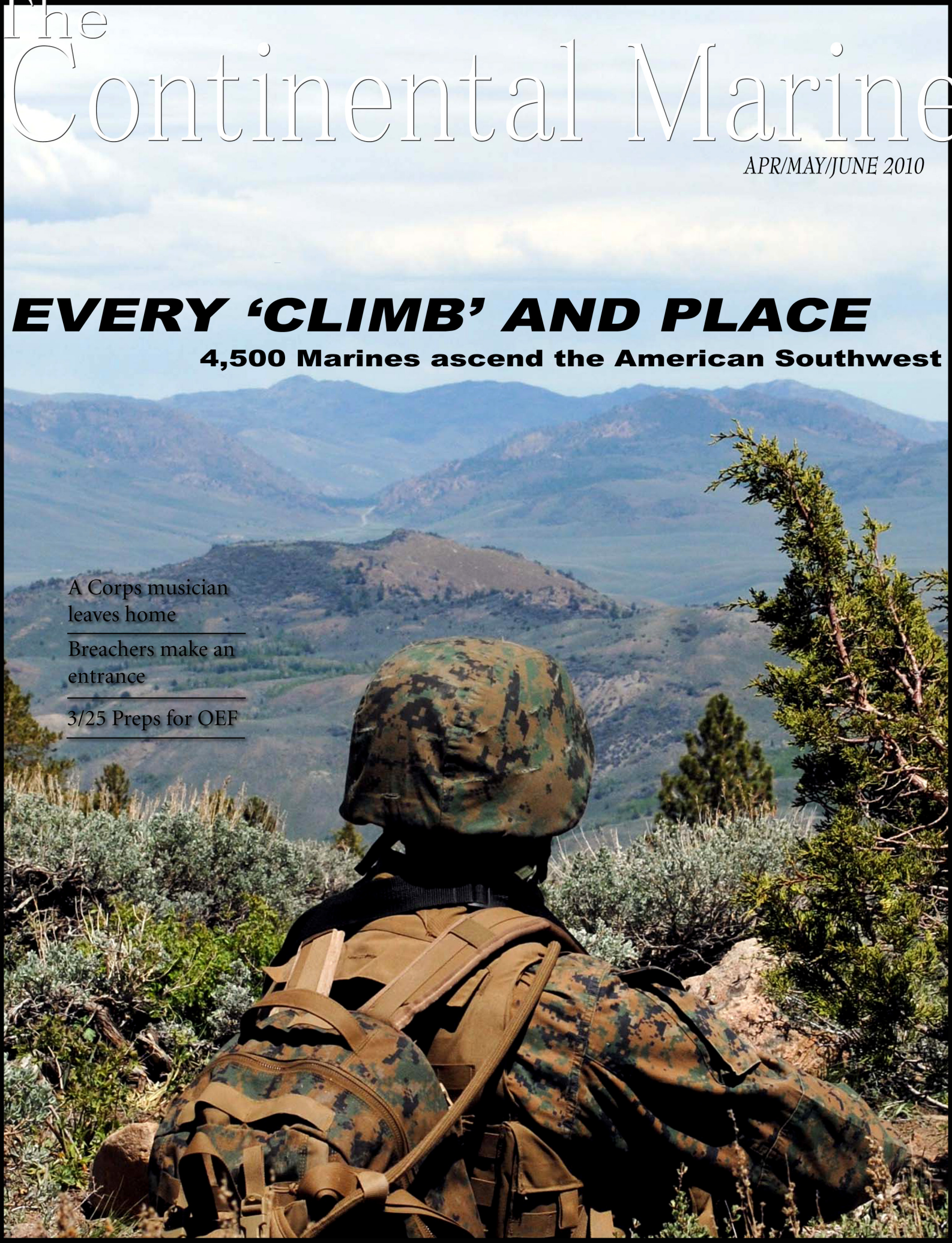
The Continental Marine

APR/MAY/JUNE 2010



EVERY 'CLIMB' AND PLACE

4,500 Marines ascend the American Southwest

A Corps musician leaves home

Breachers make an entrance

3/25 Preps for OEF

Marine Forces Reserve

Commander, Marine Forces Reserve
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Public Affairs Chief
Gunnery Sgt. J. J. Connolly

Media Officer
Capt. Kate Vanden Bossche

Internal Media Officer
2nd Lt. Dominic Pitrone

Media Chief
Sgt. Kari Keeran

Editor/Combat Correspondent
Cpl. Michael Laycock

Combat Correspondent
Cpl. Tyler Hlavac

Combat Correspondent
Lance Cpl. Jad Sleiman

Combat Correspondent
Lance Cpl. Lucas Vega

Combat Correspondent
Lance Cpl. Nana Dannsaappiah

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FROM THE EDITOR:

While most Americans spend their summer seasons vacationing and relaxing, reserve Marines are hip-deep in annual training exercises; whether at home or abroad, we're training.

What's to be gained from all this training? Our mission is to be a ready and sustainable operational reserve that provides strategic depth to the Marine Corps.

Have we, as a Reserve, accomplished this? You bet.

Javelin Thrust 2010 was one of the largest Marine Corps training exercises of the year for the entire Marine Corps. More than 4,500 Marines from 4th Marine Division, 4th Marine Air Craft Wing and 4th Marine Logistics Group trained as a Marine Air Ground Task Force during the two-week exercise.

Tradewinds 2010, a Southern Command-sponsored event, had reserve Marines training alongside Marines and soldiers from 15 nations from the Carribean Basin. Together, these forces improved their drug interdiction, riot control and crime scene investigation skills.

During African Lion, more than 700 Marines trained alongside the Moroccan military to build upon the long-standing relationship between the United States and Morocco. This type of theatre security cooperation is key to the United States' strategic postition in the world.

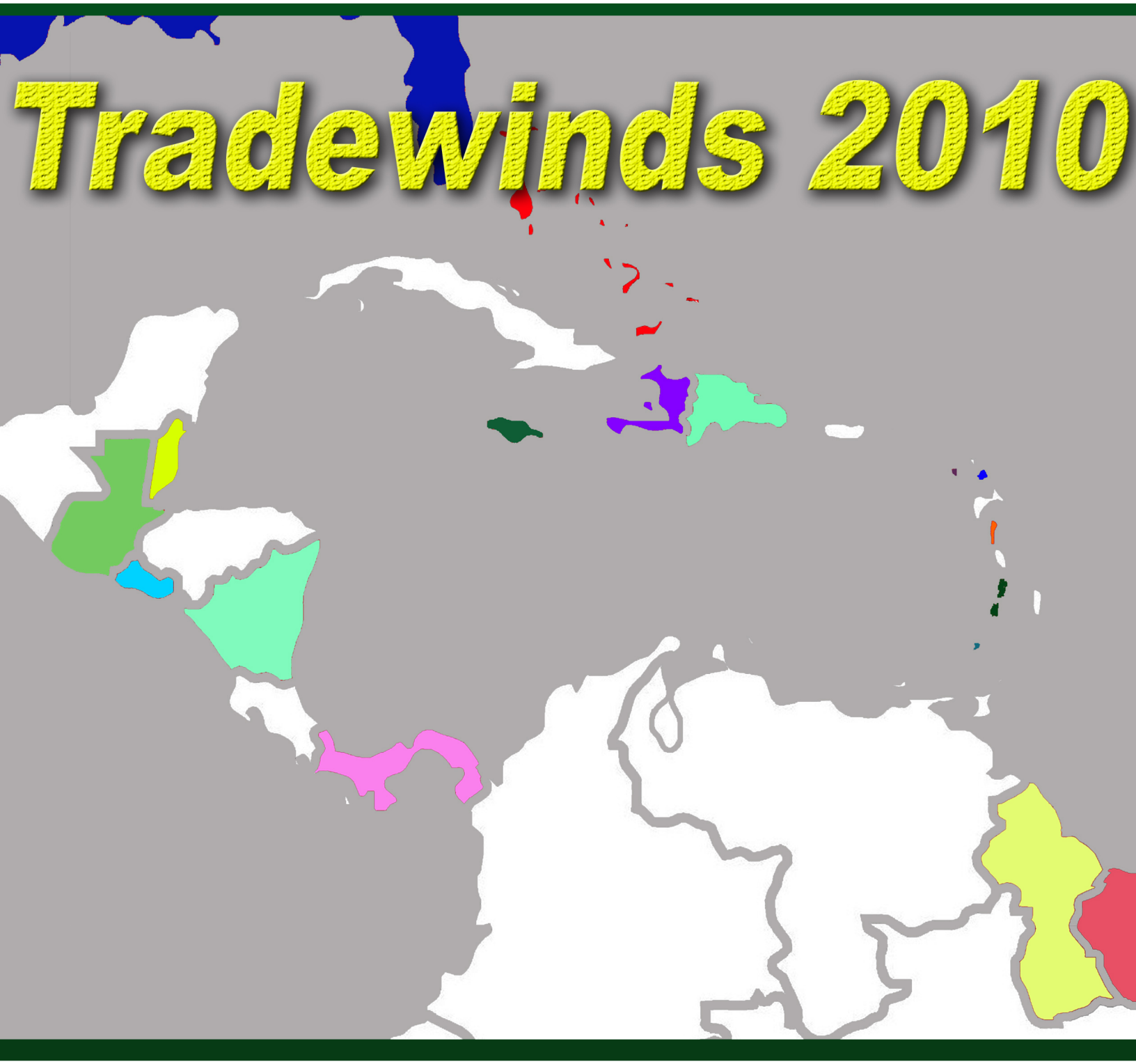
So, as you read about our training and readiness, keep in mind the wider impact our Force has around the globe; and, how the reserve Marine remains an integral part of the Total Force.

