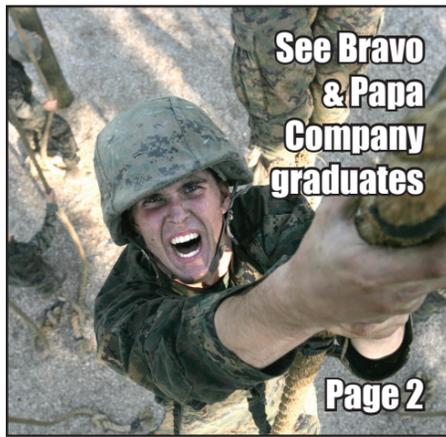


THE PARRIS ISLAND BOOT



See Bravo & Papa Company graduates

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Photo by Lance Cpl. F.J. Abundes

Staff Sgt. Christopher Bradley, with Platoon 1030, Bravo Company, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, stands at attention with his platoon during their initial drill evaluation at the All-Weather Training Facility on Feb. 27.



Photo by Lance Cpl. David Bessey

Rct. Frank Ortiz, 19, of Platoon 1025 Bravo Company, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, recites the Oath of Enlistment before receiving his Eagle, Globe and Anchor at Parris Island's Iwo Jima Memorial on April 14.

Lance Cpl. David Bessey
Staff Writer

Through thick, humid air, illuminated only by the stars above, the recruits of Bravo Company, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, marched home from the Crucible on April 12.

The 9-mile march is the final obstacle standing between the recruits and an Eagle, Globe and Anchor.

"This march is not about a transition from recruit to Marine," said 1st Sgt. Edward D. Parsons, the Bravo Com-

pany first sergeant, 38, from Shelby, N.C. "They are tired, hungry and their feet are blistered. This is about carrying the 'soldier's load.' This is about them completing the mission."

At each checkpoint, the recruits are given 10 minutes to remove their packs, drink water and rest.

The drill instructors have already noticed a change in their recruits.

Even though the recruits do not see it, they are already acting as the Marines they will be, said Sgt. David Brown, 29, a drill instructor for

Platoon 1029. The drill instructors have also changed as well. Now, they take a new role as mentors.

To get to this point in training, the drill instructors must give everything they have to transform civilians into Marines.

"It takes us to be on them constantly," said Brown from Arcadia, Fla. "We show 110 percent of ourselves to stress the core values all the time."

The drill instructors sang cadence after the

SEE TITLE PAGE 3

BRAVO COMPANY FINDS ITS WAY THROUGH DARKNESS

Lance Cpl. F.J. Abundes
Staff Writer

The recruits of Bravo Company, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, navigated through the night compass course March 27 in order to test their land navigation skills.

At Page Field, recruits are given a piece of paper with coordinates and must figure out a way to read them in the darkness and then find their way across the course with only a compass.

"You never know when you are going to be navigating at night," said Cpl. Stewart Richardson, the senior land navigation instructor, Weapons and Field Training Battalion. "A lot of times, when I was [deployed], most of our movements were at nighttime because that's when the enemy doesn't have night vision capabilities."

The night compass course involves the same fundamentals as the day land navigation course. However, recruits learn a different technique to use a compass at night due to low visibil-

ity, said Richardson, a native of Myrtle Beach, S.C.

"It's visually challenging," said Pfc. Alexander Zamorano, a recruit from Platoon 1024 and a 19-year-old from Miami. "You don't have a map or a protractor. You can only listen to the clicks on a compass."

A compass has 120 clicks, each equaling three degrees. Once a recruit reaches his designated point, he will change the clicks on the compass to get to his next desired azimuth. Azimuth is the direction one goes in terms of degrees.

The recruits also learn how to preset the compass so they can use the green luminous dots for degrees, instead of relying on the dial, Richardson said.

Recruits only use their compass and a paper to follow the azimuths and distances, Richardson continued. They take the paper, and they're taught how to slide it across the green luminous dots, so they can read the coordinates

SEE DARKNESS PAGE 4

NEWS BRIEF

Aerial Spraying to Control Sand Flea/Mosquito Population

In an effort to control sand flea and mosquito populations, Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island is scheduled to undergo aerial spray activities during the week of April 23-26. Spray activities will occur approximately two hours before sundown if weather permits.

The insecticides used present no threat to humans, plants or animals in the area, and are approved by the Environmental Protection Agency; however, beekeepers within a five-mile radius are urged to keep hives covered.

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BRAVO & PAPA COMPANY GRADUATES

Bravo Company Honor Graduates

Pfc. M. D. Clark, Roanoke, Va.
Platoon 1024, Clark was recruited by
Staff Sgt. Bryant and trained by Staff Sgt. Castillo

Pfc. R. C. Gilmore, Auburn, N.Y.
Platoon 1025, Gilmore was recruited by
Sgt. Guadalupe and trained by Gunnery Sgt. Aburto

Pfc. E. M. Otero, Tampa, Fla.
Platoon 1026, Otero was recruited by
Staff Sgt. Lopez and trained by Staff Sgt. Colon-Soto

Pfc. N. Lochowski, East Haddam, Conn.
Platoon 1028, Lochowski was recruited by
Sgt. Witherspoon and trained by Staff Sgt. Mejia

Pfc. M. K. Vergara, Smithtown, N.Y.
Platoon 1029, Vergara was recruited by
Staff Sgt. Rodriguez and trained by Sgt. Henderson

