

THE PARRIS ISLAND BOOT



See Fox
Company
Graduates

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Fox Company



pulls together, finishes the job

Page 5

Photo by Lance Cpl. F.J. Abundes

Recruits from Fox Company, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, drag a simulated casualty to safety during Fonseca's First Aid event at the Crucible April 27.

Fox Company recruits complete



BASIC WARRIOR TRAINING

Photo by Lance Cpl. David Bessey

Lance Cpl. Roger Chriswell, 25, an instructor at Page Field, instructs recruits on the hand-and-arm signals course and to be wary of the types of possible roadside bombs April 9.

Lance Cpl. David Bessey
Staff Writer

The recruits of Fox Company, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, patrolled a ghostly road during the hand-and-arm signals and roadside bomb training section of Basic Warrior Training at Page Field on April 9.

The purpose of the event is to teach recruits basic hand-and-arm signals and how to issue commands in small units as well as how to identify potential improvised explosive devices in hostile territory.

Instructors teach re-

cruits several classes on how to issue orders with nonverbal commands, said Lance Cpl. Roger Chriswell, 25, an instructor at Page Field. The recruits are taught how to spot and identify the major types of IEDs used by hostiles.

The recruits gathered onto the empty road where the instructors reviewed the material they learned in the classes.

As the recruits patrol down the road, there are various signs that signal for them to change formation.

Rct. Ezekiel Minguela, 19, from Platoon 2033, and a native of Tampa Bay, Fla.,

was one of the recruits who practiced hand-and-arm signals in silence during the course.

Minguela spotted a sign and instantly responded with the signal to his fellow recruits. He positioned his arms diagonally giving the non-verbal command for the echelon-left formation.

During the patrol, the recruits' objective changed to find and locate potential IEDs.

"I never knew something as simple as a soda could be an IED," said Rct. Christopher White, 18, of Platoon 2033.

SEE WARRIOR PAGE 3

Data network Marine an expert in her domain

Sgt. Michael Cifuentes
1st Marine Division

CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan — When a senior Marine refers to one of his devil dogs as the most "Marine" Marine under his charge, a person reaching 5 feet 1 inch and shy of 100 pounds is probably not the visual.

Nonetheless, Lance Cpl. Samantha C. Catoe, a data network specialist working at the headquarters element of Task Force Leatherneck, 1st Marine Division, was given that title by her supervisor, Staff Sgt. Donald T. Jones.

Catoe, a 21-year-old native of Irmo, S.C., said she believes she earned the reference by being respectful, professional, excellent at her job and enthusiastic about her current assignment in Afghanistan.

"She's been giving it all

SEE DATA PAGE 7



Photo by Sgt. Michael Cifuentes

Lance Cpl. Samantha C. Catoe, a data network specialist working at the headquarters element of Task Force Leatherneck, 1st Marine Division, starts her shift at the TFL communications section help desk by going over a list of trouble tickets at her desk, April 24. Catoe, a 21-year-old native of Irmo, S.C., deployed with the 1st Marine Division in February, and has displayed strong technical skills at her job.

NEWS BRIEF

Run for the Tea

The MCAS Beaufort Officers' Club is proud to host its 2nd Annual "Run for the Tea" five-kilometer and Kids' Races on May 19, 2012. For more information or to request a registration form, please call 843-522-0522 or email oscrunforthetea@gmail.com.

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FOX COMPANY GRADUATES

Honor Graduates

Pfc. S. P. Spratt, Carrollton, Ga.
Platoon 2032, Spratt was recruited by
Staff Sgt. Chaney and trained by Staff Sgt. Liciaga

Pfc. J. W. Muhlhauser, Huntsville, Ala.
Platoon 2034, Muhlhauser was recruited by
Sgt. Kent and trained by Staff Sgt. Canez

Pfc. D. W. Morgan, Honeoye, N.Y.
Platoon 2033, Morgan was recruited by
Staff Sgt. Hoover and trained by Sgt. Harris

Pfc. J. T. Wingfield, Cary, N.C.
Platoon 2036, Wingfield was recruited by
Sgt. Benavidez and trained by Staff Sgt. Thompson

Pfc. P. J. Pierson, Tuckahoe, N.Y.
Platoon 2037, Pierson was recruited by
Sgt. Ferguson and trained by Sgt. Dominguez

