristics of active shooters at the Presidio of Monterey, Aug. 14.



Employees from Belas dining facility pose with the Presidio of Monterey's, anti-terrorism team on post, Aug. 7.



Role players enact an active shooter scene at the Marine barracks on the Presidio of Monterey, Aug. 28.



Janice Quenga, garrison anti-terrorism officer, debriefs Marines on a recently conducted active-shooter drill on the Presidio of Monterey, Aug. 28.

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