Pfc. M. O. Smith, Algonac, Mich.
Platoon 1030, Smith was recruited by
Sgt. Hulsey and trained by Staff Sgt. Lowther

Papa Company Honor Graduates

Pfc. S. A. Decker, Allenwood, N.J.
Platoon 4010, Decker was recruited by
Sgt. Bowman and trained by Staff Sgt. Bacolod

Pfc. H. A. Shimko, Frederick, Colo.
Platoon 4011, Shimko was recruited by
Sgt. Riddle and trained by Staff Sgt. Shepard

Platoon 1024

Pvt. H. Amayajimenez, Pfc. A. J. Alexander, Pvt. J. A. Barger, Pvt. J. E. Barnett, Pvt. S. L. Bashford, Pfc. D. B. Bledsoe, Pvt. M. T. Brown, Pvt. R. T. Caskey III, Pvt. J. J. Castrillon, Pfc. M. D. Clark, Pvt. R. J. Clark, Pfc. T. A. Deese, Pvt. J. G. Delgadoguzman, Pvt. T. B. Freeman, Pvt. I. D. Giermanski, Pfc. K. M. Goetz, Pfc. J. L. Graves, Pfc. L. E. Hoffman, Pvt. A. J. Kennedy, Pfc. M. E. Lewis III, Pvt. J. L. Lindley, Pvt. M. A. Livingstone, Pfc. J. A. Mauro, Pvt. M. T. Melton, Pvt. N. E. Meyer, Pfc. C. L. Moore, Pvt. K. T. Mosley, Pvt. I. T. Padgett, Pvt. D. J. Parker, Pvt. W. P. Raben, Pfc. J. B. Robertson, Pvt. J. S. Scott, Pvt. K. A. Shepperd, Pvt. B. M. Sholes, Pvt. B. L. Smith, Pvt. A. R. Thomas, Pfc. K. D. Wager, Pvt. D. M. Ware, Pfc. J. A. Weaver Jr., Pvt. J. C. Wilson, Pfc. A. C. Wolfe

Platoon 1025

Pvt. M. B. Barker, Pvt. N. B. Boseman, Pvt. G. Dias, Pvt. N. J. Dillard, Pvt. N. A. Dishler, Pvt. J. M. Edelbach, Pvt. D. G. Emery II, Pvt. P. D. Fent, Pfc. B. M. Forster, Pvt. R. C. Gates Jr., Pfc. R. C. Gilmore, Pfc. A. L. Gonzalez, Pvt. W. J. Harper III, Pvt. N. W. Harris, Pvt. S. A. Harvey, Pvt. C. D. Hefner, Pvt. K. S. Heilman, Pfc. H. A. Herrartecano, Pvt. P. S. Huot, Pfc. D. M. Jacobson, Pvt. E. R. Jordan, Pvt. W. L. Lemaster, Pfc. J. A. Leskovic, Pfc. J. D. Lopez, Pvt. I. M. Macwan, Pvt. G. L. Maxwell, Pfc. S. R. Newhouse, Pvt. G. T. Norton, Pvt. J. M. Odee, Pvt. C. N. Ogle, Pvt. F. J. Ortiz, Pfc. B. C. Parlett, Pvt. J. F. Perezjimenez, Pvt. D. A. Pomeroy Jr., Pvt. T. J. Prebel, Pvt. A. T. Ricks, Pvt. C. M. Smith, Pvt. J. A. Suttles, Pvt. M. R. Tantimonico, Pvt. G. A. Vaughn, Pvt. D. D. Woodruff, Pfc. C. C. Word

Platoon 1026

Pvt. F. Aguilar, Pfc. C. H. Alamed, Pvt. J. L. Benitez, Pfc. J. F. Berland, Pfc. M. D. Black, Pfc. D. C. Brown II, Pfc. A. P. Cano, Pfc. M. Castner, Pvt. S. A. Cherniatiev, Pvt. D. B. Dorley, Pvt. E. J. Echevarria, Pvt. T. A. Elms, Pfc. R. M. Faison, Pvt. K. T. Freels, Pvt. J. M. Gallegos, Pfc. J. A. Gentry, Pvt. C. Z. Higuera, Pvt. L. V. Jennings, Pvt. B. Kareem, Pvt. A. C. Larkins, Pvt. A. E. Logan, Pfc. A. D. Lopez, Pvt. J. Lucianocruz, Pvt. N. M. Marotta, Pfc. C. O. Medina, Pfc. M. A. Mikkelson, Pvt. I. D. Mills, Pfc. M. J. Nolan, Pvt. D. M. Oczkowski Jr., Pfc. E. M. Otero, Pvt. G. R. Outlaw, Pfc. A. A. Planzo, Pfc. D. N. Recinos, Pvt. J. A. Reese, Pvt. C. J. Rydin, Pvt. J. A. Santiago, Pvt. W. E. Seabolt Jr., Pvt. B. C. Smith, Pfc. N. A. Stadie, Pfc. K. N. Temen, Pvt. C. J. Vitols