Platoon 2032 Pvt. H. L. Adams, Pfc. S. W. Ahern, Pfc. R. J. Conner, Pvt. J. M. Davis, Pvt. B. R. Diepparamirez, Pvt. P. J. Dixon, Pfc. J. C. Ferreira, Pvt. R. Galarza, Pfc. J. T. Garcia, Pvt. M. A. Garcia, Pvt. A. J. Gartee, Pfc. S. A. Gibbs, Pfc. M. S. Gibson, Pvt. S. P. Glover, Pfc. E. N. Goodson, Pvt. D. M. Gould, Pfc. J. T. Green, Pvt. G. M. Griffin, Pvt. X. S. Ham, Pvt. M. E. Hampton, Pfc. J. D. Harvey, Pfc. C. O. Henson, Pfc. L. F. Hernandez, Pfc. M. J. Jefferson, Pvt. J. A. Johnson, Pfc. J. B. Kelly, Pfc. J. H. Lane, Pfc. B. C. Leya, Pvt. Z. F. Lujano, Pfc. T. J. Mackenzie, Pfc. T. R. Mcneeley, Pvt. J. C. Moore, Pfc. M. S. Myers, Pfc. S. N. Nderitu, Pvt. P. J. Nelson, Pvt. W. E. O'brian, Pfc. K. R. Perry, Pvt. J. A. Pryorhopewell, Pfc. A. S. Rankin, Pfc. M. L. Rivera, Pvt. A. D. Roberts, Pfc. K. T. Simmons, Pfc. N. D. Simmons, Pfc. B. C. Smith, Pvt. S. H. Smith, Pfc. S. P. Spratt, Pfc. C. B. Taylor, Pvt. G. L. Thomas, Pfc. R. F. Turnbull, Pvt. S. D. Wagner, Pfc. S. S. Williams, Pfc. R. D. Willis, Pfc. K. D. Wiltsie, Pvt. D. L. Witcher

Platoon 2033 Pvt. L. J. Ban, Pvt. Q. A. Banks, Pvt. M. G. Blackford, Pvt. J. F. Bocyck, Pvt. F. S. Bolanos, Pfc. D. A. Brooks, Pvt. R. W. Carn, Pvt. G. A. Chismar, Pfc. R. J. Cox Jr., Pvt. B. C. Cripe, Pvt. B. C. Dargis, Pvt. O. A. Dixon, Pvt. T. J. Donaldson, Pfc. T. P. Drew, Pfc. J. A. Droste, Pvt. B. J. Fayard, Pvt. K. R. Findling, Pvt. D. C. German, Pfc. M. G. Gilberti, Pvt. A. Guerra, Pvt. M. R. Halleran, Pvt. N. B. Holmes, Pvt. I. M. James, Pvt. J. D. Jones, Pvt. E. P. Kees, Pfc. W. M. Kelly, Pvt. N. E. Landon, Pvt. C. L. Malakie, Pvt. M. Manzo II, Pfc. B. T. Mcknight, Pvt. E. E. Minguela, Pfc. A. S. Montgomery, Pfc. M. S. Morek, Pfc. D. W. Morgan, Pvt. S. A. Nievesbaez, Pfc. C. J. Palombine, Pvt. M. H. Plant, Pfc. J. D. Queener, Pfc. E. Ramos, Pvt. B. N. Reno, Pvt. E. L. Robinson Jr., Pvt. K. E. Rosario, Pvt. J. R. Rubley, Pfc. R. P. Ryals, Pfc. J. M. Sahawneh, Pvt. B. M. Siliano, Pfc. J. R. Smith, Pvt. T. S. Staley Jr., Pfc. D. T. Suggs, Pvt. H. J. Taylor, Pvt. C. S. Wagner, Pvt. C. A. White, Pvt. I. F. Winterbottom

