2D MARINE LOGISTICS GROUP (FWD)
WARRIORS SUSTAINING WARRIORS

The Warrior's Log

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'Excellence, Innovation & Quality' for the Marines and Sailors of the 2nd Marine Logistics Group

March 2, 2012

Kids collide with fun

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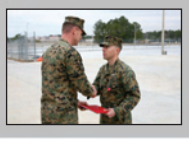

Heroism ... Page 2

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EOD technicians earn bronze stars for heroism

Cpl. Bruno J. Bego
2nd MLG Public Affairs

CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C. — Two explosive ordnance disposal technicians received a prestigious award for their actions in Afghanistan in support of International Security Assistance Force operations from April to September 2011.

Staff Sgt. David J. Dignan and Staff Sgt. James D. Whidden, both with EOD Company, 8th Engineer Support Battalion, 2nd Marine Logistics Group, were awarded the Bronze Star with a Combat Distinguishing Device during a ceremony aboard Camp Lejeune, N.C., Feb. 10.

"We are here to celebrate that these two guys are back home, safe," said Col. Mark R. Hollahan, the 2nd MLG commanding officer, who presented the awards to the Marines. "I also want to give words of gratitude on behalf of [Brig. Gen. Michael G. Dana, the 2nd MLG commanding general]."

According to his citation, Dignan, who was deployed to Helmand province, Afghanistan, responded to a group of Marines and sailors from 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division who were not only held by an ambush, but also a road side bomb, which prevented them from moving to a better location.

Minutes after arriving, Dignan moved through the storm of bullets to clear the threat so the patrol could move out of the danger zone. Immediately after, continuing to expose himself to heavy enemy machine gun fire, Dignan set up an explosive breaching charge to help the unit enter a suspected enemy compound. He then helped clear the area along with members of the patrol he was aiding.

Whidden, who served in Helmand province as well, responded to a patrol, where troops found an IED inside a compound. His citation states that Whidden had to crawl on his hands and knees to enter the small structure, probing the ground as he advanced to find himself in the middle of a mind field. With complete disregard for his own safety, he proceeded to deactivate each one of the five devices.

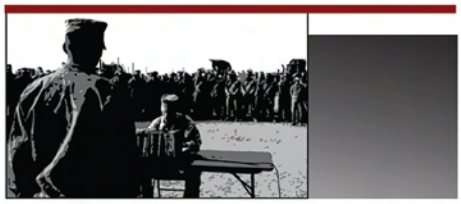
During the process, Whidden encountered multiple anti-tamper switches, specifically designed to prevent him from disarming the bombs, which he managed to defuse anyway.

Nearing the end of the ceremony, Hollahan gave words of appreciation to the Marines who received the award and the other EOD Marines present. Afterwards, Hollahan dedicated a few words as a reminder of all the EOD technicians who have served before them.

"You guys do incredibly brave stuff [on your deployments], but it comes with a cost. We all know what the cost is," Hollahan concluded. Let us never forget all those wounded warrior's who are still paying the cost and the ones who paid the ultimate sacrifice.

Cpl. Bruno J. Bego

Staff Sgt. James D. Whidden (right), an explosive ordnance disposal technician with 2nd EOD Company, 8th Engineer Support Battalion, 2nd Marine Logistics Group, is awarded the Bronze Star by Col. Mark R. Hollahan (left), the 2nd MLG commanding officer, during a ceremony aboard Camp Lejeune, N.C., Feb. 10, 2012. Whidden received the Bronze Star with a combat distinguishing device for his actions while deployed to Helmand province, Afghanistan, in support of International Security Assistance Force operations from April 9 to Sept. 20, 2011.



2D MLG BLOTTER

23 Feb. 2012 - A Marine with Combat Logistics Regiment 26 was found with spice and drug paraphernalia in his barracks room.

25 Feb. 2012 - A Marine with Combat Logistics Regiment 27 was arrested for breaking and entering, and assault causing serious injury with damage to property.

War stories: Tales of recovery

Cpl. Bruno J. Bego
2nd MLG Public Affairs

CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C. — Injuries sustained in battle are something many Marines have become accustomed to dealing with. One of the most common injuries is a concussion.

The Navy and Marine Corps team is able to treat concussions and return Marines to the fight quickly, but this should not diminish the severity of the injury. What many don't realize is the lingering after effects of a concussion can be as debilitating as a missing limb.