Platoon 1028

Pfc. E. Augustedujon, Pvt. M. J. Bomhold, Pvt. T. J. Bonanni, Pvt. J. W. Bradley, Pvt. M. W. Corporan, Pfc. B. M. Dodman, Pfc. J. A. Downey, Pfc. J. J. Ferrier III, Pvt. K. T. Gaber, Pvt. J. G. Garciaalvarez, Pfc. S. C. Gardner, Pfc. K. M. Gartling, Pvt. S. M. Gawenda, Pvt. B. M. Hannah, Pfc. M. A. Hardy, Pfc. D. C. Herrera, Pvt. T. A. Hinson, Pvt. G. M. John, Pfc. J. D. Kolb, Pfc. J. W. Koren, Pvt. L. J. Kosikas, Pfc. C. D. Lee, Pfc. W. N. Levy, Pfc. N. Lochowski, Pvt. A. Maeda, Pfc. E. Maldonado, Pvt. W. A. Martinezmoreno, Pvt. C. L. McMillan, Pfc. R. P. Memory, Pfc. R. L. Morales, Pfc. J. W. Nickson, Pfc. M. B. Richardson, Pfc. R. Rivera, Pfc. E. X. Rosarioayala, Pvt. G. C. Ruoss, Pvt. R. A. Santiago, Pfc. G. J. Seals, Pvt. D. T. Smith, Pvt. M. L. Visco, Pvt. B. S. Warfield, Pvt. B. D. Whitfield Jr., Pfc. P. E. Wyatt, Pfc. A. E. Zamorano

Platoon 1029

Pfc. E. E. Alfonsoacosta, Pvt. L. E. Aroche, Pvt. R. Barajas Jr., Pvt. N. M. Bell, Pfc. N. S. Brasher, Pvt. S. M. Burke, Pvt. S. A. Cammisa, Pfc. J. M. Carroll, Pvt. S. Carter, Pvt. R. J. Conde, Pfc. M. Coronel Jr., Pvt. C. Crawford, Pvt. J. A. Dingus, Pvt. C. A. Dotson, Pvt. A. W. Field, Pvt. C. P. Geraci, Pfc. L. J. Germuska, Pfc. D. J. Gilkerson, Pvt. J. Gillespiequiles, Pfc. S. R. Hanrahan, Pvt. J. A. Head, Pfc. T. R. Herrera, Pvt. D. S. Hertweck, Pfc. T. R. Higginbotham, Pfc. M. J. Hill, Pvt. D. Jamatte, Pvt. E. S. Jones Jr., Pfc. N. X. Keefe, Pfc. K. C. Kent, Pvt. A. B. Kubach, Pvt. B. J. Laking, Pvt. J. Lyman, Pvt. D. J. Lynch, Pfc. K. M. Machuchicas, Pvt. C. S. Montrond, Pvt. S. J. Musgrave, Pvt. T. J. Prevost, Pvt. D. Rohrer, Pvt. W. Samuel Jr., Pvt. D. Sansovich, Pvt. C. Santiago, Pvt. J. Shaver, Pfc. J. Smith, Pfc. Z. Smith, Pvt. J. Starkey, Pfc. M. Vergara

Platoon 1030

Pvt. B. G. Aguirre, Pfc. S. J. Barlow Jr., Pfc. G. N. Bass Jr., Pvt. J. W. Bates, Pfc. W. R. Beardslee, Pvt. A. M. Bolis-vergari, Pvt. Z. T. Broderick, Pvt. B. R. Cameron, Pfc. D. L. Chapman, Pvt. S. P. Ciancarelli, Pvt. A. D. Cochran, Pfc. J. A. Deserve, Pvt. J. M. Eagle, Pvt. A. M. Ellis, Pfc. D. R. Golden, Pfc. A. P. Hamilton, Pvt. D. M. Hawkins, Pvt. D. S. Hawthorne, Pvt. J. M. Hebert, Pfc. B. S. Hoffmeister, Pfc. K. A. Holland, Pfc. V. M. Inclan, Pvt. R. B. Klein Jr., Pvt. A. J. Love, Pvt. D. J. Marujo III, Pfc. B. J. McCall, Pvt. B. J. Mcfadden, Pfc. B. M. McKenna, Pvt. N. P. Morgan, Pfc. S. L. Paige, Pfc. D. G. Parker, Pfc. J. W. Parris, Pvt. N. L. Ratajczak, Pfc. R. A. Rodriguez Jr., Pvt. R. N. Ross, Pfc. J. A. Sargent, Pfc. A. W. Shane, Pvt. S. Singh, Pfc. M. Smith, Pfc. A. M. Smoker, Pvt. K. J. Snyder, Pvt. A. R. Steifer, Pvt. T. A. Torres, Pvt. J. S. Vialpando, Pfc. Z. J. Vogt