Platoon 2034 Pfc. J. I. Aleman, Pvt. N. J. Alvarado, Pfc. B. A. Carlton, Pvt. R. M. Charles, Pfc. S. D. Cutter, Pfc. E. Dejesus Jr., Pvt. W. F. Deriso, Pvt. J. M. Devito, Pvt. B. T. Devore, Pfc. D. R. Dillard, Pfc. Z. M. Edwards, Pvt. J. Freitegrisales, Pvt. C. M. Gable, Pfc. J. M. Garrison, Pvt. S. W. Gordon II, Pfc. A. J. Hamilton, Pvt. A. L. Hart, Pfc. J. W. Hindman IV, Pvt. J. M. Howell, Pvt. E. M. Hvostal, Pfc. K. E. Janes Jr., Pvt. N. M. Johnson, Pvt. S. P. Kane, Pvt. J. L. Keller, Pvt. T. C. Kitts, Pfc. T. Kle-niewski Jr., Pfc. K. M. Kupski, Pfc. A. R. Linehan, Pvt. P. A. Markel Jr., Pfc. A. V. Mauro, Pvt. R. A. Maybin Jr., Pvt. C. C. Merschen, Pfc. E. L. Milton, Pvt. J. W. Muhlhauser, Pfc. J. A. Murilloaguirre, Pfc. B. K. Owens, Pfc. C. T. Paradise, Pvt. R. P. Paradise, Pfc. S. Z. Passehl, Pfc. N. Perezrodriguez, Pfc. R. J. Powers, Pvt. L. C. Rearden, Pvt. P. M. Richard, Pvt. E. M. Ruiz, Pfc. G. L. Savage, Pvt. E. B. Sewell, Pfc. B. M. Spellman, Pvt. N. H. Stauffer, Pfc. K. L. Thomas, Pvt. T. B. Thompson, Pfc. C. S. Tuten, Pfc. J. M. Walsh, Pvt. J. C. West

Platoon 2036 Pvt. C. M. Baker, Pvt. V. T. Bateman, Pfc. C. J. Baxter, Pvt. K. M. Beacom, Pfc. D. M. Bowling Jr., Pfc. C. J. Boyenga, Pvt. S. A. Brown, Pfc. W. M. Brown, Pvt. D. A. Buchanan, Pvt. A. C. Canfield, Pvt. I. T. Conrad, Pfc. M. P. Davis, Pfc. C. J. Dotson, Pvt. D. L. Dougherty Jr., Pvt. G. T. Gambrill Jr., Pvt. C. V. Gant, Pfc. A. R. Garcia, Pfc. B. J. Gautreaux, Pvt. N. A. Gomez, Pvt. M. J. Granholm Jr., Pfc. M. L. Grant Jr., Pvt. J. A. Green Jr., Pfc. A. Guerra, Pvt. J. A. Guzman Jr., Pfc. D. J. Hines, Pvt. P. H. Hughes, Pfc. M. A. Iman, Pfc. D. T. Johnson, Pfc. S. D. Medina, Pfc. Z. T. Mendes, Pvt. S. E. Meyer, Pvt. E. P. Milich, Pfc. C. R. Moore, Pvt. J. R. Naphy, Pfc. R. Ngan, Pvt. M. F. Ortega, Pfc. C. Raksachat, Pfc. N. J. Reitz, Pvt. Z. J. Reynolds, Pvt. J. A. Rosado, Pfc. A. H. Seals, Pvt. S. M. Shay, Pvt. J. L. Slody, Pvt. S. C. Stickney, Pvt. W. T. Todd, Pvt. T. B. Tressler, Pfc. C. R. Tuckerwebster, Pvt. K. W. Turner, Pfc. A. E. Underwood, Pvt. D. E. Wilt, Pfc. J. T. Wingfield, Pfc. D. A. Wittwer, Pfc. Y. Yao

Platoon 2037 Pvt. H. M. Abdulmuhaymin, Pvt. J. Acevedo, Pvt. A. C. Ambrogio, Pvt. D. W. Austin, Pvt. C. E. Azcarate, Pvt. A. D. Book, Pfc. D. Borrero, Pvt. B. W. Bosman, Pfc. S. K. Bowman, Pfc. C. J. Boyer, Pvt. H. M. Capel, Pfc. J. D. Cave, Pfc. G. P. Chavez, Pfc. D. K. Cho, Pfc. B. K. Clarke Jr., Pfc. R. J. Crinerbonilla, Pvt. J. A. Dellinger, Pfc. K. C. Devlin, Pvt. J. T. Ewald, Pvt. M. A. Figueroa, Pvt. D. C. Fraley, Pvt. A. K. Francis, Pvt. A. J. Fresch, Pfc. T. N. Ghiran II, Pfc. T. R. Gonzalez, Pvt. J. Gonzalezcruz, Pvt. K. B. Henshaw, Pfc. C. R. Herndon, Pvt. L. L. Jelks, Pfc. R. M. Kensinger, Pvt. L. F. Lamberti, Pfc. D. Lea, Pvt. S. W. Lee, Pvt. T. R. McCabe Jr., Pvt. C. M. Mcquade, Pvt. O. I. Moran, Pfc. J. C. Moses, Pfc. J. M. Olivares, Pvt. M. Osorio, Pfc. M. R. Paz, Pfc. W. C. Phillips, Pfc. P. J. Pierson, Pvt. J. P. Pless, Pvt. J. Reyes, Pfc. G. Rodriguez, Pfc. C. L. Rogers, Pfc. A. M. Sandomierski, Pvt. B. J. Smith, Pvt. A. M. Timinski, Pvt. H. K. Truzy III, Pvt. P. D. Whitney, Pfc. J. T. Williams, Pvt. J. A. Willis, Pfc. J. D. Wright Jr.

