Midshipmen get a taste of Marine Corps life

Story by Pfc. Khoa N. Pelczar
The Convoy Staff

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. — Every summer, some college students have four weeks to get a taste of what it’s like to be in the Marine Corps or the Navy. They are not obligated to stay in the program and can give up at anytime and return to civilian life. But for those who choose to stay in and complete the program, these men and women could be the future officers of the Navy and the Corps. These college students are Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps midshipmen.

In order for the students to stay in the program, they must participate in the Career Orientation Training for Midshipmen every summer, a month-long program that takes midshipmen to different military bases and shows them what service members do on a daily basis.

“The purpose of the Career Orientation Training for Midshipmen, or as we called it CORTRAMID, is to motivate them to stay in the (ROTC) program,” said Capt. Ted Corbeill, a Marine officer instructor with Iowa State University Naval ROTC, 36, from Southfield, Michigan.

The four-week program is broken down into four parts: Surface Week, which they stay on a surface ship; Submarine Week, which they dive into the deep unknown in a submarine; Aviation Week, which midshipmen learn about various aircraft the Navy and Marine Corps operate; and Marine Week, which they learn and conduct a variety of training exercises.

With Marine Week being spent at San Mateo here, they experience the life of a Marine, receive guidance and get classes on what it takes to be a Marine directly from the Marines who live and work here.

“By far, Marine Week is definitely my favorite week,” said Garrett Q. Bentley, a midshipman of Norwich University, 20, from Grass Valley, Calif. “The Marines are so helpful, we get step-by-step, clear instructions and they allow us to have hands-on experience.”

The midshipmen were divided into three platoons and rotated with one another as they went on with training so they could become familiarized with the different military bases and shows them what service members do on a daily basis. “The training exercise is a pre-deployment requirement,” said Bentley, 37, from San Antonio. “It involves things we’ve learned in basic training and more.”

After arriving at the FOB, the Marines set up radiocommunication, then went through the Combat Marksmanship Program with rifles, grenades and a few crew-served weapons to make sure everything worked properly. Then they began to plan and analyze the mission in accordance with the climate of Afghanistan.

“It helps me get used to the heat over there in Afghanistan, especially when we have to wear these flaks all the time,” said Pfc. Shae A. Ealy, a security guard with Security Platoon, Engineer Support Company, 7th ESB, 1st MLG, 19, from Columbus, Ohio. “It was covered in sweat as the sun burned up the training field. I also enjoy patrolling, but shooting was the best part.”

Marines also posted interior guards, as they would in a real situation. To secure the FOB perimeter, Marines went patrolling.

“Practice makes perfect” is a phrase that serves as a guideline for everything that Marines do, practicing for deployment is no different.

The Marines of 7th Engineer Support Battalion, 1st Marine Logistics Group trained at Camp Roberts July 9-27 on a forward operating base they built here in May. This time, they used the FOB in order to conduct training in preparation for a future deployment to Afghanistan.

“We have 565 Marines from the battalion coming out to train, and we also brought 332 major end items (heavy equipment) out here with us,” said Staff Sgt. Juan L. Zuniga, 54 chief with headquarters and Service Company, 7th ESB, 1st MLG.

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7th ESB wraps up 3-week training
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UNITED STATES ARMY NATIONAL GUARD
AND RESERVE BASE CAMP ROBERTS, Calif. — “Practice makes perfect” is a phrase that serves as a guideline for everything that Marines do, and practicing for deployment is no different.

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Midshipmen with Combat Logistics Battalion 15, Combat Logistics Regiment 17, 1st Marine Logistics Group, test fire the M-9 service pistol at Fort Hunter Liggett July 27. Marines were training in preparation for their upcoming deployment to Afghanistan.

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Afghan gaves cultural training

Key Afghan Phrases

1. Salaam Aliakum! - Peace be upon you, or "hello";
2. Wailaikum Salaam - Response to "hello";
3. Gungha Yee - How are you?
4. Da Allah pa Aman - God save you, or "goodbye";
5. Manana - Thank you

Afghan women

In Afghanistan, women are married at what most Americans would consider to be a very young age, usually by 14 or 15, he added.

The family also has a strong support system, Shenwari explained. Because the families are so large, if a member of the family can't find work, other members of the family can provide them with monetary support, if needed. In addition, tribal and religious leaders play an important role in the social structure of a Pashtun tribe.

Being aware of these cultural differences and social positions within a tribe may help Marines better interact with the Afghan people.

"There are quite a bit of differences: the language, first and foremost, the culture and the way their tribal system is set up, the families, and the importance of respect," said Sgt. Boris Barrera, lead defense travel administrator with Service Company, Combat Logistics Regiment 17, 1st Marine Logistics Group, who currently works at the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force Defense Travel System Helpdesk.