Platoon 4010

Pvt. C. Andersen, Pvt. S. I. Baez, Pvt. N. L. Bini, Pfc. B. J. Birl, Pvt. A. N. Bloomer, Pfc. A. T. Burns, Pfc. M. E. Cahill, Pfc. M. A. Carbajal, Pfc. C. N. Clark, Pfc. K. J. Cok, Pvt. M. C. Covey, Pvt. C. L. Crawford, Pfc. S. A. Decker, Pfc. K. E. Emert, Pfc. H. M. Faulkner, Pvt. C. D. Fulwider, Pfc. J. J. Garcia, Pfc. C. M. Haller, Pvt. B. M. Herbst, Pvt. R. L. Herrick, Pvt. A. B. Hopkins, Pfc. A. M. Hughett, Pfc. R. A. Jones, Pvt. A. H. Joyce, Pfc. T. F. Kingsly, Pvt. C. D. Kun, Pfc. B. R. Lee, Pfc. C. V. Lee, Pvt. G. N. Lesage, Pfc. M. A. Lewis, Pfc. L. T. Lovejoy, Pfc. E. I. Lugo, Pvt. M. Mendez, Pvt. A. Morfa, Pfc. N. A. Napper, Pfc. J. K. Nichols, Pvt. C. Loran, Pfc. C. A. Ortiz, Pvt. S. R. Pasillas, Pvt. C. J. Patrick, Pfc. M. Pena, Pvt. A. N. Queenhuffman, Pvt. S. R. Rey, Pvt. V. N. Ricks, Pvt. S. S. Samuels, Pvt. S. L. Scarberry, Pvt. S. M. Shumacher, Pvt. A. L. Todd, Pfc. G. Trevino, Pfc. D. B. Vail, Pvt. R. A. Welch, Pvt. S. A. Williams, Pvt. A. N. Wynter

Platoon 4011

Pvt. C. L. Abrego, Pfc. A. F. Afuola, Pvt. T. L. Armstrong, Pfc. K. A. Bacho, Pvt. K. T. Bell, Pfc. S. L. Brooks, Pvt. S. M. Buantello, Pfc. E. L. Cannon, Pvt. S. Cardona, Pvt. M. A. Carter, Pfc. A. Chavez, Pvt. K. J. Chow, Pvt. G. Cota, Pfc. C. A. Cross, Pvt. K. M. Ecker, Pvt. A. A. Ellis, Pvt. I. M. Feasel, Pfc. E. A. Frazier, Pfc. S. R. Hickman, Pfc. J. N. Howard, Pfc. A. M. Hurt, Pfc. C. B. Johnson, Pfc. P. B. Lastres, Pvt. M. D. Lowe, Pfc. K. D. Markel, Pvt. J. Martinez, Pvt. N. J. Miller, Pvt. A. C. Morris, Pvt. J. A. Norris, Pvt. Q. S. Patrick, Pvt. E. M. Perry, Pvt. E. M. Potts, Pfc. V. L. Ragel, Pfc. N. D. Ramirez, Pvt. S. K. Rehder, Pvt. N. C. Renninger, Pfc. S. Rivera, Pfc. J. Rodriguezmartinez, Pvt. R. K. Sage, Pfc. A. K. Samra, Pvt. L. A. Sanchezdevore, Pvt. W. L. Scott, Pfc. C. V. Seng, Pvt. R. D. Shedd, Pfc. H. A. Shimko, Pvt. A. R. Soto, Pvt. A. J. Spallane, Pfc. D. O. Stearns, Pfc. L. C. Tiplin, Pfc. C. V. Torres, Pfc. K. M. Turner, Pfc. M. L. Vogt, Pvt. H. Warren, Pfc. K. A. Youngblood

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Photos by Lance Cpl. David Bessey

Rct. Christian Higuera, 19, of Platoon 1026, Bravo Company, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, receives his Marine Corps emblem at Parris Island's replica Marine Corps War Memorial on April 14.

TITLE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

recruits crossed Drill Instructor Bridge. Now on the final stretch, the recruits were nearing their destination.

They arrived at Parris Island's replica Marine Corps War Memorial as celebratory music played. The recruits quickly removed their packs, slung their rifles over their shoulders and arranged themselves around the statue.

The color guard raised

the flag on the memorial as the national anthem played. Some recruits could not hold back their tears as the big moment finally arrived.

Their drill instructors emerged from the rear of the platoons with a wooden plaque filled with Marine Corps emblems. They placed an Eagle, Globe and Anchor in each recruit's hand and congratulated the new Marines on the accomplishment.

"I feel good and relieved," said Pfc. Paul Wy-

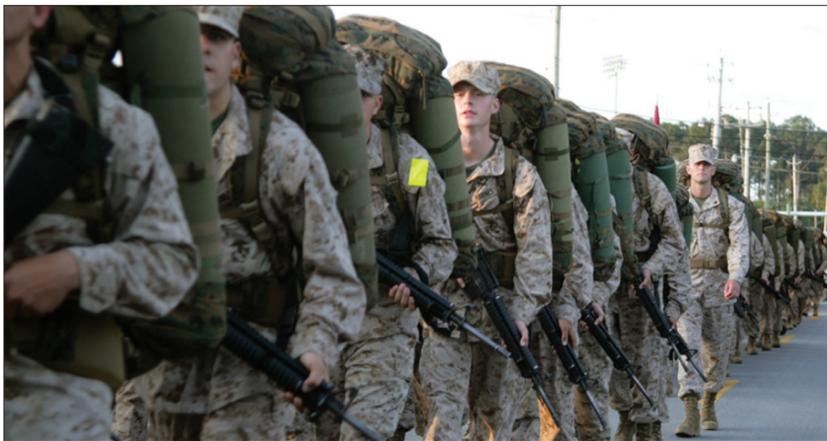
att, 19, of Platoon 1028, from Gettysburg, Pa. "I thought all this time I would get hurt, but now I feel more confident in myself than ever."

The day had only just begun for the new Marines of Bravo Company. Now they would get to enjoy a warrior's breakfast, and look back at what they had done over the past 12 weeks on Parris Island.