Cpl. Cody M. Sackinger, a combat engineer with 8th Engineer Support Battalion, 2nd Marine Logistics Group, was his convoy's lead vehicle driver when his front right tire set off a roadside bomb during an operation in Helmand province May 2011.

Sackinger was awarded the Purple Heart during a ceremony aboard Camp Lejeune, N.C., Feb. 17.

"I don't think I will ever forget the first few seconds of the incident," the Waynesfield, Ohio, native said. "We were going through a wadi when the improvised explosive device went off. I was very confused at the moment, very dizzy and all I could think of was making sure everybody was OK."

Sackinger and the others in the truck were diagnosed with concussions.

"My eyes were dilated, I was woozy and I couldn't stay focused," he added. "I was relieved we all could make it out of there so quick.

"You feel so vulnerable when you are in that position and in that type of environment, but I knew the other Marines had my back." he said.

A few days later, Sackinger was sent to the Concussion Restoration Care Center for rehabilitation. The CRCC is an installation aboard Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, ran by Navy medical personnel, whose sole purpose is to help troops recover quickly from concussions or any other type of combat injury, and return to the fight as soon as possible.

"I am very happy with the way the Marine Corps helped me out after what happened," he added. They provided me with a psychiatrist to help me recover mentally and even tried acupuncture treatment for my headaches."

The medical team was able to get Sackinger back to his unit to complete his tour in Afghanistan. However, he required follow-on medical treatment upon his return to the states.

"I get a lot of medical help," Sackinger explained. "On average, I go to at least two appointments each week."

Although he is not visibly injured, he is currently suffering from short-term memory loss, speech problems, hearing loss, balance problems and has trouble concentrating.

"I would say loss of concentration and sleep are the two things challenging me the most," Sackinger said. "I try to stay as focused as I can when I do things or when I talk to people, but sometimes it can be really difficult and frustrating for me."

Sackinger said this experience changed the way he looks at life. He said it has helped him appreciate every moment he spends with his family and it makes him work harder to recover.

"I continue to ... do exercises to help me with coordination and balance issues," he added. "I also go to the neurologist pretty often as well as mental health."

Sackinger not only relies on the care from doctors to recover, but his wife, Heather, provides the emotional support to help him push through.

"I think the recovery process has been slow but steady," Heather explained. "We have been supported from the beginning by our families and the [Marine Corps].

"I try to be understanding and patient with his situation," Heather said. "I listen to him every time he wants to talk, and I wake up and watch TV with him every time he can't sleep. I am as supportive as I can be."

She also explained, the hardest part for her is to see her husband suffer from this situation, but she is assured the medical care he is receiving will help him recover.

"I would say that my peace of mind comes from the fact that he is getting all the attention he needs," Heather expressed with a sense of relief. "They can handle all the medical stuff that I don't understand, I will take care of the rest."

Sackinger is still recovering from his life changing experience, but as he explains, the help he continues to receive will enable him live a good life with his family.

WARRIOR of the WEEK

CORPORAL CODY SACKINGER

JOB:
COMBAT ENGINEER

HOMETOWN:
WAYNESFIELD, OHIO

WHAT REGULATION WOULD YOU CHANGE AS COMMANDANT:
HANDS IN POCKETS

WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE ABOUT CAMP LEJEUNE:
BIGGER ROADS AND FASTER SPEED LIMITS

WHAT'S YOU FAVORITE UNIFORM:
DRESS BLUE ALPHAS. HATE TO WEAR THEM, BUT CAN'T BEAT THE WAY WE LOOK IN THEM.

Cpl. Bruno J. Bego

Marines with 2nd Maintenance Battalion, Combat Logistics Regiment 25, 2nd Marine Logistics Group bow their heads during an invocation before a professional dinner aboard Camp Lejeune, N.C., Feb. 9, 2012. The dinner was the conclusion of the Corporal's Leadership Course, which is offered by the battalion to help newly promoted corporals transition to a noncommissioned officer mindset. The corporals participating and their instructors had a chance to eat dinner with senior Marines from the unit in a professional environment.

Corporals get big helping of leadership

Cpl. Bruno J. Bego
2nd MLG Public Affairs

CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C. - The command for 2nd Maintenance Battalion, Combat Logistics Regiment 25, 2nd Marine Logistics Group hosted a professional dinner aboard Camp Lejeune, N.C., Feb. 9, for its junior non-commissioned officers at the Ball Center.

