

PASS IN REVIEW

OCT. NOV. DEC 2012





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Photo by Sgt. Dengrier M. Baez

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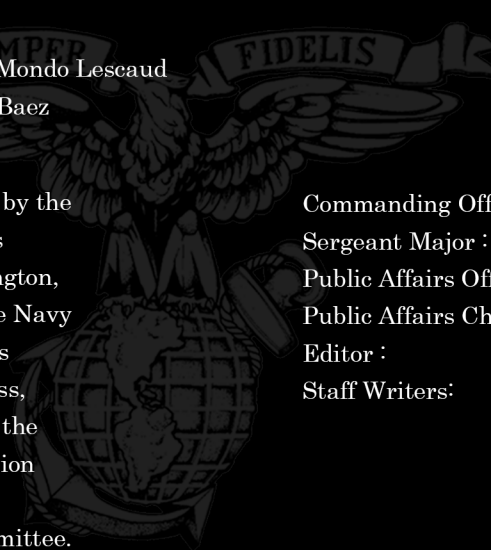
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Front cover photo illustration by Cpl. Mondo Lescaud
Back cover photo by Sgt. Dengrier M. Baez

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Semper Fidelis

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Forum

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Life

Bloom where you're planted

STORY BY CPL. MONDO LESCAUD

“People don't have 100 percent pleasantries in their lives,” said Capt. Jonathan Wagner, Headquarters & Service Company executive officer. “It's up to you to make the best of whatever situation you're put in.”

It was definitely one of the most impactful things I've heard since enlisting into the Marine Corps.

That morning, with everyone still sweaty from the morning's physical training, Wagner stepped into the middle of the circle of Marines to end the training session with these motivating words. It was his personal challenge to the individuals in the company to bloom where they're planted.

As these words reached my ears and swirled around in my head, I simultaneously evaluated my year-long stint here at the Corps' oldest post.

As I concluded my long, hard look in the mirror, still surrounded by the stench of my sweaty peers, junior Marines and leaders, I couldn't help but be a bit disappointed with myself.

Wagner wasn't only focusing on excelling while on duty, but rather in all aspects of life.

Life. This is where I think I've faltered. I joined the Corps open contract and was told I was going to be a combat correspondent upon graduating recruit training. Originally, I wanted to be a mechanic, but under the circumstances, the only way I could enlist was to go open contract.

I figured that at the very least, I could still accomplish one of my goals and

expectations in the Corps, to deploy and see the world as a correspondent, so when I received orders to Washington, D.C., those goals were put on hold for the time being.

Being in the nation's Capitol was a surprise to say the least. It took me a while to truly appreciate the importance of our mission here at the Corps' oldest post.

My lack of understanding and not being able to see the big picture led to some disappointment, therefore affecting my motivation and fighting spirit. At the time, I struggled to improve physically, academically, mentally and professionally. It's easy to blame your situation on other people, but it is hard to admit falling short, especially when it's your own fault.

I snapped out of my self-pity and started making efforts to improve. I started with my roots, athletics. Getting back into basketball and dabbling in weightlifting did a few things for me. First, it improved my physical conditioning and strength. Second, playing hard and with attitude helped me use the stress and anger I had in a productive manner. Third, it improved my outlook and motivation towards the Corps and my military career.

This can prove true for young leathernicks throughout the Corps if every Marine took that short commute to their local gym.

According to www.livestrong.com, exercise improves self-confidence and attitude, and decreases depression and stress. But it wasn't only about me keeping in good physical and mental shape.

Completing a few college classes and using your time wisely can also have a positive effect on your mental state and future success. Applying to college alone

was a huge boost in the photosynthesis of my growth.

Nearly every unit throughout the Corps has an education center with one sole purpose: to help Marines further their education. They are free, friendly, knowledgeable and always willing to help, so try giving them a call.

I was always reluctant to go to college, which is why I enlisted in the Corps right after high school. I was scared of failing out of college and turning into another average or subpar citizen. However, after being in the Corps for approximately two years and doing quite a bit of maturing, I had to re-evaluate my choice of avoiding further academics.

College is cost-effective for active duty service members. There's really no excuse for not at least attempting to take advantage of nearly free college classes during a four-year tenure. The schedule of a nondeployable Marine lends itself very well to online classes, so why not take advantage?