Semper Fi,
2nd Lt. Dominic Pitrone, Internal Media Officer

New Eligibility Criteria for DOD ESGR Patriot Award includes Spouses' Employers

The Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) Patriot Award program recognizes employers for implementing employment policies and practices that are supportive of their employees' participation in the National Guard and Reserve. The Patriot Award certificate is intended for an immediate supervisor. It is significant to have an employer who shows flexibility and support for a military family, to allow a military spouse to juggle and balance the responsibilities of being a parent and an employee, especially when his or her spouse is deployed. Therefore, ESGR is proud to announce an expansion of the Patriot Award eligibility criteria to include employers of service members' spouses. Spouses and service members can go to www.esgr.org to nominate your employers and learn more.

400 Exercise Participants



15 Caribbean Partner Nations

Marine Cpl. Derrick Clark, Lexington, Ky., native and Gunnery Sgt. Christopher Lake, both military policeman with Military Police Co. A, share an electroshock of 1,200 volts from a taser gun.

Photo by Lance Cpl. Lucas Vega

Jungle Survival Belize

Story and photo By
Lance Cpl. Lucas Vega
Marine Forces Reserve

PRICE BARRACKS, Belize - Marines and sailors of Company F, 2nd Battalion, 23rd Marine Regiment received introductory training in jungle warfare tactics and survival from the Belize Defense Force April 14 during exercise Tradewinds 2010.

The Marines and sailors participating had no prior training in warfare other than desert and urban terrain.

From April 11-14, the 30 student Marines and sailors of Co. F dedicated most of their time to the classroom, but on April 16 the Marines traveled to the jungle along the Guatemalan border to put their classroom training to the test.

The Marines operated in full proper protective equipment, sporting a pack weighing up to 40 lbs., with essential supplies, food and water.

The students were training under the close supervision of BDF Staff Sgt. Rady Puc, a jungle warfare instructor with training company who had more then 15 years experience.

"In the Belizean Army, our initial course for jungle tactics is six weeks long," said Puc. "This is a shorter version of the course, and we are covering just as much."

On April 14, the Marines spent time in the classroom for instruction followed by practical application.

Outside of classroom instruction, the students observed as BDF soldiers conducted patrols and engaged mock enemy forces in nearby thick vegetation.

The Marines then mimicked the BDF soldiers and conducted their own mock patrols and enemy contact, with adjustments from Puc and other Belizean soldiers.

"Different countries armies do different things to prepare for the jungle," explained Puc. "The Marines I trained before adjusted very quickly once they actually got out there."

Puc, who had trained nother Marine units in the past, added it typically takes years for Belizean soldiers to master the appropriate skills needed to survive in a jungle environment all while keeping a combat mindset and maintaining vigilance of the enemy.

"A week in the jungle is a piece of cake for a Belizean soldier," said Puc. "The Marines will struggle at first, but jungle warfare isn't easily learned by anybody."

The Marines ranging from private first class to sergeant, some who have served combat tours in Iraq and others who are just a few weeks out of the Marine School of Infantry, bring different levels of experience to the training.

"This jungle warfare training is good, well-rounded training," said Lance Cpl. Robert Fishbourne, a machine gunner with Weapons Platoon, Co. F, 2nd Bn., 23rd Marines, who already completed one tour in Iraq. "It's definitely different from other training we have received, but these guys (Belizean soldiers) are really good so it's another beneficial weapon to add to our unit's arsenal."

The week-long classroom preparation ended April 15. Some Marines went into the jungle confident, while others were more worried about the simpler things the jungle has to offer.

"I'll do fine," said Fishbourne. "I'm more worried about waking up next to a snake or with some kind of critter crawling on me."

Partner nation soldiers and Marine instructors utilized a pool, typically used leisurely by civilians, to do aquatic drills; one of five types of training drills used in MCMAP. The Marines and soldiers executed striking techniques underwater. They performed partnered sit-ups along the sides of the pool for conditioning. They also built teamwork and confidence by conjoining arms forming a "serpent" to chase a Marine instructor. "I wanted to mix it up a little bit," said Marine Staff Sgt. Robert Foreman, a third-degree black belt instructor of MCMAP. "It's great training, plus it's been hot outside so the pool cooled the students off."

Photo By Lance Cpl. Lucas Vega

A Marine sights in on his target with a training pistol during a U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation led, week-long course teaching students to act/react quickly under real life circumstances.

Photo By Lance Cpl. Lucas Vega

Sim Rounds, Real Pain

FBI teaches Marines, Belize police

By Lance Cpl. Lucas Vega
Marine Forces Reserve

PRICE BARRACKS, Belize - They are friends on the sidelines, but foes the instant they step directly in front of each other only 10-15 feet apart, staring eye to eye.

Under the watchful eyes of a U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation agent instructor and fellow students, partner nations soldiers and Marines receive the command to draw their weapons, point their muzzles, not down range, but at the person who only a few moments ago was sitting next to them in the classroom.

Price Barracks is one of many FBI training sites furthering allied relationships with Caribbean Basin Partner Nations law enforcement soldiers and personnel, explained Michael Parmigiani, a supervisory special agent with the FBI.

"We elevate their heart rate and put them under realistic pressure in the simulations so they can take the lessons learned to the street," said Sam Mullins, a supervisory special agent in the FBI, with the international training and assistance unit.

Simulation rounds in the magazine and one round in the chamber, the students have less than a second to react and shoot the enemy, or be eliminated.

"In my head over and over I'm planning what I'm going to do once I draw that weapon," said Marine Cpl. James Medley, a military policeman, Military Police Company A from Lexington, KY. "It's mostly instinct once it actually happens, but I'm just hoping I don't get shot."

Two Marines, alongside soldiers from 15 Caribbean Partner Nations, had the chance to receive training from multiple, experienced FBI agents during Tradewinds.

The agents, specializing in various fields, brought decades of real-life experience to the students who were participating in the sim round mock-drills. The projectiles may only leave a mark on the flesh as the tiny, plastic projectiles fly at speeds reaching 400 feet a second, but they are the closest tools available used by the students to get a small dose of the pain associated with being hit with a real projectile.

"The pain is worse than a paintball, but way less than a real bullet," said Medley. "These scenarios give us an idea of the physical and mental feelings that may translate to real life, but you never really know how it feels until you experience it in real life."

Using sim rounds and handguns designed for the special bullets, the Marines and partner nation's soldiers stood side by side, clearing rooms, doing action/reaction drills, and searching vehicles all in a single day's work during the first week-long evolution as part of Tradewinds.

"It's pretty sweet that we are getting trained by the FBI," said Medley. "They travel all around the world to teach this training, and I'm glad to be a part of it."