THE PARRIS ISLAND BOOT

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More of the story

WARRIOR

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

“Before, we didn’t even know what we’re looking for.”

The instructors tell recruits to continue moving if an IED is spotted, but to take a mental note of its location.

The recruits have to count as many IEDs as they see on the course, Chriswell said.

“It’s better to be over-cautious than too complacent,” Chriswell said.

“It was more interesting and more realistic than what we have done so far in training,” said White.



Photos by Lance Cpl. David Bessey

Rct. Ezekiel Minguela, 19, of Platoon 2033, Fox Company, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, signals to his fire team to change positions at Page Field on April 9.



Rct. Jordan Sahawneh, 17, of Platoon 2033, Fox Company, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, scans the side of the road as he patrols with his fire team during the hand-and-arm signals portion of Basic Warrior Training at Page Field.



Rct. Jordan Sahawneh leads his fire team through a dirt trail at Page Field. The recruits are learning how to spot roadside bombs.

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for daily updates on
recruit training.



Riot-ready Marines display nonlethal capabilities to Bulgarians



Photos by Cpl. Paul Zellner

A Bulgarian special forces soldier prepares to fire a stinger ball grenade in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, April 16. The training was part of a three-day, nonlethal weapons display, which included kinetic as well as static displays of weapons, equipment and tactics.



Staff Sgt. John DuBarry, a military policeman and nonlethal weapons instructor with the military police detachment, Black Sea Rotational Force 12, shows Marine Corps baton techniques to members of the Bulgarian Armed Forces and local civilian police in Plovdiv, Bulgaria April 16.

Cpl. Paul Zellner
Black Sea Rotational Force

PLOVDIV, Bulgaria — Marines with Black Sea Rotational Force 12 participated in nonlethal weapons and tactics exchange with more than 25 Bulgarian soldiers, sailors and civilian police in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, April 17-19.

“The purpose of this training is to show the Bulgarian military and law enforcement community the wide variety of non-lethal options that the Marine Corps utilizes,” said 1st Lt. Jared Batzel, senior member of the mil-

itary police detachment, BSRF 12.

Military policemen attached to BSRF 12 instructed classroom courses on tactics, munitions, weapons and other equipment used in the Marine Corps’ nonlethal arsenal. The courses were then utilized in practical application drills and firing ranges to familiarize the service members and policemen with what they had learned in class.

“This training is a great foundation for improved interoperability,” said Maj. Anatoli Barkovski, a Bulgarian special forces soldier. “We learned about

and got to employ new equipment and weapons systems.”

The instructors gave a kinetic display on some of the equipment as they took to the field with riot shields and batons. The Bulgarians then had a chance to don the equipment and go over movement drills of a riot team. Throughout the next few days the Marines showed their partner nation members many of the basic nonlethal skills including mechanical advantage control holds. X26E Tazer, baton, riot shield and oleoresin capsicum spray.

“All the information was new to us because the Bulgarian special-forces mission is different. Now that I have done the training I see how these things can be applicable, especially while on a deployment,” said 2nd Lt. Grozdan Naydov, a Bulgarian special forces soldier. “This is not my first time working with U.S. military, but my impression with U.S. military members is that they are very detailed and thorough, which makes for a good exchange.”

The training is part of the Black Sea Rotational Force’s six-month deployment, which includes training exercises with 19 nations planned throughout the Black Sea, Balkan and Caucasus regions.