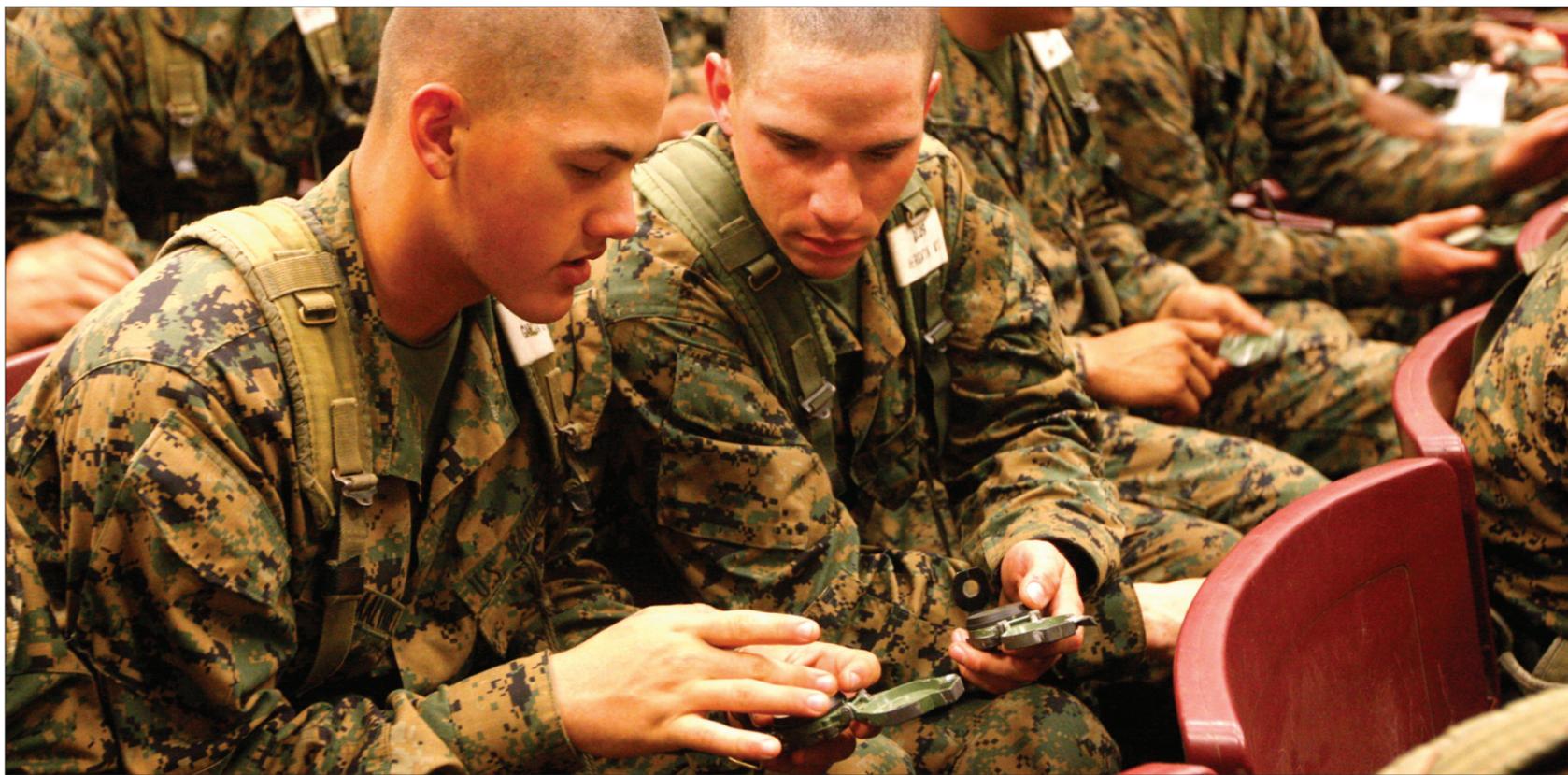
"It will be a time for them to sit down with each other as new Marines," Brown said.



A Marine clasps his Eagle, Globe and Anchor after receiving it at the Iwo Jima Memorial on April 14 after earning the title Marine.



Recruits from Bravo Company, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, march the final stretch from the Crucible to Parris Island's replica Marine Corps War Memorial to receive their Marine Corps emblem on April 14.



Photos by Lance Cpl. F.J. Abundes

Rct. Jose Garciaalvarez, an 18-year-old from Hershey, Pa., explains to Rct. Matthew Vergara, a 25-year-old from Long Island, N.Y., how to properly read a compass.



Sgt. Tavares Taylor, an instructor with Weapons and Field Training Battalion, explains the parts of a compass to a recruit March 27.

DARKNESS
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

on it.
“If you’re out in the field and it’s nighttime, you can’t use light, because the enemy might spot you,” Zamorano said. “You have to be able to use what you have, which is a compass and coordinates, to get where you have to be without being spotted.”
Richardson said recruits do better at night than during the day. “At nighttime, they have to trust the techniques I just taught them, because they can’t see,” he said. “They have no other way

to navigate.”
Zamorano said he and his team had to move slowly to be safe and avoid stepping on fallen branches and leaves as much as possible. “You have to check where you’re stepping at all times and stay quiet so the enemy won’t hear you,” he said.
The techniques recruits learn during the night compass course are just a few of the many skills taught in recruit training. With one more day of training under their belts, the recruits of Bravo Company were closer to finally earning the title Marine.