Marine Cpl. Jason Hettmansperger, a military policeman from Co. A was one of the two Marines selected to train in the FBI led course. Due to limited space and student to instructor ratio, just a handful of Marines were chosen during the first week's cycle of Tradewinds to participate in the FBI-instructed class.

Training with partner nations had its pitfalls, Hettsmansperger explained; however, when he trains with other countries he is learning the cultures of his fellow students as well as the curriculum.

"In the states, we have our own rules of engagements and laws that aren't the same as the other countries," said Hettmansperger, who is deploying alongside Medley with 40 other MP's with Co. A late this summer. "We bring different cultures, backgrounds and lifestyles, but we all come together when we train with each other."

Marine Cpl. Jason Hettmansperger, a military policeman from Military Police Co. A, Lexington, Ky, awaits impact as a plastic simulation round projectile is just inches from striking his torso.

Photo By Lance Cpl. Lucas Vega

Marine Cpl. James Medley, a military policeman, Military Police Co. A from Lexington, Ky., points his weapon at his target, a Jamaican soldier, who gives the sign for surrender during action/re-action drills.

Photo By Lance Cpl. Lucas Vega

Imagine a gas station

16,000 ft. above the g

moving more than 3

Marine Corps Reserve KC-130 conduct refueling missions in Morocco

AFRICAN LION 2010

Story and Photo By
Maj. Paul Greenberg
Marine Forces Reserve

KENITRA, Morocco — Marines and sailors from Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 234, a Marine Forces Reserve unit based in Fort Worth, Texas, participated in a two-week reserve summer deployment with the primary mission of conducting aerial refueling flights in support of the Royal Moroccan Air Force.

The squadron has flew more than 10 sorties refueling Moroccan F-5 jet fighters at high altitudes.

"I was impressed with them," said Capt. David Grosso, a KC-130 pilot with the squadron after his first refueling mission with the Moroccans May 31. "They're really proficient in aerial refueling. You could tell when they had an experienced pilot or when they had a new guy in the seat, just like with (U.S.) Marine Corps pilots."

In aerial refueling, the KC-130s extend hoses, which are housed in large pods under the plane's wings. At the end of the hoses are paradrogue assemblies, which are about the size of 50-gallon drums and are commonly called "baskets."

The jets have refueling probes on their front of the aircraft. The jet pilots line their probes up with the KC-130 baskets. The jet slightly increases its velocity to move its probe into the paradrogue. This is done at about 16,000 feet.

Metal spokes on the paradrogue assembly, which the Marines refer to as "turkey feathers" because of their shape and configuration, guide the probe into the refueling coupling. A cloth parachute on the basket catches the wind and opens up the turkey feathers wide, giving the jets a clear target.

The KC-130 flight engineer, who sits up in the cockpit with the pilots, is in charge of extending the in-flight refueling hoses. The flight engineer monitors the aircraft systems and regulates both the fuel usage and fuel transfer simultaneously.

To conceptualize what the refueling experience is like for a jet pilot, imagine having a long, steel arm rising out of the hood of your car, just in front of the right-hand side of your windshield. You have to speed up slightly to insert this steel arm into a small parachute dangling from the back of a tractor trailer going more than three hundred miles an hour on a bad road with an excessive cross-wind blowing.

A successful refueling mission therefore requires extensive skill and experience on the part of all involved, particularly the jet pilot.

"It went smooth. Those guys are good to go," said Gunnery Sgt. Richard Warren, one of the squadron's flight engineers, who has been in Marine

A KC-130 T-model aircraft from Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 234, releases its refueling hoses and paradrogue baskets during an aerial refueling training mission with Moroccan F-5 jets.

ground,

00 mph

Corps aviation for about 16 years.

"They follow all the same procedures in NATO publications," explained Warren. "The hardest part is the link up. Everyone has to be at the right altitude. Putting a bunch of airplanes together in the same air space is inherently dangerous, regardless of what country they're from."

The American KC-130 flight crew communicated simultaneously with the Moroccan air traffic control center in Rabat or Casablanca on one radio. With a second radio, they talked to the Moroccan F-5 pilots whose aircraft they were refueling.

Although the native languages in Morocco are Arabic and French, all Moroccan military pilots, air traffic controllers and flight operations personnel are proficient in English, the international language of aviation.

"Once we get in the air, the procedures are all the same," said Cpl. Brice Kippes, a VMGR-234 flight mechanic from Iliff, Colo.

Kippes' job during refueling missions was to look out the windows of the paratrooper doors on each side of the plane to ensure the successful link-up between the refueling pods and jets' probes. He was in communication with the flight crew in the cockpit via intercom, so he could let them know if there were any problems.

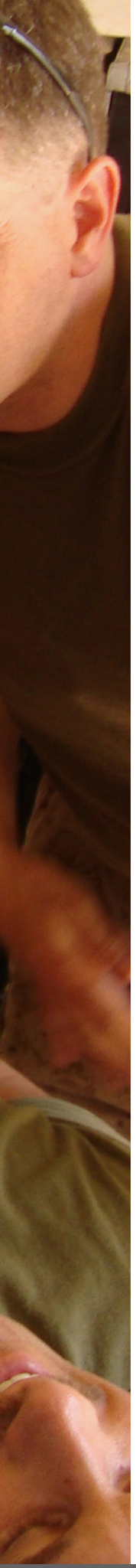
"Everything in the air is very strict and standardized," said Kippes, who trained with the Moroccan Air Force during last summer's African Lion, as well. "They use the same (Naval Air Training and Operating Procedures Standardization Manual) procedures that we do. They know what's going on pretty well."

The Moroccan Air Force also has KC-130 aircraft, which they routinely use to refuel their jets. The Moroccan "H" models are very similar to the Marine Corps Reserve's "T" models, which makes training all that much easier, according to Staff Sgt. Stephen Rubel, a flight engineer with VMGR-234.

This aerial refueling was just one element of African Lion 2010, a theater security cooperation exercise between the United States and Morocco involving more than 1,000 U.S. troops, mostly reservists.

For the past seven years, African Lion has been conducted annually to further develop joint and combined capabilities between the two countries, who have been allies since Morocco became the first foreign country to recognize the United States' independence in 1778.□

House Call Morocco



Story and Photos By Maj. Paul Greenberg

Marine Forces Reserve

CAP DRAA TRAINING AREA, Morocco- U.S. Marine Corps and Navy reservists from 4th Medical Battalion, 4th Marine Logistics Group came here in late May to set up a Forward Resuscitative Surgical Suite trauma center as part of exercise African Lion.

This new life-saving capability, which was first employed in its current form in 2003, provides trauma and surgical care to Marines and sailors in an expeditionary environment, both in training and combat.

The battalion is headquartered in San Diego, Calif., but has small units located throughout the United States. The 23 Marines and sailors here for the exercise hail from detachments in 14 states.

Lt. Cdr. Hank Deters, a reservist with a detachment from Company A in Pittsburgh, Pa., was the officer in charge of the FRSS team here.

"Level one care is corpsman care on the battlefield," explained Deters. "Level two trauma care is what we do, the surgical part of it, usually in two tents with a surgical bed, a refrigerator for the blood, a ventilator with an anesthesiologist and other specialized equipment. Level three is a MASH-type unit, or a combat support hospital, which has more advanced equipment like intensive care units, operating rooms and operating beds. It's in a hardened structure. Level four care is a modern hospital outside a combat zone where they have post-surgical care."

From the time they arrive at a forward operating base or combat outpost, a FRSS can typically set up their tents and equipment and be ready to receive patients within one hour, according to Deters.

This is Deters' second time participating in African Lion. In 2006, he flew on a Moroccan helicopter with a Marine injured by a flare during training from Cap Draa to the Tan Tan airfield nearby for evacuation by Lear jet to the U.S. Army hospital in Landstuhl, Germany.

A native of Gardner, Kan., Deters is the captain of a paramedic unit in Kansas City area in his civilian life.

Prior to becoming an officer in the Navy Reserve about ten years ago, Deters was an enlisted corpsman with the 24th Marine Regiment in Kansas City for 15 years, achieving the rank of petty officer 1st class and deploying with the Marines in support of Operation Desert Storm in 1991.