“Any exchange with military personnel is welcome and useful. It helps you see where you stand as a military force,” said Barkovski. “We compared procedures and there weren’t major differences, which we see as a sign that the Bulgarian Army is developing in the right direction.”



Fox Company completes the Crucible



Photos by Lance Cpl. F.J. Abundes

Recruits from Fox Company, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, hide behind a berm for safety during Fonseca's First Aid at the Crucible on April 27.



Rct. Ryan Charls, a 19-year-old from Paris, Ky., sprints from behind a berm to get closer to the simulated casualty during Fonseca's First Aid at the Crucible on April 27.

Lance Cpl. F.J. Abundes
Staff Writer

Off in the distance, the recruits heard a faint cry for help, but simulated mortars falling around them and machine-gun fire kept them from rushing to the injured Marine's aid.

The recruits of Fox Company, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, crawled to their fellow recruits' assistance during the Fonseca's First Aid at the Crucible April 27.

The event is based on the actions of Seaman Luis E. Fonseca Jr., who was awarded the Navy Cross, the U.S. Navy's second highest decoration, for his actions in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom March 23, 2003, while serving with Amphibious Assault Vehicle Platoon, Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, Task Force Tarawa, 2nd Marine Expeditionary Force.

According to the historical citation, "During his company's assault and seizure of the Saddam Canal Bridge, five Marines were wounded when their amphibious assault vehicle was struck by rocket-propelled grenades.

"Fonseca, in the face of small-arms, machine-gun and intense rocket-propelled grenade fire, evacuated the Marines from the burning vehicle and estab-

lished a casualty collection unit inside his own medical evacuation vehicle. There, he stabilized two Marines with lower limb amputations and administered morphine.

"After his vehicle was rendered immobile by enemy fire and again, under intense gunfire, Fonseca organized litter teams and directed the movement of four of the Marines, while personally carrying one wounded Marine over open ground to another vehicle."

Staff Sgt. Ulysses Lloyd, drill instructor for Platoon 2034, prepared the recruits for the event before they executed their mission.

"Fonseca saved several Marines' lives," he said. "It doesn't matter what branch of service you are in, we all fight for the same cause. You might say we're the best, but at the end of the day, it's all about the common goal – to protect our nation and our freedom."

During the event, recruits attempt to save the lives of simulated casualties by advancing through a wooded area then crawl through sand to prevent getting hit by "mortars" and "machine-gun rounds," which are simulated by audio recordings that play during the event.

The recruits take turns

moving forward, providing security for each other.

Once at the "victim," recruits must drag their fellow recruits back to safety and provide medical support.

"You have to use teamwork to move from berm to berm without getting shot," said Rct. Eduardo de Jesus, a recruit with Platoon 2034. "You have to make sure that when you're doing it, someone's always there to cover you."

The 21-year-old from Peabody, Mass. said the hardest part of the event was moving the casualties.

"Now, we have to go get the casualty and try to get the casualty to safety without getting shot," de Jesus said. "If you get shot, that's two casualties."

"People weren't working together," said Rct. William Deriso, also from Plt. 2034. "In the field, if we don't have teamwork, someone's going to die."

Although they were not in a life-threatening mission, they learned they would have to pull together to earn the title Marine.

"No one recruit is going to make it through the Crucible alone," Lloyd said. "It's going to take those other recruits in their squad to motivate the other recruits who want to drop their pack."

MARINE FINDS FIRST FAMILY IN THE MARINE CORPS

Lance Cpl. F.J. Abundes
Staff Writer

Many people join the Marine Corps and find a brotherhood that exceeds college fraternities.

A graduate in today's ceremony found that same familial bond in the Corps' culture, as well as the home he never had as a child.

Pfc. Justin Muhlhauser, honor graduate for Platoon 3034, Fox Company, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, lived in 11 different foster residences as a child.

"I didn't think the military would be my path until three months before I came to boot camp," Muhlhauser said. "I love the brotherhood aspect. It means a lot because I haven't had much of a family."

Born to an alcoholic mother and an addict father, Muhlhauser was abused as a child,

he said. He was put with a foster family. He was then continuously moved around because of more abuse.

As a junior in high school, Muhlhauser said he made the decision to move back with his father in hopes of change.

His father had not changed his ways.

"He was still hitting me at 17 and I thought to myself 'I'm not going to have that,'" the now 19-year-old said. "I moved out of my house at 17. Then, I moved an hour away from my high school to downtown Knoxville, Tenn., because it had the cheapest apartment."