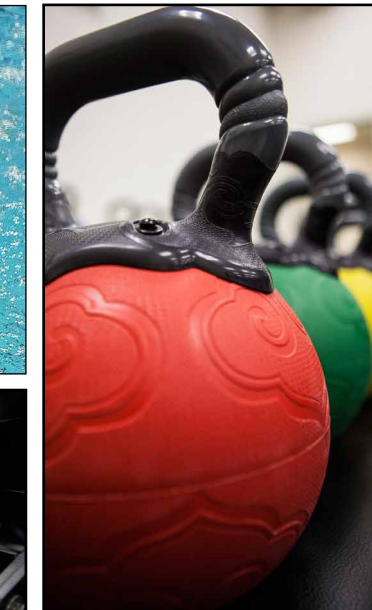
There are many reasons for my temporary mental lapse, and many reasons for my comeback and rise, which is still not completed, and might never be.

I needed to come back for myself, my Marines and my future.

Maybe this roller-coaster ride of an experience will keep the motivators motivated, or maybe it will stop a Marine from regressing too far, or maybe it will serve as a motivational speech for someone close to the point of no return.

Whatever category you think you fall into, I challenge you to do something that can be very hard, bloom where you're planted, particularly Marines at the oldest post of the Corps.

TOURING DC



ENTERTAINMENT

DINING

HISTORY

Staying active in the wintertime

Story and photos by Sgt. Dengrier Baez

During the winter we tend to want to hibernate from the cold weather like bears. But as Marines the option of putting on an extra layer of personal insulation is not on the table. In my time living in Washington, D.C., I found that there are many ways to combat the winter fat and stay fit.

I'm not a huge proponent of gyms full of machines. I prefer calisthenics and using my own body weight as resistance. With that in mind I always look for activities around the city that provide protection from the inclement Mid-Atlantic winter weather and provide opportunities for natural-resistance exercise.

I consider myself lucky because where I live I have large workout areas at my disposal. I don't have to leave the comfort of the building to find a space to perform my normal workout routine. But don't be disheartened if you're lacking space. With a pair of dumbbells, you can execute a number of exercises within the confines of even the smallest room. If you're not a fan of traditional dumbbells, kettle bells make a great alternative. Kettle bells are fun and can give you another range of routines to try. If you don't already have a routine, Jamie C. Dalecki, Marine Corps Community Services sports and fitness director, could assist you with any questions regarding a workout or equipment.

If you don't mind getting some fresh air, there are nearby facilities that have activities worth checking out. The Capitol Region offers everything from yoga to Crossfit but here are a few of my favorite places that can help you get a winter exercise edge and develop that summer beach body.

William H. Rumsey Aquatic Center on Capitol Hill

Besides a scenic run to the Lincoln Memorial and back, I swim whenever possible. It provides me with a high-cardio low-impact workout. I'm not the next Michael Phelps but I push myself with each lap. A few blocks from the Barracks, there's an indoor pool free for military personnel. Although the short walk to the facility in the Eastern market neighborhood during the winter season may leave you a bit chilled, it's definitely worth it. The facility is top-notch and offers an Olympic size swimming pool. The pool can get over-crowded during certain times of the day, so don't be discouraged if it is a little busy during your first venture out. If you want to get toasty before your journey back, jump in the hot tub after your long swim. The aquatic center is open Mon-Fri. 6:30 a.m.-9:30 p.m., Sat. 1:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. and Sun. 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

National Capital YMCA on Rhode Island Ave.

If you're not too keen on being wet, there's always rock climbing. I find that if you push yourself to do the more difficult walls it can be very rewarding. Because of the angles and grips used to climb, your upper body muscles will receive a workout unlike any other. But be warned if it's your first time out, there is a high likelihood you will be sore later in muscles you didn't even know you had. Now, getting to a rock climbing gym might be more of an adventure than you hope for but it's not terrible. The National Capital YMCA is just a metro ride away and the large rock climbing wall there is great. The YMCA is open Mon-Fri. 5:30 a.m.-10:30 p.m., Sat. 8:00 a.m.-6:30 p.m. and Sun. 9:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m.



The National Gallery of Art Sculpture Garden Ice Rink

So, heights are not your thing. You're looking for something fun that makes you break a bit of a sweat. Try ice skating. I highly recommend this as an activity that is enjoyed by both families and individuals. Just a few stops away on the metro you'll find the small rink filled with skaters. During the winter months of mid-November through mid-March the ice skating rink is open at the National Mall. Located inside of The National Gallery of Art Sculpture Garden, this skating rink opens every day. The hours are Mon-Thurs. 10:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m., Fri-Sat. 10:00 a.m.-11:00 p.m. and Sunday 11:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m. and admission is eight dollars. You can rent skates for as little as three dollars, but remember to bring some identification if you want to rent skates or the lockers they have available. There's also a café that offers hot cocoa and other treats that skaters can purchase, sit down and enjoy after a long session of skating.