Deters emphasized that his 25 years as a reservist on the Navy-Marine Corps team helped to shape him both as an individual and as a medical professional.

Petty Officer 2nd Class Kenneth Justice was a team leader for the first medical team on the FRSS. The first medical team receives the patients in the "pre-op" tent and prepares them for surgery. His team does triage, stabilizes airways and controls major bleeding with tourniquets and pressure bandages.

After surgery, the patients return to the first medical team's tent for post-operation care.

"We see patients when they come out of surgery and prep them for medevac," said Justice. "We 'package' the patients by securing all medical devices such as (intravenous) bags and oxygen tanks. We wrap them like a tamale in a flight blanket and get them ready to put on the helicopter or tactical ambulance."

A hospital corpsman and advanced laboratory technician with a total of 16 years active and reserve time in the Navy, Justice attends weekend reserve drills with Company K, 3rd Battalion, 23rd Marine Regiment in Memphis, Tenn.

"It's been an incredible experience here in Morocco," said Justice. "We get to take the skills we learn in theory and put them into practical application. Here we actually get to live and work in real combat-like conditions. We're in an encampment overseas, sleeping in tents in an environment like Iraq or Afghanistan, eating MREs, using field showers, sleeping on the ground, and working with rapid put up and rapid break down of the equipment. You can't get an experience like that back at the drill center, or from an on-line course."

In his civilian career, Justice is a field service engineer for a biomedical and diagnostics company. He typically drives more than a thousand miles a week to service equipment in the Mississippi Valley region. Sometimes his company sends parts from their headquarters in California and Florida to Justice's home in Memphis for him to service and repair.

But for one month each summer, he puts his career aside, says good-bye to his family, and goes off to serve with Marine Corps Reserve units for their annual training exercises.

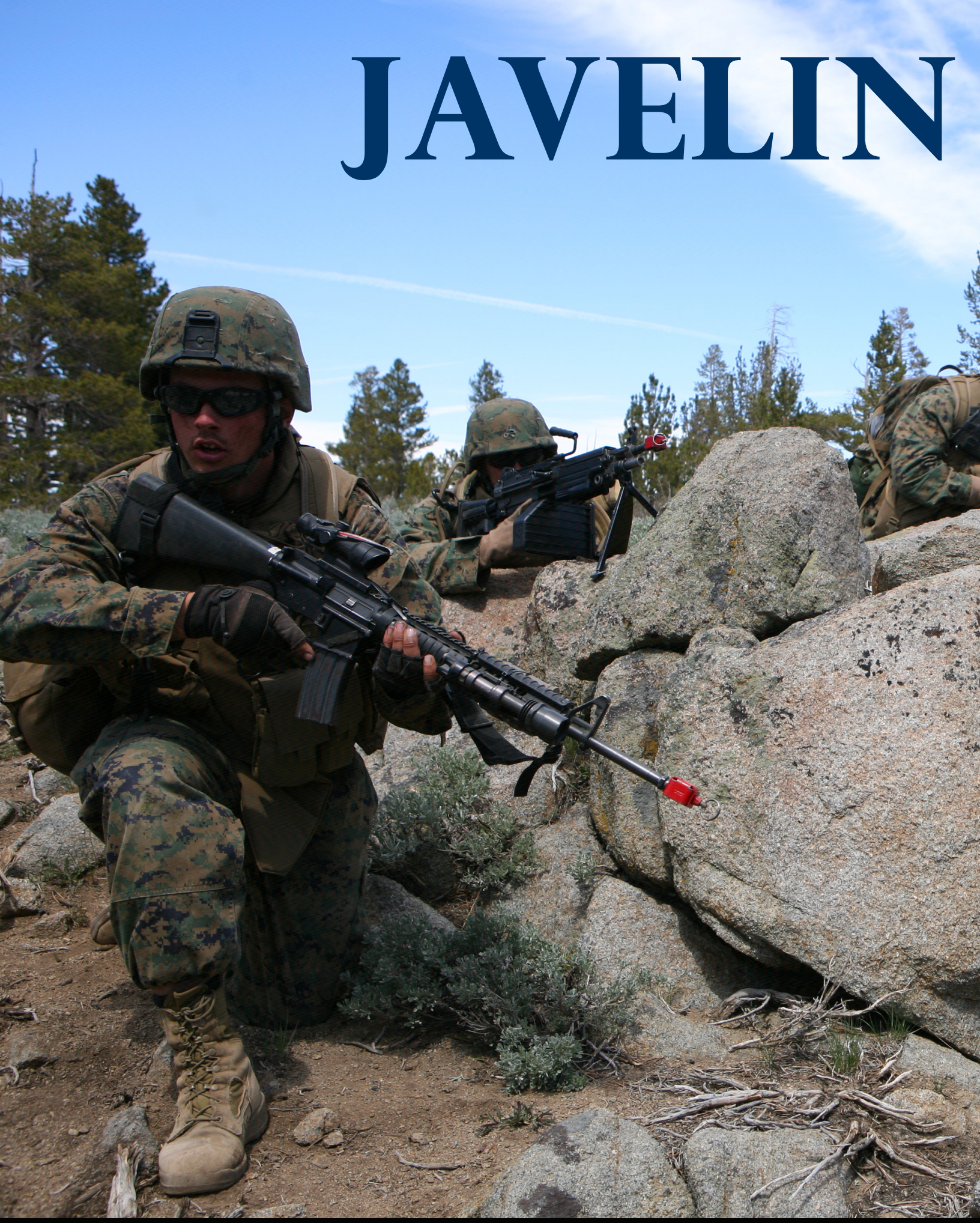
"I do it for the sailors and Marines," said Justice, who earned his Fleet Marine Force Warfare Qualification in 2007. "My senior officers and my junior corpsmen are professionals who put their lives on hold and come out here and do outstanding jobs," said Justice. "These are good people, dedicated people, and they are definitely worth their weight in gold."

The FRSS had the chance to perform an actual surgery on a Marine who had an abscess on his sacrum here June 4. The surgeons made an incision and drained the abscess in their surgical tent. After several days of recovery, the reservist returned to full duty here and was able to continue training with his unit.

Some members of the FRSS are scheduled to be back here next year for African Lion 2011. Some will participate in different theater security cooperation operations in Africa, Asia or South America instead.