Each day, Muhlhauser would wake up at 6 a.m., be ready at 6:30 a.m., then drive to his school to be there by 7:30 a.m., he said. After school, he practiced football, then worked as a waiter.

"I would get out at 1 a.m., then drive back home and do

it over again," he said.

After high school, Muhlhauser was offered a scholarship to Austin Peay State University, he said. But funds were low, and Muhlhauser would have to wait until the following year for the scholarship.

Muhlhauser would have to take a \$10,000 loan to continue his education, he said. He had to make a choice – the military or a full-time job.

Living an active lifestyle, Muhlhauser went into the Army recruiting office and asked to be special operations. The recruiters laughed in his face, he said. Determined, he left their agency and went to the adjacent Marine Corps recruiting office and inquired about the reconnaissance job field.

"The recruiter said, 'If you do well on the [initial strength test], I'll talk to the command and see if you can get that one

recon spot,'" Muhlhauser said. "One recruiting office is only allowed to give out one recon contract a year."

Muhlhauser earned the spot.

"When I first met him, we talked and he told me a bit about his past, how he didn't have a family," said Pvt. Erick Sewell, a fellow graduate. "Seeing where he is now, he doesn't act like someone off the streets. He carries himself well for someone who came from a tough background."

Sewell said other recruits look up to Muhlhauser. He is a leader who leads by example.

"Anything he'd ask anybody to do, he's able to do it or he'll do it first," the Vernon, Fla. native said. "He doesn't just boss them around."

Muhlhauser said his senior drill instructor is a mentor for him.

"If I could have my mentor, I'd want it to be him," Muhlhauser said. "I really want to be more like him. He's genuine. He's respectful."

The feeling is mutual for Staff Sgt. Carlos Canez, the man Muhlhauser looks up to.

"He's coming from no family, and he still has high morals," Canez said. "He wants to make a name for himself because he's never had anyone who accepted him."

"He's going to be a great Marine," Canez continued. "You can see it in him. He's going to do great things when he goes to the fleet."

Muhlhauser is headed to Camp Pendleton, Calif., to begin combat and reconnaissance training.

"I can't wait to call everyone my brothers," Muhlhauser said. "It feels good to have that and to rely on someone."



Photos by Staff Sgt. Nate Hauser

Gunnery Sgt. Lee Nickel, a reconnaissance Marine with Command Element, Black Sea Rotational Force 12, greets children from a local orphanage while volunteering in Constanta, Romania, April 22. The Marines and sailors of BSRF 12 worked with Hands Across Romania to entertain and feed 250 children from three local orphanages.



Marines and sailors of Black Sea Rotational Force 12 gather to take a photo with children from the local orphanage in Constanta, Romania April 22.

Staff Sgt. Nate Hauser
Black Sea Rotational Force

CONSTANTA, Romania – Marines with Black Sea Rotational Force 12 lined the steps of a local tennis club April 22, their normally stoic expressions replaced by ones of eager anticipation. Today, the Marines and sailors of BSRF 12 were forming up not for battle, but to feed and entertain 250 children from three Romanian orphanages.

It's good to have the Marines around to set the example, said Don Marco, a Catholic priest and orphanage administrator. To see them out here in uniform is like a fairy tale come true for these kids.

Black Sea Rotational Force 12 teamed with United Hands Romania, a local charitable organization, to spend a day working with Romanian children who have been

placed in state custody.

"It's the simple things that help, the kids love just having the American [Marines] here with them," said Eva Crossman a 22-year-old student of the Open University and a Dayton, Ohio, native.

The day started with the children being ushered past tables of candy and toys into the gymnasium where the Marines and volunteers had organized a myriad of games including a sack race, tug-a-war and face painting.

"This day couldn't get any better," said Staff Sgt. Wade Wilson a Reconnaissance Marine with Ground Combat Element, BSRF 12. "I feel like I'm really making a difference with these kids."

A large group of children gathered around a face painting station staffed by Recon Marines and headed by Wilson. Battalion, American flags and

butterflies were among the more popular designs the Marines painted on young faces.

"Regardless of what you know about Marines, they all have a special place in their hearts for kids," said Sgt. Maj. Gary Jacobs.

When the games wound down the Marines and volunteers served the children lunch as American music played on the sound system.