Let's face it. We're not bears, so shake off that urge to hibernate this winter. Take advantage of the cold weather season to do something different with your workouts. See you out there.



For the *Love*
CORPS

**Barracks Marines honor past,
present and future in ceremonies**



Capt. Christopher J. Biello, the ceremony's adjutant, reads Gen. John A. Lejeune's Birthday Message during the Semper Fidelis Society of Boston's Marine Corps Birthday celebration at the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center Nov. 9.

Photo by Sgt. Dengrier M. Baez

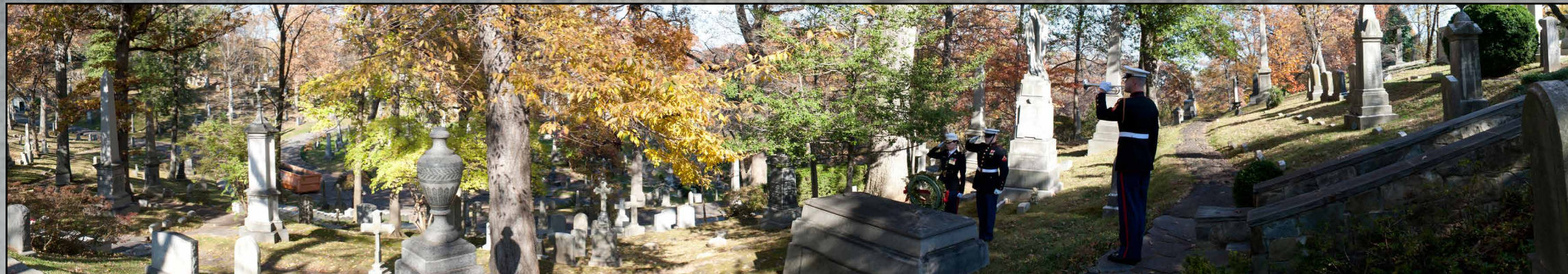


Photo by Cpl. Jeremy Ware

Barracks Marines place a wreath at Col. John Harris' gravesite during a wreath laying ceremony at Oak Hill Cemetery in Washington, D.C., Nov. 11. Marines placed wreaths at the gravesites of various notable Marines in a series of ceremonies around the National Capitol area, including the graves of numerous former sergeants major of the Marine Corps and commandants of the Marine Corps.



Photo by Sgt. Dengrier M. Baez

Barracks Marines escort a Marine Corps birthday cake during the Semper Fidelis Society of Boston's Marine Corps' birthday celebration, held at the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center in Boston Nov. 9.



Photo by Sgt. Dengrier M. Baez

Maj. Thomas Shields, Headquarters and Service Company commanding officer, marches to position during a wreath laying ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery, Va., Nov. 10.

STORY BY SGT. DENGRIER BAEZ



Shortly after putting their pride and esprit de Corps on display for thousands of spectators by performing throughout the summer months, the Marines of the "Oldest Post of the Corps" take time to reflect on the sacrifices of the Marines that came before them as well as celebrate the Corps illustrious history.

This reflective and celebratory season, typically spanning the month of November, is shared with their extended Marine family including Marine Corps leagues and societies, former and active duty Marines and other supporters of the Corps throughout the National Capital Region and beyond.

For more than 237 years, Marines have lived up to their name and upheld the traditions that have become the hallmarks of this elite organization. From Medal of Honor recipients like Cpl. John Mackie to Sgt. Dakota Meyer, Marines have sacrificed their safety and at times their lives in the heat of combat. In memory of these sacrifices and to keep the Corps values of honor, courage and commitment alive, every year on Nov. 10 the Marines of the Barracks honor and celebrate the true spirit of the Corps through a series of special ceremonies.

An integral part of this day is the laying of wreaths at the gravesites of some of the Corps most legendary and awe-inspiring Marines honoring their sacrifices and contributions to the Corps. Each year, several teams comprised of a Marine body bearer, a bugler and a Barracks officer lay the wreaths at the gravesites of Marine Corps legends like Gen. John A. Lejeune, the second Commandant of the Marine Corps Col. William Ward Burrows and Gen. Alexander A. Vandergrift, Medal of Honor recipient and 18th Commandant of the Marine Corps. Each wreath laying is performed with a short moment of silence and crisp salute during the playing of Taps.