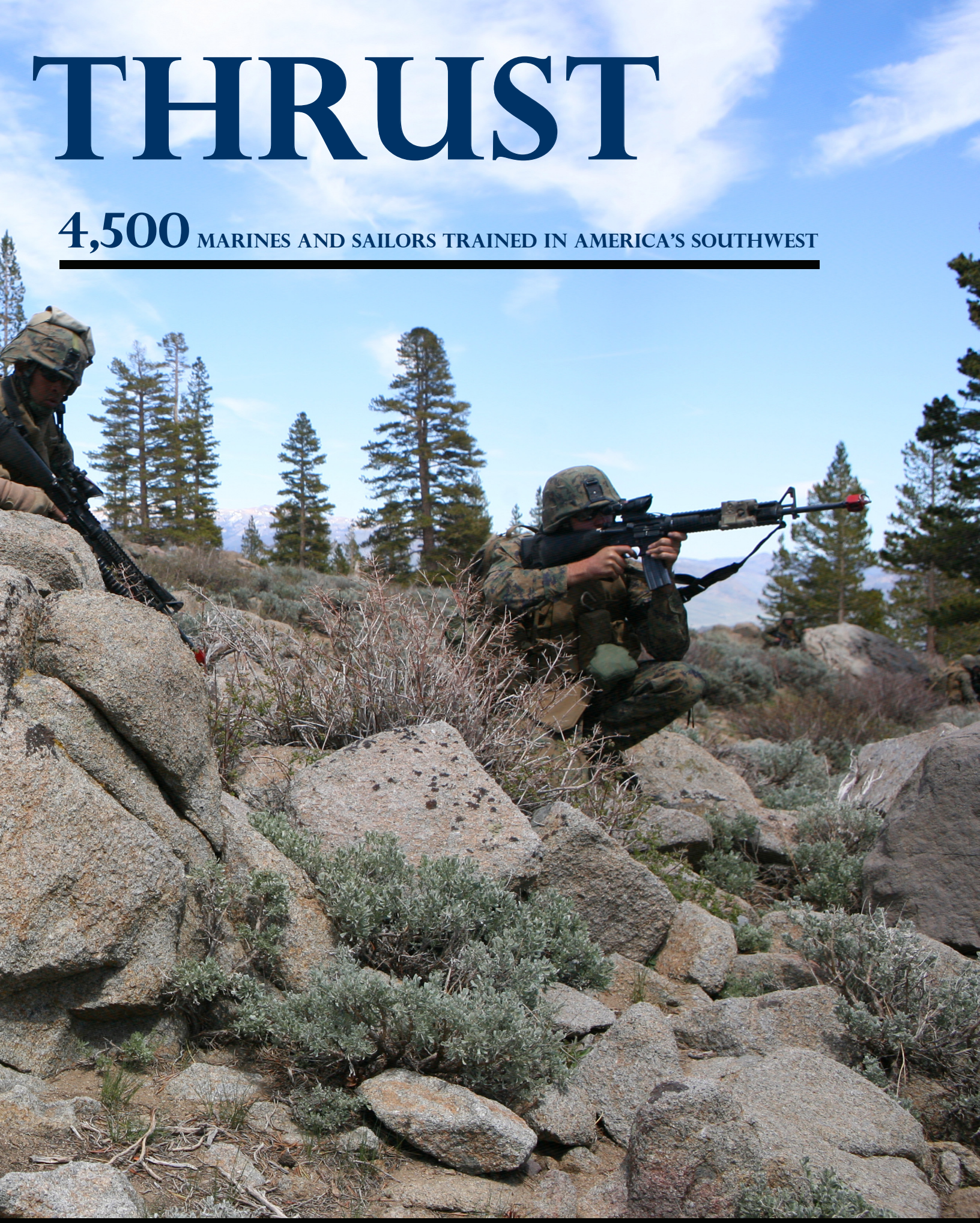
Regardless of where they go, the Marines and sailors of the FRSS can have pride in knowing that they are members of an elite team of medical professionals who bring a unique life-saving capability to the Armed Forces of the United States and their allies in expeditionary environments throughout the world.☐

JAVELIN



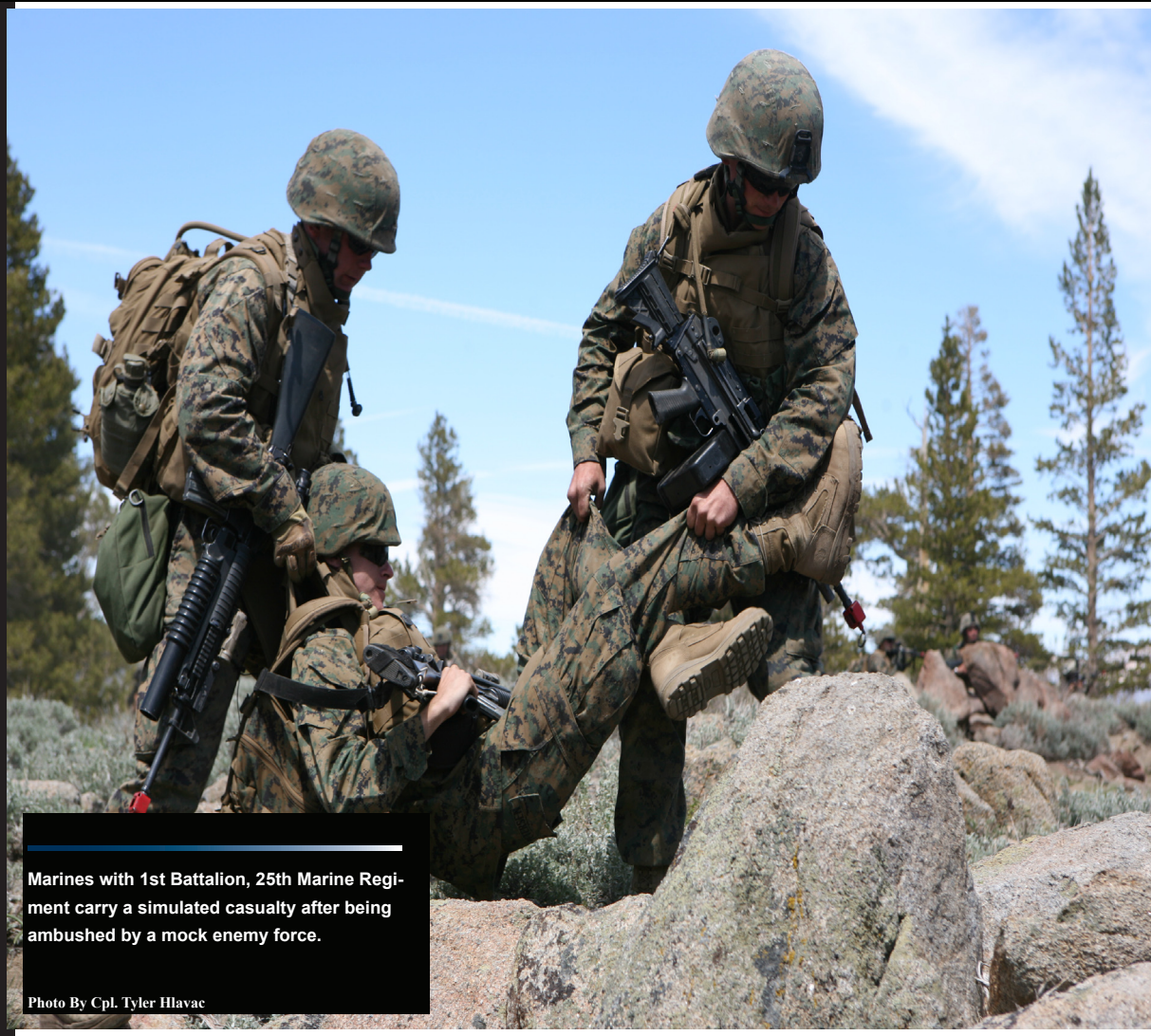
THRUST

4,500 MARINES AND SAILORS TRAINED IN AMERICA'S SOUTHWEST



PATROLING:

- 3 infantry battalions trained at the Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training center in Bridgeport, Calif.
- Elevations of the terrain reached 11,000 feet.
- The longest patrol lasted 8 hours and covered more then 7.5 miles.
- Marine practiced IED identification techniques, mounted patrols and engaged in mock ambushes while on patrol.



Marines with 1st Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment carry a simulated casualty after being ambushed by a mock enemy force.

Photo By Cpl. Tyler Hlavac

Pfc. John Ogden, a rifleman with 1st Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment, provides security for the rest of the Marines in his convoy as they scramble to recover after a mock improvised explosive device.

Photo By Cpl. Tyler Hlavac

"This is the perfect place to train for Afghanistan as the terrain is so similar."

-2nd Lt. Jake Jackson, 1st Battalion 25th Marine Regiment

AIR SUPPORT:

- Col. Robert F. Leary commanded the air element consisting of 1,200 marines.
- The air element Marines from Marine Aircraft Group 49 and Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 764.
- The air element operated 244 flights to support Javelin Thrust.
- The air element transported 2,193 Marines back and forth between the different sites of Javelin Thrust.
- The air element moved over 230,00 pounds of cargo during Javelin Thrust.

A CH-53E Helicopter with Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 772, 4th Marine Aircraft Wing kicks up sand and dust as it prepares to land and begin transporting Marines. HMH 772 is based out of Willow Grove, Penn.

Photo By Cpl. Tyler Hlavac

A Crew Chief aboard a CH-53E prepares to land a helicopter full of Marines in support of Exercise Javelin Thrust 2010.

Photo By Lance Cpl. David Waite

BREACHING:

Text and Photos By Lance Cpl. Nana Dannsaappiah

HAWTHORE ARMY WEAPONS DEPOT, Nev. - On the outer edge of a simulated combat town, engineers from Combat Engineer Platoon, Marine Wing Support Squadron 473, constructed a seven-foot wall with two doors and a window to be breached using precision demolition techniques.