"It's great of you to help. We couldn't have made this happen for so many kids without you," said Crossman while the Marines handed out sandwiches and cakes.

As the day ended, Marines distributed the toys and clothes provided by United Hands Romania.

"The Marines get along so well with the kids. I would not have expected this," added Crossman.



Sgt. Davis, a Reconnaissance Marine with Command Element, Black Sea Rotational Force 12, paints the face of a young boy from a local orphanage while volunteering in Constanta, Romania April 22.

More of the story

DATA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

she has," said Jones, data chief for Task Force Leatherneck. "She's the lead Marine on the server build team. It requires someone who's technically proficient and she's got the technical knowledge."

She currently works the night shift at the Task Force Leatherneck communications section help desk, taking on tasks that range from answering calls for assistance with in-operative computers used by 1st MarDiv personnel to building and refurbishing client servers.

Catoe said her job is really customer service-oriented and very satisfying. Although her work environment is behind friendly lines, her job can be rather chaotic when everyone in the 1st MarDiv (Fwd) compound is communicating by transmitting data.

"Communications, the servers and networking are essential to the mission," Catoe said. "We work at a high echelon. If the commanding general's computer goes down, it's a major deal. If connectivity in the combat operations center goes down, which has computers among computers in there, it's a huge deal."

Still, she thrives at her job, keeping communications between coalition forces in Helmand province running.

Her nightly shift begins behind a desk built by Marine engineers in a warehouse lined with wooden walls, tucked in a corner of the division compound. Just as most people working "behind the scenes" at Camp Leatherneck have stacks of papers on their desks, she has stacks of laptops and hard drives that need her expertise.

A couple dozen red wires streaming across the ceiling into a cold climate server room offer a sci-fi décor to the help desk hut. But there's nothing fictional to Catoe's responsibility of working with equipment worth millions of dollars. Her duties of troubleshooting and fixing network problems even extend to forward operating bases throughout Helmand province.

"People sometimes have issues talking from unit to unit, and we at the help desk will walk them through fixing it," she said. "Except for Marines who are out on patrols, no one really communicates over radios anymore. Without

computers, the units out there wouldn't be able to coordinate missions or monitor operations."

Excelling at her job only compliments what she's done for herself during her two years as a Marine.

With first class combat and physical fitness test scores, high biannual personal evaluation points and certificates from Marine Corps self-education courses in her personal record, she received recognition by her command. Catoe was selected as this period's Marine of the Quarter for Headquarters Detachment, 1st MarDiv, for qualities that sets her apart from fellow competing peers.

"It was a close call and it came down to scores on her service record book," said 1st Sgt. Sean Hyman, Headquarters Detachment first sergeant and a native of Little Rock, Ark. "The first thing you'll notice about her is that she's a small individual, but her personality speaks differently. You would know Catoe by her actions."

The recognition began with Marines who directly supervise her, but she said she also owes the distinguished reputation to her own self-motivation.

"I had good scores, and I worked really hard for those scores," Catoe said. "I'm not going to do something [at half effort]. If I'm going to do [Marine Corps Institute courses] I might as well do 12 of them. I want to look good as a Marine."

Catoe was promoted this month. She said she came into the Marine Corps with an understanding of what her perseverance as a Marine meant and how to generate it. Her mother served four years in the Corps and her father retired after serving for 20 years as a Marine infantryman. The two met while serving at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C., – a place commonly known for where Marines are made.

After high school, Catoe, who rocked blue-dyed hair and several piercings in her ears at the time, continued her education in college studying computer science. However, she said she felt it was time to leave home after the first year.

She said the Marine Corps is something she never considered, let alone deploying to Afghanistan. But she became motivated after listening to a series of conversations between her former boyfriend and her

father.

"My boyfriend at the time was going to join the Army, but my dad talked him into joining the Marines," Catoe said. "I started getting a little jealous so I wanted to join too."

Typical of parents during a time of war, especially those who endured the challenging life of a Marine, Catoe said her parents tried to persuade her from enlisting and suggested finishing school and becoming a Marine officer.

She also faced a tough decision with her boyfriend.

"My boyfriend pretty much said 'I won't date you if you join,'" said Catoe.

Two years later and in Afghanistan, Catoe said she loves being a Marine. She knew what she wanted to do for the Marine Corps when she saw her recruiter in 2010, and she's living up to that dream today.