Photos by Lance Cpl. F.J. Abundes

Staff Sgt. Rayford Meyers, drill master for 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, inspects recruits from Bravo Company, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, during their initial drill evaluation at the All-Weather Training Facility on Feb. 27. Recruits are inspected by each battalion's drill master.



Recruits from Bravo Company perform the movement "Rifle Salute" while competing in their initial drill evaluation Feb. 27.

Lance Cpl. F.J. Abundes
Staff Writer

Recruits from Bravo Company, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, put their best foot forward during their initial drill evaluation Feb. 27 at the All-Weather Training Facility.

Drill teaches recruits discipline by having them respond to orders immediately, said Gunnery Sgt. Pedro Zuniga, the drill instructor who commanded the recruits of Platoon 1025. It is important because if they hesitate in a combat environment, they could put themselves or another Marine at risk.

Staff Sgt. Chris Verrette, 1st Recruit Training Battalion drill master,

said drill is all about discipline and bearing. The slightest movement in the formation is easy to spot. Each fidget is counted against the platoon's overall score.

"When I look at a unit whom I'm grading in drill, I can see how disciplined they are by how they stand, where they stand, if they're fidgeting, excessive movement – you can see a lot," Verrette said.

Many of the recruits felt anxious or nervous because this is the first event in which they are evaluated as an entire platoon.

Before the competition, Rct. Michael Pantimonico, a 19-year-old from Milford, Conn., said he was worried because of the pressure of everyone looking at his platoon and

expecting it to do great. Pantimonico added that knowing the platoon was representing his drill instructors also added pressure.

Although the competition was hard, Pantimonico said in the end he felt they performed well.

"We worked together as a team and showed our drill instructors that we can perform up to their expectations," he said.

Zuniga said although a couple of recruits messed up a few individual movements, his platoon did really well.

Initial drill sets the foundation for these recruits' discipline, which will reflect on their actions as Marines for the course of their careers and the rest of their lives.



Rct. Addison Hamilton, Platoon 1030, fixes his rifle sling as a part of the platoon's drill routine Feb. 27.

Marines continue infrastructure growth in Afghanistan



Photo by Sgt. Michele Watson

Gunnery Sgt. Joel Williams, heavy equipment chief, Heavy Equipment Platoon, Support Company, 9th Engineer Support Battalion, 1st Marine Logistics Group, watches while a grader levels the gravel during road construction outside of Forward Operating Base Geronimo, in Afghanistan on March 23.

Sgt. Michele Watson
1st Marine Logistics Group

HELMAND PROVINCE, Afghanistan – Marines with Support Company, 9th Engineer Support Battalion, 1st Marine Logistics Group, worked tirelessly toward the completion of a 12-kilometer stretch of road.

A road was already in place, but during several severe rainstorms the route was damaged and in desperate need of repair.

“After receiving approval to reconstruct the road, we had to figure out the amount of fuel, equipment and manpower needed to accomplish the mission,” said Gunnery Sgt. Joel Williams, heavy equipment chief, Heavy Equipment Platoon, Support Company.

To construct a road that can withstand heavy rains,

heavy equipment operators used heavy equipment for a multi-step system. The process created a smooth path similar to roads in America.

First, the Marines used a front loader to load up the dump trucks with gravel. The dump trucks then dropped the gravel onto the road. A road grader, which is used to shape the road, leveled out the surface and also made the V-ditches on the side. After the road was shaped, a water truck wet the rock and soil. Once that dried, heavy equipment operators used a compactor to pack the building materials together. This process results in a fast, convenient route of travel.

“While I am in the compactor, my job is to make sure the road is heavily compressed,” said Lance Cpl. Yanet Sierra Trejo, a

heavy equipment operator with Heavy Equipment Platoon. “When I am in the [front loader], I have to make sure I put enough gravel in the dump to lay out on the road.”

Although asphalt is not used to create a black top surface like highways in America, when using the adapted road, the difference is hard to notice.

“You can feel how smooth it is when you're driving on the road,” said Williams. “It's just like driving on a road back home.”

To counter the effects of water damage, the Marines built V-ditches on both sides of the road for rain to drain into. The road was also built with a small crown.

“Instead of having a flat road, we leave a 3 to 5 percent grade crown in the road, so the water goes into the V-ditches during rainfall,” said Cpl. Joshua

Reynolds, a heavy equipment operator, Heavy Equipment Platoon.

Road construction always requires the skill of heavy equipment operators, but more was required to accomplish this mission due to the threat of insurgent activity.

“Being in Afghanistan we also have to determine how much security is needed,” said Williams.

During the project, a security team was established to protect the Marines working on the road.

“Before the heavy equipment operators begin their work, we clear the area using mine-rollers to proof the area for [improvised explosive devices],” said Cpl. Jared Hilton, security team leader, 2nd squad, Security Platoon. “Once it's cleared, the operators can move freely.”

Multiple irrigation

trenches and canals create opportunities for enemy fighters to maneuver and place improvised explosive devices, but added security diminishes the threat.

“Insurgents use the areas we can't see, like wadis, to move around,” said Hilton. “We post security and keep eyes on all avenues of approach, so the heavy equipment operators can work through the day and focus on their task.”