"Being a part of this wreath laying ceremony is special," said Lance Cpl. Brian Rochelle, Marine Corps body bearer. "There are only a handful of Marines from the Barracks that get to participate so I feel honored to be out there. It's a privilege to be chosen to go."

In accordance with Barracks tradition, that same day, the Marines of the Barracks converged at the Marine Corps War

Memorial to commemorate the fallen in a parade. This year, the ceremony was hosted by the top leader of the Corps, Gen. James F. Amos accompanied by the 32nd Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. James L. Jones as the guest of honor. During the ceremony Amos and Jones along with Col. Christian G. Cabaniss, the Barracks commanding officer, laid a wreath at the base of the monument.

"The wreath laying ceremony is on behalf of the entire Corps. We're there to represent the Marines that can't be there. The Marines from the past who are no longer with us and the Marines from the present who are deployed," said Cpl. Marcos Cisneros, ceremonial hoster. "Being a part of the ceremony is hard to describe, there's a sense of sadness for those that were lost, but also celebration of the creation of the Marine Corps."

Barracks Marines also participated in other more jovial activities while commemorating the Corps birth, most notably by supporting numerous Marine Corps birthday ceremonies in places like the Library of Congress, the U.S. House of Representatives and the Semper Fidelis Society of Boston to name a few. But no celebration is ever complete without cake and the Marines of the Barracks delivered by providing ceremonial cake escort teams for each event. After practicing for weeks, the escort teams professionalism and dedication were put on display to help keep the Corps decades-old birthday traditions alive. Other members of the Barracks were equally engaged throughout the birthday period. The Commandant's Own, U.S. Marine Drum & Bugle Corps had its hand in supporting many of the ceremonies bringing each ceremony to life with their music. Additionally, the Marine Color Guard and Silent Drill Platoon were also heavily called upon to provide special performances and proudly display the Corps' colors and the stars and stripes.

Altogether, Barracks Marines supported 10 to 15 ceremonies each week during the birthday ball period. Despite the tremendous amount of effort that was required to support the various events the work did not detract from the true meaning of the Corps' birthday.

"The birthday season can be very taxing with commitments every day," said Lance Cpl. Zachary Everett, Barracks operations clerk. "But despite all the stress we never forget what is at the heart of every ceremony we support, and that is the celebration of our Corps' birthday."



Photo by Sgt. Dengrier M. Baez

The U.S. Marine Band performs during the wreath laying ceremony at Marine Corps War Memorial in Arlington, Va., Nov. 10.