"I love my job. I really do," she said. "If you're not building the network, you're monitoring the network – monitoring all the user accounts, emails and any issues with their computers. It's something I always really wanted to do."

Some of Catoe's fellow Marines said sometimes they find humor in their job – mostly with trouble tickets involving simple solutions that the common computer-savvy person can figure out. Other times, her friends show brotherly-sisterly love by making light-hearted and welcomed jokes of her stature.

"I get called short and tiny. I kind of embrace it," she said. "It kind of pushes me to do more. Yeah, I'm 98 pounds, and I can do anything anyone else can in this job. A lot of my motivation comes from people who don't expect it from me."

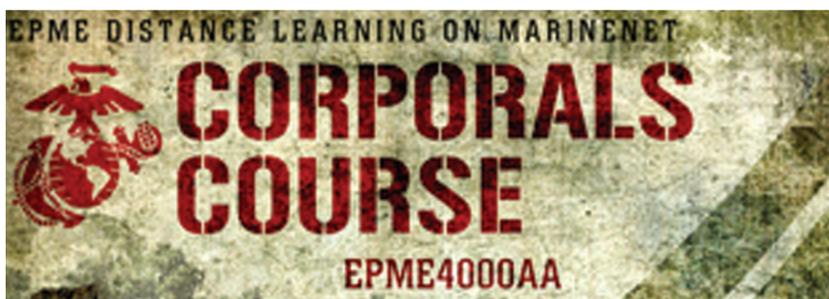
Work and motivation is continuous in the help desk hut. As Marines and coalition forces in Afghanistan begin to consolidate into new battle positions and turn bases over to Afghan forces, computer networks need rebuilding, said Catoe. Her return to her home station, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., is something she doesn't think about right now, as she focuses her priorities on trouble tickets and building servers.

"The most satisfying part of the job is working for the Marines," Catoe said. "They're usually really grateful about our help, and it's a good feeling."



Photo by Sgt. Michael Cifuentes

Lance Cpl. Samantha C. Catoe, a data network specialist working with Headquarters Detachment, Task Force Leatherneck, 1st Marine Division, was selected as this period's detachment Marine of the Quarter. The 21-year-old native of Irmo, S.C., is tasked with resolving trouble tickets submitted by headquarters personnel at the Task Force Leatherneck compound.



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/recruitfamilies>.



Wednesday

Welcome to Family Orientation Day at Parris Island

- 6AM-10PMMarine Corps Exchange (MCX) Open
- 6AM-6PMMarine Corps Exchange (MCX) Food Court Open
- 7AM-5PMEngraving Shop open
- 7:30AM-4PMDouglas Visitors' Center open - please register upon arrival
Java Café (9AM-11:30AM)
Graduation Station (8AM-4PM)
- 9AM-4PMFamily 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-3:30PMFamily 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-4PMDouglas Visitors' Center open - please register upon arrival
Java Café (6AM-2PM)
Graduation Station (6AM-4PM)
- 6AM-10PMMarine Corps Exchange (MCX) Open
- 6AM-6PMMarine Corps Exchange (MCX) Food Court Open
- 7AM-5PMEngraving Shop open
- 7AMMot/National Run - Peatross Parade Deck
- 8AMDepot Museum Opens
- 8:15AMAll Weather Training Facility (AWTF) Opens
- 9:30AM-10AM.....Battalion Commander's Brief to Families & Liberty Ceremony (AWTF)
- 10AM-2PMMarksmanship Training Unit Open House
- 10AM.....Liberty Begins
- 10:30AM-1PM.....Family Day Buffet at the Lyceum - new Marines eat for free!
- 2PMWarrior's Prayer at the Recruit Chapel
- 3PMLiberty Ends
- 3PM-4PM.....Marine Corps 101 at Douglas Visitors' Center
- 5PMMeet & 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-2PMDouglas Visitors' Center open
Java Café (6AM-12PM)
Graduation Station (6AM-12PM)
- 6AM-10PMMarine Corps Exchange (MCX) Open
- 6AM-6PMMarine Corps Exchange (MCX) Food Court Open
- 7AM-5PMEngraving Shop open
- 7:45AMMorning Colors at Barrow Hall
- 9AM-10AM.....Graduation at Peatross Parade Deck (weather permitting)
- 11AM-1PMLunch Buffet at Traditions (Officer/SNCO Club)