With the completion of the road, military vehicles as well as local civilians have a faster and safer method of travel.

“The road will allow freedom of movement without worrying about damaging mine-roller wheels or the vehicle itself,” said Williams.

Hilton also discussed the benefit of lessened IED threats.

“Because we add so

many rocks, the road is harder, and it's more difficult to dig holes to plant IEDs in,” said Hilton.

The Marines of Support Company worked well together, and their dedication to the mission brought safety to both military and civilian vehicles and garnered the appreciation of the locals.

“I think these Marines are some of the best I have ever worked with,” said Williams. “They have the ability to deliver and make it happen. They are all positive, so it makes for good end results.”

Hilton also said the efforts of both security and construction go hand in hand.

“We definitely work as one team,” said Hilton. “We all know each other's jobs and responsibilities, and it helps to make the mission run smooth.”

15th Marine Expeditionary Unit conducts night training

Cpl. John Robbart III
15th Marine Expeditionary Unit

CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. — “Train how you fight,” rang true when more than 100 Marines and sailors with 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, with the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit, conducted their helicopter raid at night as a part of a MEU Exercise, at Camp Pendleton, Calif., on April 9.

Marine Expeditionary Unit Exercise is designed to train the unit as a Marine Air Ground Task Force in preparation for their upcoming deployment. It is the first exercise that integrates all elements of the MAGTF. This was the first opportunity the battalion landing team had to work with Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 364 the MEU's aviation combat element.

Their crew helicopters inserted the Marines while their attack helicopters notionally provided close air support. As additional support, a KC-130 airplane lit up the skies by expending illumination rounds to assist the troops moving through the darkness.

“Marines need to be confident shooting live rounds right next to each other,” said 1st Lt. Bradley C. Fromm, range safety officer for the raid and executive offi-

cer, India Company. “This range will help build that confidence,” added the 26-year-old native of Madison, N.J.

The Kilo Company Marines were broken up into three elements: assault, support and security. The assault element is the main effort in a raid, which is defined as an operation to temporarily seize an area in order to secure information, confuse an adversary, capture personnel or equipment or to destroy a capability culminating with a planned withdrawal.

The support element was broken up into two positions and provided cover fire while the assault element closed in on the objective. The security element assisted by covering the assault element from enemy infiltration. All the Marines were tactically inserted by either a CH-46 Sea Knight or a CH-53 Super Stallion.

“This was a great opportunity for us to practice working with the other elements of the MAGTF,” said Lance Cpl. Daniel L. Storberg, radio operator, India Company. “Most of the Marines haven't worked with the rest of the MEU, and I'm glad we got to do that tonight,” added the 21-year-old native of Ventura, Calif.

Conducting the raid at night

provided good training for the unit. India Company provided personal safety officers for the range in order to help reduce hazards of conducting a raid at night on unfamiliar terrain.

“We were responsible for making sure safety was paramount during this exercise,” said Lance Cpl. Chance W. Parks, PSO for the assault element and team leader, 3rd Platoon, India Company. “The Marines were able to quickly revert to what they have been practicing. This was a successful training evolution,” added the 23-year-old native of Menifee, Calif.

The training was for more than the troops on the ground. Exercises like a night helo raid challenge the units' staff officers to conduct intense planning to ensure even the smallest details are considered.

“Our goal is to make sure the Marines know that when they are tasked with a mission, they can rest assured the planning was done successfully,” said Capt. Travis L. Hord, assistant operations officer for the battalion. “Also, they are building trust in their fellow Marines across the MEU. Everyone needs to trust each other, and they certainly will after this,” added the 30-year-old native of Dayton, Ohio.

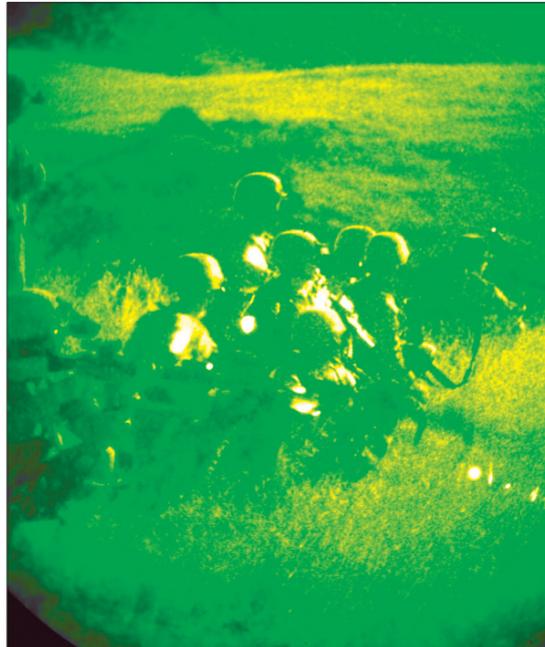


Photo by Cpl. John Robbart III

Marines with the assault element 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit's battalion landing team, prepare to destroy an objective during a helicopter raid conducted at night as a part of a predeployment at Camp Pendleton, Calif., April 9. The exercise is designed to train the unit as a Marine Air-Ground Task Force in preparation for their upcoming deployment. It is the first exercise that integrates all elements of the MAGTF. For many of the infantry Marines, this was their first opportunity to work with the other elements.