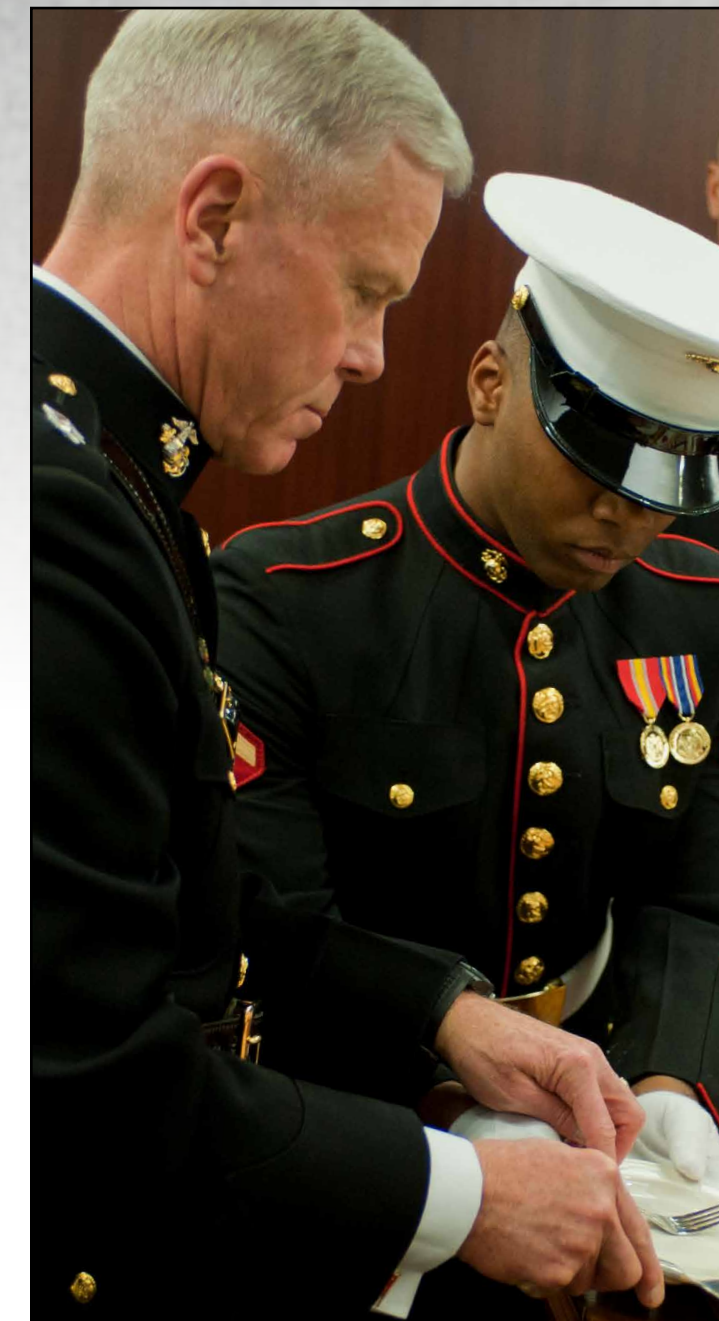


Photo by Cpl. Jeremy Ware

Gen. James F. Amos, Commandant of the Marine Corps, prepares a plate to receive a piece of Marine Corps birthday cake during a cake cutting ceremony at the U.S. House of Representatives Nov. 15.

Bonnie



Photo by Cpl. Jeremy Ware

AMOS

For the First Lady of the Corps, it's all about taking care of Marines and their families.

 Story by Cpl. Mondo Lescaud & Cpl. Jeremy Ware

Marines have been connecting the name Bonnie Amos to a military mother figure for more than the few years she's lived in the Home of the Commandants with her husband of 42 years, Gen. James F. Amos, commandant of the Marine Corps.

The 5-foot-5-inch Floridian has spoken to Marines and their spouses in her soft southern drawl since the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003 when her husband was actively engaged in combat operations with the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing. She's picked them up during tough times, encouraged them forward and motivated them. This is her self-appointed personal challenge, her never-ending Marine Corps mission.

The true amount of happiness her extensive work has produced is priceless. She asks nothing in return, as her satisfaction comes from knowing her love and devotion to God, country and Corps comes to fruition every day, behind closed doors.

Mrs. Amos is an avid supporter of numerous Marine family support programs, lending her time, energy and experience to the causes she sees as the most important to champion.

"I'm a cheerleader for all the goodness that we offer," explained Mrs. Amos, wearing her warm trademark smile. "My job is to hug, to kiss, to express gratitude, and to always let them know that everything they do makes a difference, and they matter. I'm a cheerleader for thanking our spouses for all the sacrifices they make."

Along with the commandant, she has her motherly hands working in the Injured Marine Semper Fi Fund, Military Spouse Employment Partnership, Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors and numerous other Marine and family support programs.

“It is a testament to her dedication to Marine families. She could have asked for anything, but she wanted to have something to help others.”

“I put my name behind organizations that do good things for our Marines and their families,” said Mrs. Amos. “But I’m very careful about that. There are some amazing foundations and charitable organizations out there, but I really zero-in on the ones that focus on our Marines, sailors and their family members.”

While she puts a tremendous amount of effort into bolstering support for these programs, she still finds time to help parent the thousands of spouses and children of the Corps by letting books, authored by professional writers, do the advising.

There are more than 20 books suggested to military families by the First Lady of the Marine Corps. This easily-accessible reading list offers a wide variety of subjects, ranging from spouses finding employment to how children are affected by frequent moves.

Most of her sources of help can be found on eMARINE, what she jests as a present from her husband, as the program was officially acquired by the Corps on her birthday last year. The Corps-wide accessible website is dedicated to getting accurate and up-to-date information to Marines and their spouses. Although the purchase date was fortuitous, she has been an ardent supporter of the program and embraced it as if it were her own. The first lady even maintains a blog on the site where she talks about her journey in the Corps and the advocacy of the programs she supports for Marine families.

“Last year Mrs. Amos asked the commandant to purchase eMarine, feeling that it would be a great vehicle for Marines and their spouses to have access to information about everything from their current and future duty stations to the benefits and resources available to them,” said Lynnette Thompson, the Barracks Family Readiness Officer. “It is a testament to her dedication to Marine families. She could have asked for anything, but she wanted to have something to help others.”