Demolitions are designed to breach specific target using the least amount of explosives necessary to get the job done, explained Gunnery Sgt. Johnathan Balbuena, engineer operations chief.

"It's part of our job to gain entry and clear rooms. That can mean getting the bad guys or saving the people inside the room," said Balbuena.

Two four-man teams each took turns breaching the doors and windows. Teams consist of a breacher, assistant breacher, mechanical breacher and a fire team leader. Marines used doughnut charges to blow the door knobs off, a water charges to blow a doors out of frames and a window charges to blow the glass out of windows.

The fire teams practiced breaching with different explosives serveral times. Each time the teams tightly stacked themselves behind a kevlar blanket to shield themselves from the impact of the blast. By the end of the day, the Marines executed breaches in less time and with less guidance from the instructor.

"It's good practice because we gain muscle memory," said 1st Lt. Carlos Munoz, a Fresno, Calif., native. "My confidence grew exponentially, just handling the different devices. It's not going to explode just because you breathe on it."

"Building confidence takes a lot of rehearsals, a lot of working with the team, getting good instruction and then practical application," said Balbuena."Repetativeness is what's going to build confidence. Confidence is half the battle." ☐

Marines from Combat Engineer Platoon, MWSS 473 prepared demolitions used in precsion demolition techniques.

Marines from Combat Engineer Platoon, Marine Wing Support Squadron 473 blow a hole in a fence at Hawthorne Army Weapons Depot, Nev. The Marines used a kevlar blanket to shield themselves from fragmentation and to reduce the impact of the blast.

COMBAT SERVICE SUPPORT:

Photos By Cpl. Tyler Hlavac

Dental staff with 4th Marine Logistics Group work to fill a patient's tooth during exercise Javelin Thrust 2010.

Approximately 15 cooks from 4th Marine Division, 4th Marine Aircraft Wing and 4th Marine Logistics Group provided serveral meals a day to Marines and sailors in the field. Anywhere between 300 and 500 were fed each meal.

"The Marines received great training and accomplished all of their objectives. I talked to the grunts, the cooks, the guys in the fuel pit . . . everyone got something out of it."

-Brig. Gen. James A. Lariviere, commanding general, 4th Marine Division

Fake bloo

Real T

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. —

Two Marines are patrolling streets side by side in Helmand Province, Afghanistan. Insurgents open fire on them, and the Marines take cover behind a brick wall. Then one of the Marines realizes his buddy is lying on the ground after being shot, leaving the Marine with the choice of what to do next.

This was the approach that Carlos R., a Special Operations Training Services instructor, used in training Marines of 1st platoon, Company L, 3rd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment on combat trauma situations May 24 at the Area 25 Combat Town, here, in preparation for the unit's upcoming deployment to Afghanistan later this year. Carlos, a former corpsman with a Masters degree in medicine, has ten years in the Marine Reconnaissance and Army Special Forces fields.

"The most common mistake during combat trauma is failure to act quickly," said Carlos. "Violence of action wins battles, but that violence of action can also save lives."

Carlos told the Marines he would have first rushed behind the cover of a brick wall and start shooting back.

"The best form of medicine is rounds down range," said Carlos as he shouted the importance of fire superiority.

He strictly advised Marines to keep shooting until the enemy is down and there is absolutely no danger, citing that Marines should never underestimate the power of a single rifleman and their rifle.

If a Marine lowers his weapon in that situation, he has given up a strong point and allowed the enemy to fire and/or maneuver, Carlos explained.

Marines are trained on how to treat casualties in combat, but in that training, communication is not stressed enough, he said.

"Ninety percent of the medical healing can be performed behind cover," said Carlos.

A Marine can find out if the casualty is

d, Training

Story and photo by
Lance Cpl. Nana DannsaAppiah
Marine Forces Reserve

alert, the location of his injury, the location of enemy fire and more information to assist him in making a life-and-death situation just by talking to the injured Marine, said Carlos. A Marine can even determine how much time he has to save the casualty, or direct him to safety by evaluating the responses he gets.

Carlos also stressed that having a plan and a backup plan is crucial to successful combat medical treatment.

He told the story of a Marine who couldn't use a tourniquet after realizing that his left arm was blown off. The Marine then grabbed a triangular bandage around his neck to stop the bleeding on his left arm.

"He is taking what we've already learned and breaking it down and giving us different options," said Cpl. Mark Edwards, a fire team leader with 1st Plt.

After the Marines received instructions on how to react to fire, they put it to the test in practical application drills. Squads of Marines took turns patrolling through the urban terrain course.

While taking fire from mock insurgents, the Marines had to advance through the course to provide medical treatment to a stranded casualty. Under enemy gunfire and sustained casualties, team leaders had to remain calm while making sure that they were communicating with other Marines on what actions to take.

They screamed enemy positions and movements to each other and advanced to a stranded casualty by applying fire and maneuver tactics that they learned.

The objective of the exercise was for Marines to react quickly, but also not to lose focus on the mission if something unexpected happened, such as a casualty, said Carlos.

"It is very important for them not to get tunnel vision while operating," he said.□

CBIRF hones skills in NYC

Story By Cpl. Michael Laycock
Marine Forces Reserve

"Knowing what I know of the Marine Corps, they worked as fast and as well as I expected them to. I had high hopes that they would come out and get it done quickly"

-Lt. Ian Swords, New York Fire Department

Photo by Cpl. Michael Laycock

NEW YORK - Marines joined the New York Fire Department for a joint terrorist attack response training exercise April 19-22, at the Randall's Island Fire Academy.

The Chemical Biological Incident Response Force (CBIRF), based 30 miles outside Washington, D.C., is an emergency force that responds to any chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear or high-yield explosive incident which cannot be handled by local, state or other federal agencies. During training, Marines would arrive on Randall's Island before sunrise and divide into three groups, each completing a different section of training. The training included finding and rescuing victims in a collapsed structure, to rappelling down buildings and extracting victims out of mangled vehicles. Most of the Marines had experience rappelling, but few had ever used hydraulic cutters to rip open a car or drill through a six-inch layer of concrete to find a casualty.

"I love cutting up cars," said Staff Sgt. Kelly Van Sickle, who works in the Headquarters Battalion of CBIRF, after participating in the training. "I came from a background of firefighting before I got here. A lot of things that have been invented as far as rescue came from here. These guys know what they are doing."

Photo by Sgt. Randall Clinton

Photo by Sgt. Randall Clinton

On the last day of training, the Marines and firefighters participated in a joint exercise putting their combined training to the test.

The scenario was planned during the week by the lead instructor at the CBIRF Operator's Course and by the instructors from the fire department, who witheld the details from the Marines until the very last moment.

"That's part of the training," said Staff Sgt. Timothy Easterling, a chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and high-yield explosive tech with CBIRF, explaining the need for the surprise scenario. "If something like this were to happen, we wouldn't know what we were getting into until we got there."

When the event started, the firefighters were the first ones on the scene. They cleaned up a simulated bus bombing and treated the casualties that were strewn across the area. While still guiding the last of the victims, the firefighter then received word of a simulated chemical attack at a different location. The fire chief, realizing the need for assistance, called in the Marines.

Immediately, the command unit rushed in and received the situation brief from the fire chief. The decontamination, extraction and medical vehicles arrived shortly after the command unit and quickly began setup. Each of the teams were ready to begin work within moments of arrival.

During setup, the reconnaissance team, in their full chemical protective suits, headed towards the subway simulator to observe the situation and start the rescue effort. The extraction team rushed into the building next, carrying firefighters who were lying throughout the subway acting as to be wounded civilians, in order to save as many casualties as they could. The team used hunting sleds to drag the injured and then decontaminated the victims with water hoses. Extractors carried the casualties to the decontamination tent where the decontamination team scrubbed them down to remove all remaining chemical residues.

The casualties were checked with a chemical detector after leaving the decontamination tent. Corpsmen completed final step in the process: stabilizing the victims before sending them off to hospitals for further medical attention.

The Marines completed the drill in two hours, one hour less than expected. They transported more than 60 casualties from the subway and other locations through decontamination, to medical facilities.