"Not to say that we as Americans don't have respect, but it's clearly more emphasized in Afghanistan," said Barrera, 25, from Fairfax, Va. "As Marines, when we do go out there, I believe our personal respectability is the key to us being respectful to their culture.

Shenwari also explained the importance of "small actions" such as showing respect to the people of the village. "It's as simple as smiling, raising one's hand and giving the traditional greeting of "Salaam Aliakum" to send a positive message to all the people that you have respect, that you are a friend, not an enemy," he said. "With this phrase, you are defeating enemy propaganda."

Another simple act, shaking a child's hand, can help Americans build better relationships with future generations of Afghans, he added.

This shows "we there for their tranquility, stability and security," said Shenwari.

"It will help in our mission," Barrera agreed, "because as we have learned in this training, the influence of the tribal leaders is very important. By befriending the tribal leaders, we'll be able to complete our mission better and have a better success rate. After completion of this class, I learned and I am sure we have more of a respect for as to why they do certain things within their culture, and I understand it better."

Shenwari ended the class by thanking the Marines in Pashto because he was the target of an attack due to his anti-extremist political views.

Shenwari, who is Pashtun, explained how the dynamic of the Afghan household is quite different from that of an American one. While polygamy in the United States is outlawed, and the U.S. Census shows the average number of children per family is around two, Afghan men in some tribes are allowed to have up to four wives, and many of them produce "small armies" of children, said Shenwari, who himself has nine brothers and three sisters. Also, many Afghan girls are married at what most Americans would consider a very young age, usually by 14 or 15, he added.

"By the time she's 20, she might have five children," said Shenwari, 44, who has one wife and three children.

But the family also has a strong support system. Shenwari explained. Because the families are so large, if a member of the family can't find work, other members of the family can provide them with monetary support, if needed. In addition, tribal and religious leaders play an important role in the social structure of a Pashtun tribe.

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Author examines reasons why U.S. went to war in Iraq – twice

Story by Lance Cpl. Jerrick J. Griffin
The Convoy Staff

“At first blush, the two wars appear similar. Both involved a president Bush and the United States in conflicts with Iraq and Saddam Hussein. Then, however, the resemblance ends.”

This is an excerpt from the 278-page book, “War of Necessity, War of Choice,” written by Richard N. Haass, who compares the decisions that brought about the two Iraq wars. He also makes a distinction between the 1991 and the 2003 Iraq wars.

According to Haass, the first Iraq war, after Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait, was a “war of necessity.” It was limited in ambition, well-executed and carried out with a lot of international support. It used air power alone in the beginning phase of the war and sent more than half a million U.S. service members to execute overwhelming military force.

In comparison, the second Iraq war was a “war of choice,” and the most important optional war the United States has fought since Vietnam, according to Haass. Haass argues that it was not necessary, because the United States had other policy options. He also argues that it was fought out of ambition and poorly thought out. Unlike the first war, it had more international opposition than support.

Haass was on the National Security Council staff all four years with the George H. W. Bush administration and at the Department of State the first two and a half years of George W. Bush’s presidency. This book may give readers a better understanding of what really happened with the wars of Iraq, in terms of reasons why the wars were fought, the benefits and the costs. It also offers an examination of U.S. foreign policy, how it should be

Yuma Marines brush up on combat skills on Pendleton

Story by Lance Cpl. Jakob Schulz
The Desert Warrior

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. – Being a non-deployable unit didn’t stop Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron Marines from heading to Camp Pendleton, Calif., recently to brush up on combat skills.

Seventy-six service members participated in the six-day Enhanced Combat Skills course conducted by 1st Marine Logistics Group July 12-18.

The squadron doesn’t want its Marines going into a combat zone and using these skills for the first time, said Lance Cpl. William Hamby, military policeman.

During the exercise, the platoons alternated between standing guard at the camp, patrolling and going on missions.

“A few days of patrolling, going through a town and kicking down doors was a nice change of pace,” said Lance Cpl. Christian Antonio, Intermediate Maintenance Activity asset manager, who was in charge of a simulated patrol.


This is a great book for military personnel to read, especially those who fought in both wars, so they can get a better understanding of what really goes on when the president calls for war.

“War of Necessity, War of Choice” is available at the Mainside Library, Building 1146. The library can be reached at 760-725-5104 or 760-725-5669.

War of Necessity, War of Choice

Richard N. Haass

Richard N. Haass is the president of the Council on Foreign Relations. He has worked for presidents Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, George H. W. Bush and George W. Bush in various posts at the Departments of Defense and State and at the White House. Haass was on the National Security Council staff all four years with the George H. W. Bush administration and at the Department of State the first two and a half years of George W. Bush’s presidency.

They made, what it should accomplish and how it should be


A MEMORIAL OF TWO IRAQ WARS

Richard N. Haass

The Marine Corps has long been a leader in the development of combat skills training. The training was educational, entertaining and built camaraderie between Marines who normally don’t work with each other, said Lance Cpl. William Hamby, military policeman.