While she has poured her heart into helping Marines, spouses and the programs that support them, she is also dedicated to other duties that are quite literally a little closer to home – hers and her husband’s.



Photo by Sgt. Austin Hazard

Bonnie Amos, First Lady of the Marine Corps, speaks at the beginning of the 2012 Military Spouse of the Year ceremony at Marine Barracks Washington, D.C., May 10.



Photo by Cpl. Mondo Lescaud

Bonnie Amos and Laura Kaeppler, 2012 Miss America, chat during a visit to the Barracks Oct. 22.

Our First Lady

FOR THE SPOUSES

- "SEPARATED BY DUTY, UNITED IN LOVE" BY SHELLIE VANDEVOORDE

- "1001 THINGS TO LOVE ABOUT MILITARY LIFE" BY TARA CROOKS, STAR HENDERSON, KATHIE HIGHTOWER AND HOLLY SCHERER

- "HELP! I'M A MILITARY SPOUSE -- I GET A LIFE TOO" BY KATHIE HIGHTOWER AND HOLLY SCHERER

- "CONFESSIONS OF A MILITARY WIFE" BY MOLLIE GROSS

- "THE MILITARY SPOUSE'S EMPLOYMENT GUIDE: SMART JOB CHOICES FOR MOBILE LIFESTYLES" BY JANET FARLEY

- "THE ROAD HOME: AGAIN. SMOOTHING THE TRANSITION BACK FROM DEPLOYMENT" BY ELAINE DUMLER

- "TRANSFORMATION: THE MINDSET YOU NEED. THE BODY YOU WANT. THE LIFE YOU DESERVE" BY BILL PHILLIPS

- "FAITH DEPLOYED AGAIN" BY JOCELYN GREEN

- "COURAGE AFTER FIRE: COPING STRATEGIES FOR TROOPS RETURNING FROM IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN AND THEIR FAMILIES" BY KEITH ARMSTRONG, SUZANNE BEST AND PETE DOMENICI