"They got up and running really quick," said Lt. Ian Swords with the FDNY. "Knowing what I know of the Marine Corps, they worked as fast and as well as I expected them to. I had high hopes that they would come out and get it done quickly."

Sgt. Nathan Stark, a Union, Mo., native, and Lance Cpl. Andrew Mayer, a St. Louis native, both with Headquarters and Service Company, 3rd Battalion, 24th Marine Regiment, lend some strength by holding up a wall frame for Gerry Parron, the construction superintendent for Habitat for Humanity, Greater Boston, while reconstructing the ground floor for a house on Ashton Street in South Boston May 5, 2010.

Photo by Lance Cpl. Benjamin Harris.

Marines [working] Party -In- Boston

Story and photos By
Sgt. Michael Cifuentes
Marine Corps News

Lance Cpl. James Reese and Lance Cpl. Andrew Mayer, both St. Louis natives serving with Headquarters and Support Company, 3rd Battalion, 24th Marine Regiment, use some might while pulling out tree and bush roots from the yard of a house on Ashton Street in South Boston May 5, 2010.

Photo By Sgt. Michael Cifuentes

BOSTON — If there's one thing Marines are no stranger of, it's a working party.

Marines with Headquarters and Service Company, 3rd Battalion, 24th Marine Regiment, were called upon once again for a working party, but these young men said this mission was much more rewarding than most.

"First to fight – first for working parties," said Cpl. Timothy Serback, a St. Louis native serving with H and S Company, 3rd Bn., 24th Marines.

The group of 10 enlisted reserve Marines volunteered a day of service and labor beautifying a section on Ashton Street in the Dorchester neighborhood of Boston.

Their mission: assist the Habitat for Humanity Greater Boston, a Massachusetts charitable nonprofit organization dedicated to building low-cost homes by forming partnerships with low-income families in need of decent and affordable housing.

Sgt. Jonathan Askins, a St. Louis native with H and S Co., 3rd Bn., 24th Marines, led his squad-size group of Marines in their mission.

"We were offered to help Habitat for Humanity today, but I personally felt privileged to come and work for them for a day," Askins said. "It's an honor to come out to Boston and be able to give back to the city that received us so well. It makes for a great experience."

There were various jobs to be done, which all started at a house on the corner of Ashton Street and Arbutus Street. The volunteers arrived early that morning and were quickly put to work – pulling out dead tree stumps, shrubs and weeds, picking up trash from out the street and sidewalk, and helping renovate and construct the interior of a house by nailing down floorboards and wall frames.

"They made a lot of progress today, which will have a big impact on the community when they see this area nice, neat and clean," said Gerry Patton, construction superintendent, Habitat for Humanity Greater Boston.

Although the Marines spent one day on this individual project, Patton said his mission in this section of the neighborhood will continue until he and volunteers have constructed nice, clean houses for families to move into for an affordable price. Families are selected based on their level of need, willingness to work, acceptance of responsibilities and ability to repay a mortgage.

"I think this is great for this city and great for the Marines who worked here today," said Patton. "They should all know that one day people are going to be living in a nice home, in a nice section of the neighborhood because of their hard work today."

Stark said it was beneficial to call upon reserve Marines to partake in refurbishing house – a lot of the Marines used their skill sets that they use every day in the civilian world, when not activated by the Marine Corps.

"We're really good when it comes down to it. When it's time to work, it's time to work. And when it's time to play, it's time to play," said Stark. "We've been doing both of those in Boston, so we appreciate the job we're doing here, and we realize its importance as well."

According to local residents of the neighborhood, to include Sam Jones, a mail deliveryman with United States Postal Service, the neighborhood has seen worse days. In the recent past, crime and violence has struck in just about every part of the neighborhood.

"It's a little rough around the neighborhood and

Sgt. Jonathon Askens, a St. Louis native serving with Headquarters and Service Company, 3rd Battalion, 24th Marine Regiment, hammers a nail into the floor while constructing a house in Boston May 5, 2010.

Photo By Lance Cpl. Benjamin Harris

its nice to see the outside world care," said Jones. "Walking by I can already see that this part of the block is better looking than it was yesterday. Someone will really appreciate that when they move in."

The Marines who chipped in to this major effort all felt proud when the day was done.

"We gave new life to an old neighborhood," said Lance Cpl. James Reese, also from St. Louis, serving with H and S Co., 3rd Bn., 24th Marines.

Resident Bridgett Green agreed.

"This place looks beautiful now," the Bostonian said.

The Marines' service was in conjunction with Marine Week Boston, where Marine units from all over the country joined forces in Boston to volunteer with community groups, host physical fitness challenges and sports clinics in city parks, and showcasing state-of-the-art Marine vehicles, aircraft and equipment.

Leaving The Big Easy

Story and Photos by
Cpl. Tyler J. Hlavac

MARINE FORCES RESERVE, New Orleans — As a Marine, Gunnery Sgt. Duane King, currently the drum major for the Marine Forces Reserve Band, spent much of his career New Orleans. It's the city where he spent two-thirds of his almost 15 year career and experienced some of the biggest highs and lows of his life; from the joy of exploring the New Orleans's jazz culture to witnessing first hand the devastating effects of Hurricane Katrina. Now, he is scheduled to depart the city in June and take up a job in Washington, D.C, serving as the assistant drum major for the prestigious 'President's Own' band. But wherever he goes, two things will always drive him: his love of the Marine Corps, and maybe, even more importantly, his love of music.

Music On The Mind

King's musical career first began in Jacksonville, Fla., when he picked up his first trumpet at the age of 11, following in the steps of his parents who were both musicians. After graduating high school, King wanted to continue playing music but had no desire to be a music teacher, which led him into looking at career with the military. With his musical background, joining a military band was an easy job choice. Which branch of service he wanted required more thought.

"I had all four recruiters from each service all lined up and I talked to them one after the other," said King. "The dedication I put into learning the trumpet and the courage to play in front thousands of people … the Marine Corps offered me those same qualities in becoming a Marine. I didn't get that from the other services."

Upon enlisting and finishing basic training, King was sent to the Navy's School of Music in Norfolk, Va., where he completed his initial military band training. King then received orders for the Marine Forces Reserve Band in New Orleans and reported in Oct. 1995.

> "One of the things we had to fall back on was music … anytime you put a horn in your face, those bad times fall away, you can express your emotions through music and after Katrina we had a lot to say."

Like most young Marines with music on their mind, King found himself looking forward to the jazzy, carnival-like culture of The Big Easy, a culture which King found himself experiencing his first night at his new command.

When King first arrived it was Friday night and he didn't have to check in until Monday.

Grabbing his trumpet and asking the first person he saw where the French Quarter was; King went there wide-eyed and unaware of what was going on; but he let his musical instincts take over.

"I saw some other musicians playing so I decided to put my case down and started playing from my book. I think I made like 40 dollars in tips that night."

The Blues

King left New Orleans in Oct. 2000 and headed to the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms. King spent 13 months there and then returned to the School of Music for the school's six month Ceremonial Conductor/Drum Major course.

After completing the course he received orders to Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island in June 2002. He stayed there until May 2005 before returning to MarForRes where he then assumed the billet of platoon sergeant for the band.

While serving as platoon sergeant, King experienced one of the greatest challenges in his professional and personal life when tragedy struck in late Aug. 2005. MarForRes personnel were ordered to evacuate days prior to the Hurricane Katrina's landfall, scattering Marines across Louisiana and other states such as Texas and Florida. King found himself in the position of trying to be a leader and worrying about the well-being of his 40 Marines, as well as trying to take care of his own family and personal and financial losses.

"Hurricane Katrina … living through that changed me as a person, definitely," said King, who lost many of his own possessions when his home flooded. "You realize how unimportant material things are and how important your friends, family … your Marine Corps family, how close they are to you."

Speaking Through Music

After the storm subsided, King and other Marines from the band returned to New Orleans to find their city a wreck. With buildings flooded, homes destroyed and many people still living in shelters, the band Marines resorted to the only measure they knew to lift not only their own spirits, but the spirits of those around them: music.

"One of the things we had to fall back on was music … anytime you put a horn in your face those bad times fall away, you can express your emotions through music and after Katrina we had a lot to say."