During the first day of the exercise, the Marines and sailors set up camp, divided into two platoons and began classes on combat orders, hand and arm signals and patrolling.

Days two and three were similar, with classes in the morning then practical application for the rest of the day. These days included training in fixed-site security, observation theory, combat profiling, controlled-entry points, rear-area security, combat reporting, detecting improvised explosive devices, calling for indirect fire, room clearing and urban operations.

On the final day the Marines were put to the test in a 24-hour field exercise. During the exercise, the platoons alternated between standing guard at the camp, patrolling and going on missions.

“There were a few days of patrolling, going through a town and kicking down doors was a nice change of pace,” said Cpl. Conor Murtagh, Search and Rescue maintenance administrator.

The final mission was a joint search and capture operation between the platoons. One platoon led the assault, attempting to capture three instructors acting as insurgents. After that platoon sustained causalities, the second platoon mobilized a rescue and made their way back to the base.

The Marines were exposed to a lot of things that they had already learned,“ said Capt. Dan Moench, squadron training officer. “It was good for them to refresh their leadership skills and learn through their mistakes and decisions.”
Welcome home, CLB-13

Photos from around the 1st Marine Logistics Group
A look at what Marines and their units are doing this week

Happenings

**UFC Champion Forrest Griffin**

World Famous Ultimate Fighting Champion Forrest Griffin will sign copies of his new book, "Got Fight: The 50 Zen Principles of Hand-to-Face Combat" Aug. 13 from 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. at the Country Store at Mainside Center. Outside of the octagon, Griffin is an ardent supporter of the United Services Organization and the Wounded Warrior Project, a non-profit organization providing aid and empowerment for critically injured veterans.

**Chargers Cheerleaders**

Two Chargers Cheerleaders will be at Electricity at Mainside Center promoting the new Madden NFL 10 video game Aug. 14 from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. The game goes on sale starting at 10 a.m.

**Base Movie Theater**

The Taking of Pelham 123 (R) – Wednesday, Aug. 5, at 6:30 p.m.
The Proposal (PG-13) – Thursday, Aug. 6, at 6:30 p.m., and Friday, Aug. 7, at 6:15 p.m.
Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen (PG-13) – Saturday, Aug. 8, at 9 p.m.

**Bench Press Challenge**

The final event in the Bench Press Challenge Pendleton Series 2009 will be held Oct. 23 at the 52 Area Fitness Center. Weigh-in time is at 10 a.m., and the competition starts at 11:45 a.m. Men and women are encouraged to compete, and awards will be given to first, second and third place winners in all weight classes, as well as overall male and female. For more information, call 763-0657.

**Half-Marathon Registration**

Marine Corps Community Services will hold the Heartbreak Ridge 13.1 Mile Half-Marathon Sept. 19 at 8 a.m. aboard Camp Pendleton. Registration is $40 for civilians before Sept. 4 and $45 after Sept. 4 and on race day; active duty military not on Camp Pendleton pay $35. Active duty military working on Camp Pendleton can register for free. Interested participants can register online at camppendletonraces.com/half.html.

**European Vacation**

Information Tickets & Tours/Latitudes Travel is offering an 11-day European getaway from May 8-19, 2010, for $3,454 (based on double occupancy). The “Essential Europe” trip will include visits to England, France, Switzerland and Italy. Price includes round trip airfare, transportation, breakfast daily, four dinners and guided sightseeing tours. For more information, call 725-5459, or e-mail sherwooda@usmc-mccs.org.

**Free Guitar Lessons**

The Arts & Crafts Hobby Shop is offering free guitar lessons for interested participants. A $25 refundable deposit is required to sign up. Call 725-4880 for availability and to register.

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Gunnery Sgt. Travis R. Schrowe, a maintenance attachment chief with Combat Logistics Battalion 13, Combat Logistics Regiment 17, 1st Marine Logistics Group, 30, from Fresno Calif., is happy to be home with his wife and kids after coming back from deployment. The 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit left Camp Pendleton Jan. 9 and returned home July 31.


Sgt. Nathan Cuellar, a wire chief and platoon sergeant with Combat Logistics Battalion 13, Combat Logistics Regiment 17, 1st Marine Logistics Group, 30, from Watsonville, Calif., holds his daughter for the first time in more than six months.

(Above) Sgt. Tasha M. Monz, a radio operator with Combat Logistics Battalion 13, Combat Logistics Regiment 17, 1st Marine Logistics Group, from Cincinnati, Iowa, plays with her dog, Fes, after being away for more than six months. (Right) Children of Marines with CLB-13, CLR-17, gather around the piñata during a welcome home celebration July 31, for the Marines and sailors returning from deployment. Combat Logistics Battalion 13 returned from their deployment as part of the logistics command element of the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit. They left in early January to support the MEU’s various missions which included humanitarian assistance and disaster relief to decisive combat operations.