- "WOUNDED WARRIOR, WOUNDED HOME" BY MARSELE WADDELL AND KELLY ORR

- "THE 17-DAY DIET" BY MIKE MORENO

- "SERVICE ETIQUETTE, 5TH EDITION" BY CHERLYNN CONETSCO AND ANNA HART

- "A FAMILIES GUIDE TO THE MILITARY FOR DUMMIES" BY SHERYL GARRETT AND SUE HOPPIN

- "THE DAY AFTER HE LEFT FOR IRAQ" BY MELISSA SELIGMAN

- "EATING FOR LIFE" BY BILL PHILLIPS

- "DREAM GIVER" BY BRUCE WILKINSON

- "HEROES AT HOME: HELP AND HOPE FOR AMERICA'S MILITARY FAMILIES" BY ELLIE KAY

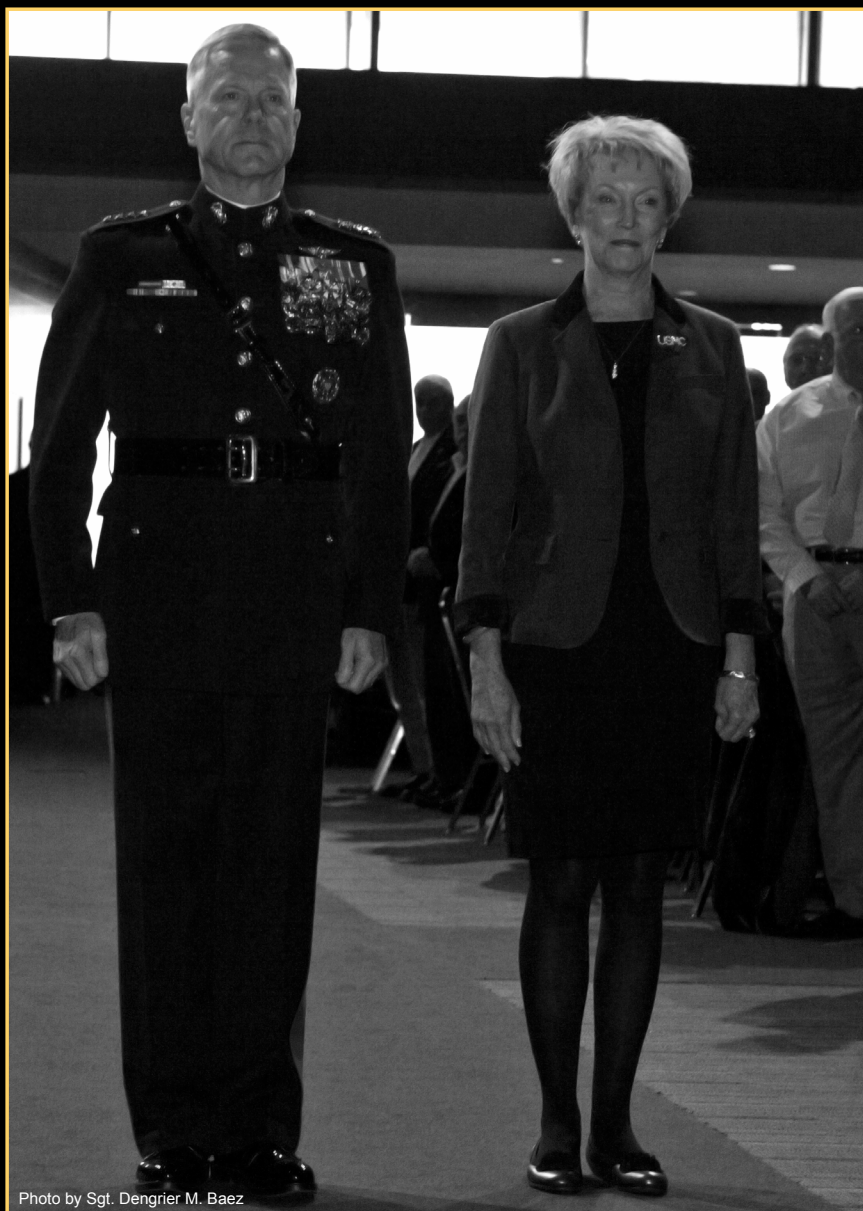


Photo by Sgt. Dengrier M. Baez

Gen. James F. Amos, commandant of the Marine Corps, and Bonnie Amos stand during honors for the commandant at the commencement of the Semper Fidelis Society of Boston Marine Corps birthday celebration at the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center in Boston Nov. 9.



Photo by Cpl. Mondo Lescaud

Bonnie Amos poses for a group photo in the Marine Family Garden outside the Home of the Commandants during a visit from Marine spouses Sept. 20.

“When you think about a Marine family, the spouse is the foundation for the home.”

She has never shied away from opening the doors of the historic Home of the Commandants to welcome guests of all kinds to share her love and passion for the Corps. Embracing the idea of being an ambassador for the Corps' rich history and tradition, the Amos' regularly host official dinners for foreign dignitaries, government officials, military leaders and numerous other VIPs helping to establish, maintain and improve relationships with the people who support the Corps and its mission.

Additionally, tours of the Amos' centuries-old, historical brick home are always open to spouses and Marines, where more often than not, the demands of her husband's job leave the first lady to play host and tour guide by herself, which she willingly does, lending her charm and enthusiasm to warm the hearts of every guest.

“The commandant and the misses really do epitomize the word partnership,” sincerely said Maj. Monica Mellon, a protocol officer for the commandant. “When you think about a Marine family, the spouse is the foundation for the home. They allow that Marine to go out and execute the job and complete the mission. The commandant and the misses are truly that partnership; one can't do it without the other.”

However, as any military couple know all too well, the loving union of marriage doesn't mean everything is done in unison. For true success, both parties need to understand each other's role and support one another.

With the commandant regularly away from home, Mrs. Amos said she truly embraces all of the roles and duties that that might otherwise be shared by a husband and wife are not in the Corps.

“Our marriage has definite benefits; it also comes with tough times with deployments, loneliness and demanding job requirements on the part of the Marine,” expressed Mrs. Amos, as if thinking back on the hardships she has endured. “But I've been a Marine spouse for 42 years now, and I don't know any different. I wouldn't know how to not be who and what I am now.”

Being a Marine spouse presents an abundance of challenges in and of itself. Being the spouse of the commandant is something else entirely, but Mrs. Amos, the mother of two children, four grand children and military mother of more than 200,000, embraces the many challenges and tackles them with the gracefulness of a southern belle and the tenacity of a pit-bull.



G

en. Leonard F. Chapman Jr., 24th commandant of the Marine Corps and former Barracks commanding officer, played a major role in creating what is now considered by many to be one of the most entertaining things do on a Friday night in the nation's capital. During each Friday Evening Parade Barracks Marines set the standard for ceremonial excellence.