The band began to visit evacuees in the various shelters set up across Texas, including Forth Worth and Dallas, putting on free shows for those who had lost almost everything they had.

"The people there knew we were from New Orleans, that we had lost everything too. Afterwards, people (evacuees) would come up to us with tears in their eyes, thanking us, which was gratifying. I would rather have someone like that thank me than 10,000 people in an auditorium," said King.

Scarlet and Gold

Almost every Marine band member dreams about joining the President's own, going over to what King calls the "scarlet and gold side." This can cause some jealousy amongst Marines, which King himself was not immune to. Early on in his career he had a negative impression of the President's Own, an emotion not uncommon amongst junior band Marines.

"During my first ten years of the Marine Corps I knew they were phenomenal musicians, but I thought they were stuck up, as they don't go to boot camp."

King's opinion changed once he began interacting with the scarlet and gold Marines during their many visits to conduct classes for the MarForRes Band Marines.

"I started meeting some of them," said King. "I learned that the vast majority of them are very nice people and amazing musicians. They know everything we know except when it comes to combat."

This interaction later led to a serious opportunity for King during spring 2009 when he received an e-mail asking for senior Marine band members to audition for the spot of President's Own drum major, which would soon become vacant. With a "cautious level of optimism" King submitted an audition video showcasing his skills and that summer he received an invite to a live audition.

The audition took place Sept. 3-4 and placed King and several other Marines against each other in displays of drum majoring and conducting skills. King even found himself pitted against his long-time friend, Staff Sgt. Aaron Goldin. Goldin and King had been stationed together in both Parris Island and later New Orleans, with Goldin serving as King's assistant drum major.

After his own audition King thought he had a good shot at the job.

"I had just decided to go for it," he said. "I thought to myself, the worst that can happen is they won't take me."

Goldin was more vocal about King's performance.

"I was watching his drum major performance and I was like 'wow,'" said Goldin. "Nobody wanted it more than him; he was really sharp and smooth."

At the end of the auditions, the judges gathered and spent the next several hours evaluating the performances. After a few hours,

Photo By Lance Cpl. Natasha Combs

they told King he had the job. It was a milestone in King's life which would only later be surpassed by what would become his greatest musical performance.

Performance Of A Lifetime

For King and the rest of the MarForRes band, life was on the upswing. The city was recovering from Katrina, he had been selected for the President's Own and the band began to find a solid groove. The good times reached a peak when King, who was now serving as drum major, along with the rest of the band found themselves on hand for one of the greatest celebrations in New Orleans history; the first ever Super Bowl victory for the New Orleans' Saints.

During the wild party atmosphere of the city following the victory, the band conducted one of their most historic performances ever at the post-Super Bowl party that had an audience of more than 800,000 people. King considers the performance to be the greatest moment of his musical career.

"It was one of the most enjoyable performance's I have done, anywhere," said King. I don't know if I can think of another performance that matches the energy the crowd and the band had. I don't know if there is anything that could ever compare to that moment."

Leaving The Big Easy

Now, as King prepares to head to Washington, D.C., and become one of those "scarlet and gold guys," he has a variety of experiences and memories to reflect upon leaving New Orleans.

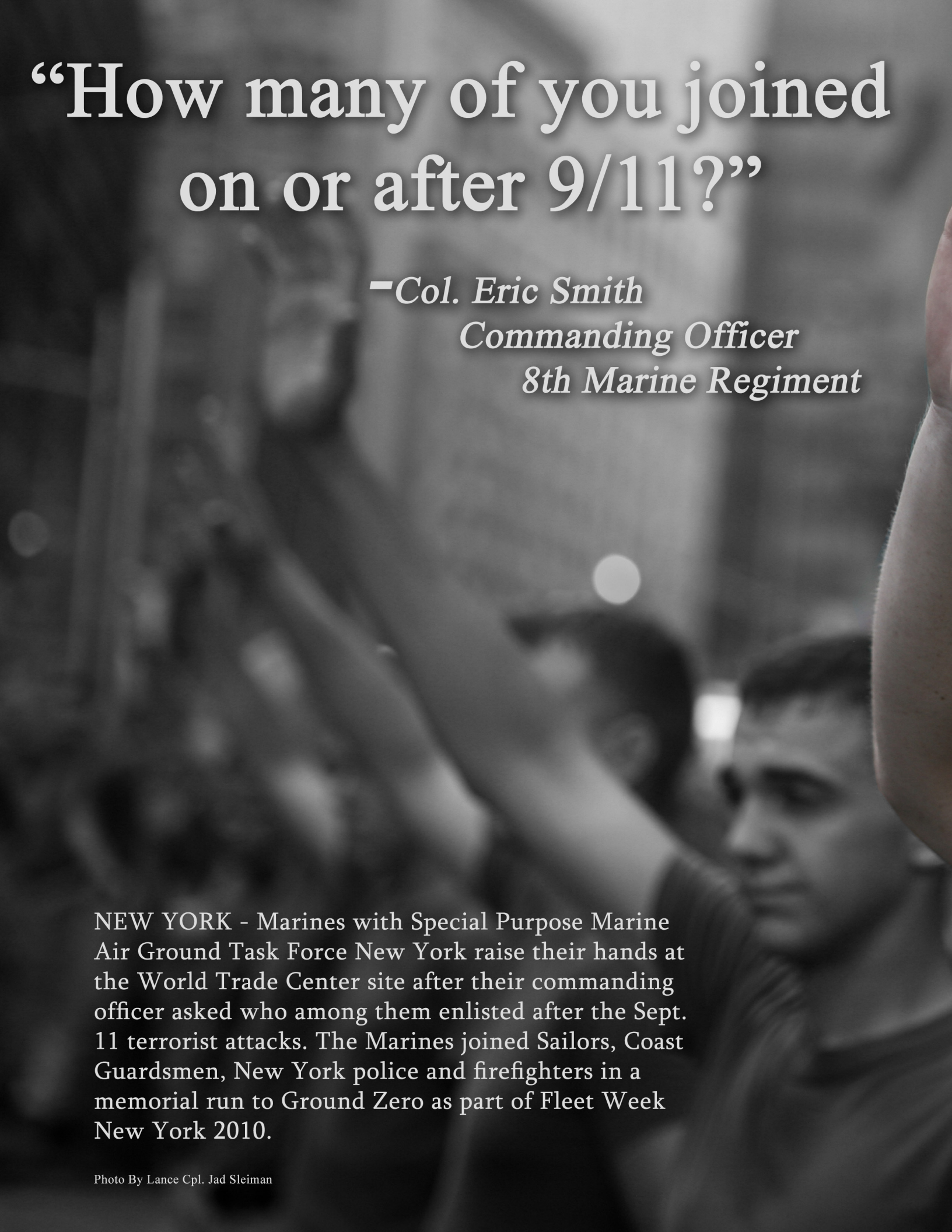
"I'm really looking forward to it (the new job)," said King. "I'm really going to miss New Orleans, the people, the culture, the band … everything here. But I'm looking forward to a new challenge up there and doing it as well as I can. It's slightly intimidating, but we wouldn't grow as people if we always went to the same job and never saw what more we could do."

Cpl. James Barry, a saxophone player with the band, said King leaving the unit will mean the loss of a great leader.

"He is someone you can go to and talk about your career, your life or music," Barry said. "He helped me out a lot early on in my career and is a constant example of a good leader. Everyone here is upset that he is leaving but I know he will get the most out of it."

Goldin said King's departure means more than just the loss of a colleague; it also means the loss of a friend.

"He is exactly what they want," Goldin said, in reference to the President's Own decision to bring King on board. "He has taught me how to march, how to be a drum major and he is a great trumpet player. He is my best friend here. I am happy for him, but I hate to see him go."□



"How many of you joined on or after 9/11?"

-Col. Eric Smith
Commanding Officer
8th Marine Regiment

NEW YORK - Marines with Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force New York raise their hands at the World Trade Center site after their commanding officer asked who among them enlisted after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. The Marines joined Sailors, Coast Guardsmen, New York police and firefighters in a memorial run to Ground Zero as part of Fleet Week New York 2010.

Photo By Lance Cpl. Jad Sleiman