The dinner was the conclusion of the week-long Corporal's Leadership Course offered by the battalion to help newly promoted corporals transition to a NCO mindset.

Marines in the maintenance field usually do not have the opportunity to interact among each other due to their job's sky-scraping demands.

"The dinner helps them interact with some of the unit's leaders and remember they are an important part of the unit and the leadership chain," said Gunnery Sgt. Loren B. Walters, from Dunkirk, N.Y., the course staff noncommissioned officer-in-charge. It also gives them a breather after a tough week.

"This is a great opportunity for us to get out of our uniforms and [spend time] with our fellow NCOs," explained Cpl. Damian M. Smith, originally from Onarga, Ill., a microminiature repairer with 2nd Maint. Bn., who was recently promoted to corporal.

Smith said he was happy he had a chance to attend the course, which he says will help him tremendously during future assignments.

"I learned a lot about counseling and mentoring my Marines as well as how to look out for their welfare," Smith added. "Now that I am responsible for three Marines in my shop, this course helped me understand how to act like an NCO."

The course's main purpose was to act as a precursor to Corporal's Course at the Staff Noncommissioned Officer Academy aboard Camp Johnson, N.C.

The course is held quarterly, and it is the way senior leaders of the battalion can ensure the new NCOs are prepared to assume new responsibilities.

Cpl. Bruno J. Bego

Marines with 2nd Maintenance Battalion, Combat Logistics Regiment 25, 2nd Marine Logistics Group fill their plates during a professional dinner aboard Camp Lejeune, N.C., Feb. 9, 2012. The dinner was the conclusion of the Corporal's Leadership Course, which is offered by the battalion to help newly promoted corporals transition to a non-commissioned officer mindset.

Parents unwind as kids bounce off walls

Pfc. Franklin E. Mercado
2nd MLG Public Affairs

CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C. — Combat Logistics Regiment 27, 2nd Marine Logistics Group gave spouses a chance to unwind as their children ran, jumped and played at a local business in the Jacksonville, N.C., area, Feb. 13.

The Jump-N-Jax Pot Luck is a monthly event hosted numerous times by the regiment during the 2nd MLG's year-long deployment and gives spouses the opportunity to relax, eat and converse with other spouses from the unit while their children have fun in a safe environment.

When a Marine deploys, one of the hardest jobs goes largely unnoticed. It's the job of the spouse left behind to run the family.

The task of taking care of children, maintaining a household, and for some working full or part time while their Marine is on the other side of the globe is no walk in the park.

Spouses are often left looking for a chance to relax from filling two or three roles during the deployment.

"I've been coming since March of last year," said Michelle L. Smoak, whose husband is Staff Sgt. Derek A. Smoak, a recently redeployed Marine with the 2nd Marine Logistics Group. "[Jump-N-Jax] is fantastic. It's two hours of letting the kids run around and getting to know the other wives."

The Jump-N-Jax Pot Luck was originally intended for families with a deployed parent but has since been offered to everyone in the unit.

The event is a good way to let your children play amongst themselves in a safe environment, Michelle explained. It's also a good place for both adults and children to meet new people.

Pfc. Franklin E. Mercado

Michelle L. Smoak, whose husband is Staff Sgt. Derek A. Smoak, a recently redeployed Marine with the 2nd Marine Logistics Group, plays with her son during a Jump-N-Jax Pot Luck held for Marines with Combat Logistics Regiment 27, 2nd Marine Logistics Group at a local business in the Jacksonville, N.C., Feb. 13.

Pfc. Franklin E. Mercado

A child plays in a bouncy house during a Jump-N-Jax Pot Luck held for Marines with Combat Logistics Regiment 27, 2nd Marine Logistics Group at a local business in the Jacksonville, N.C., Feb. 13.

"I would absolutely encourage people to come," she said. "Even in just the two hours a month we do it, I've met some great people and the kids have made friends."

"Whether you are a couple with no children or you are a single Marine, it doesn't matter. Everyone is welcome to come," said Jose Padilla, the regiment's family readiness officer.

The next CLR-27 Jump-N-Jax Pot Luck is scheduled for March 12.

For more information contact the regiment's FRO, Jose Padilla, at 451-1284 or by email at jose.l.padilla@usmc.mil.

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