Papa strikes back

Lance Cpl. David Bessey
Staff Writer

The recruits of Papa Company, 4th Recruit Training Battalion, returned to the Confidence Course at Leatherneck Square on April 4 to see how their physical conditioning and self-confidence had improved throughout training.

The current generation of the course, built in 2002, consists of 11 obstacles. The obstacles are designed to test a recruit's endurance, coordination and confidence.

"The course is a confidence builder," said Staff Sgt. Reanne Charbonneau, 27, a chief drill instructor with Papa Company.

Some recruits welcome the challenge.

The challenges are exciting and are a lot of fun, said Pvt. Christina Fulwider, 19, of Platoon 4010, and a native of Concord, N.C.

One of the obstacles recruits must overcome is the Skyscraper, a three floored wooden tower. The obstacle requires recruits to use teamwork, communication, aggressiveness, and persistence as they climb the structure.

Drill instructors continuously find ways to motivate the recruits. When a recruit struggles on an obstacle, the drill instructors remind the recruits that this is just another obstacle on their way to graduation.

One such recruit was Rct. Haili Shimko, 17, of Platoon 4011, from Erie,

Colo.

"[The course] is challenging, and it takes a lot of teamwork to get through," Shimko said.

The recruits were visibly more confident and the drill instructors could even see the improvement in their physical conditioning and self-assurance.

It's a huge accomplishment to see what these recruits and their drill instructors have done in just 10 weeks, Charbonneau said.

When the recruits of Papa Company graduate today, they will walk away with a sense of accomplishment and confidence in themselves. It is this self-confidence that will help carry them through their Marine Corps career and their lives.



Photos by Lance Cpl. David Bessey

Rct. Samantha Rivera, 24, of Platoon 4011, Papa Company, 4th Recruit Training Battalion, climbs the rope of the A-frame at the Confidence Course at Leatherneck Square on April 4.



Rct. Amanda Burns, 18, of Platoon 4010, Papa Company, 4th Recruit Training Battalion, climbs over the ropenet at the Confidence Course. The course is designed to build recruits' confidence, often requiring them to perform tasks that push them beyond their comfort zone.

MCRD PARRIS ISLAND EXPANDED FAMILY DAY SCHEDULE

MCRD Parris Island has expanded the events and activities available to families who are coming aboard the Depot to see their son or daughter graduate and become a Marine. The adjacent schedule outlines the events that are now offered to our new Marines' families and loved ones. The times and locations of these events are subject to change. For the most current information, please visit <http://www.mccs-sc.com/recruitalfamilies>.



Wednesday

Welcome to Family Orientation Day at Parris Island

- 6AM-10PM Marine Corps Exchange (MCX) Open
- 6AM-6PM Marine Corps Exchange (MCX) Food Court Open
- 7AM-5PM Engraving Shop open
- 7:30AM-4PM Douglas Visitors' Center open - please register upon arrival
Java Café (9AM-11:30AM)
Graduation Station (8AM-4PM)
- 9AM-4PM Family Check-in at the Douglas Visitors' Center; Java Café open 9AM-12PM
- 10AM-12:30PM Marine Corps 101, including a "Behind the Scenes" tour, at Douglas Visitors' Center
- LUNCH Traditions (Officer/SNCO Club), Food Court, Subway, Golf Course, Back Yard Burgers
- 1:30PM-3:30PM Family Orientation Brief at the Lyceum
- 5PM-8PM Steak Night at Traditions (Officer/SNCO Club).
Reservations required

Thursday

Welcome to Family Liberty Day at Parris Island

- 6AM-4PM Douglas Visitors' Center open - please register upon arrival
Java Café (6AM-2PM)
Graduation Station (6AM-4PM)
- 6AM-10PM Marine Corps Exchange (MCX) Open
- 6AM-6PM Marine Corps Exchange (MCX) Food Court Open
- 7AM-5PM Engraving Shop open
- 7AM Motivational Run - Peatross Parade Deck
- 8AM Depot Museum Opens
- 8:15AM All Weather Training Facility (AWTF) Opens
- 9:30AM-10AM Battalion Commander's Brief to Families & Liberty Ceremony (AWTF)
- 10AM-2PM Marksmanship Training Unit Open House
- 10AM Liberty Begins
- 10:30AM-1PM Family Day Buffet at the Lyceum - new Marines eat for free!
- 2PM Warrior's Prayer at the Recruit Chapel
- 3PM Liberty Ends
- 3PM-4PM Marine Corps 101 at Douglas Visitors' Center
- 5PM Meet & Greet with Depot Command at Traditions Lounge
- 5:30PM Welcome from the Command
- 5:45PM Family Day Dinner with Depot Command at Traditions (Officer/SNCO Club)
Advance reservations guarantee admittance

Friday

Welcome to Graduation Day at Parris Island

- 6AM-2PM Douglas Visitors' Center open
Java Café (6AM-12PM)
Graduation Station (6AM-12PM)
- 6AM-10PM Marine Corps Exchange (MCX) Open
- 6AM-6PM Marine Corps Exchange (MCX) Food Court Open
- 7AM-5PM Engraving Shop open
- 7:45AM Morning Colors at Barrow Hall
- 9AM-10AM Graduation at Peatross Parade Deck (weather permitting)
- 11AM-1PM Lunch Buffet at Traditions (Officer/SNCO Club)