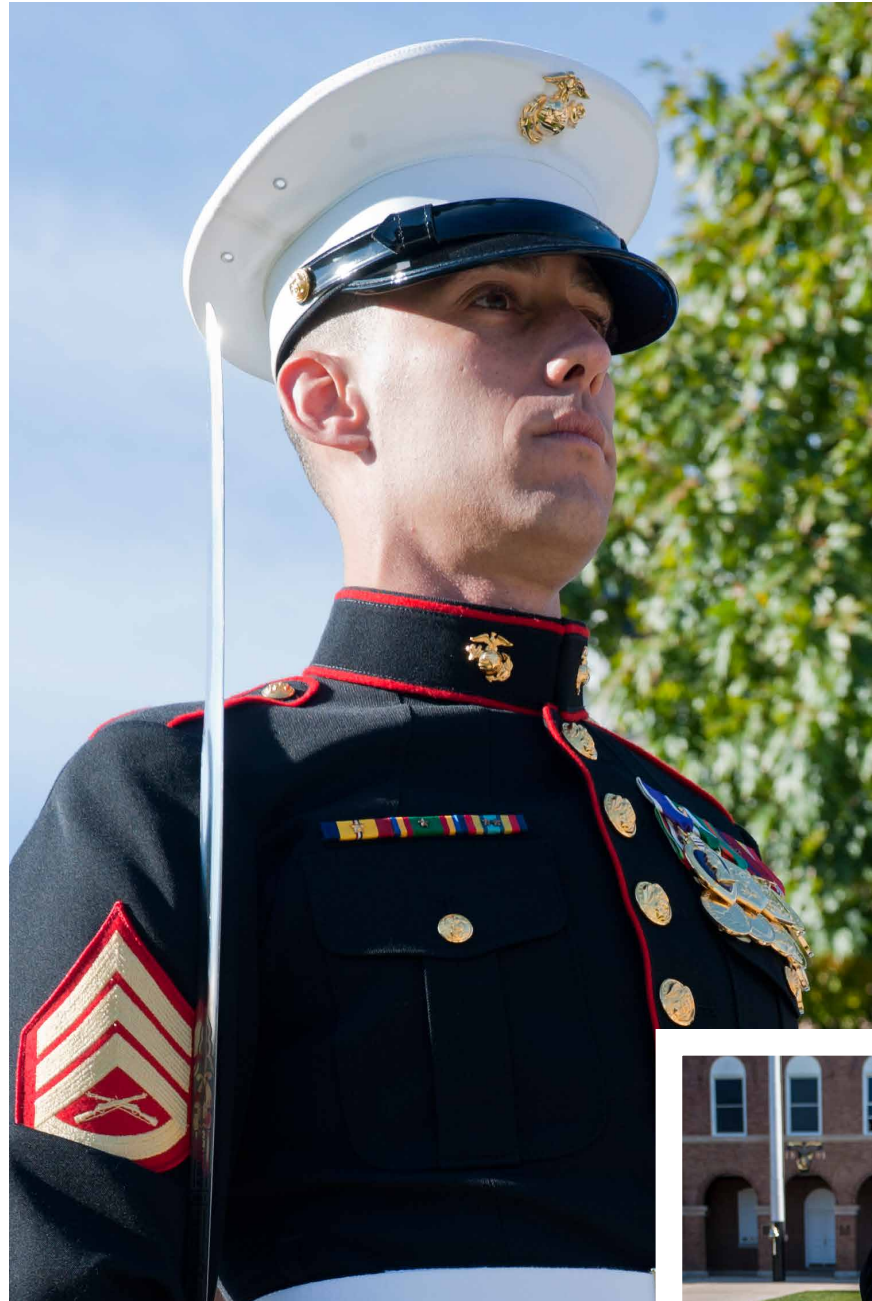


Cpl. Michael D. Wiggleton, a Headquarters and Service Company Marine, marches pass in review during a noncommissioned officer ceremonial drill school evaluation at the Barracks Nov. 16. Wiggleton and other NCOs were evaluated in appearance, bearing and execution of drill movements.



A Marine stands during a staff non-commissioned officer ceremonial drill school evaluation at the Barracks.

S School of *Smooth*



Staff Sgt. Zachary Rubart, a staff noncommissioned officer with Guard Company, executes a carry sword movement during a ceremonial drill school evaluation at the Barracks.



Cpl. Christopher Tryon, a Company B Marine, executes eyes right during a ceremonial drill school evaluation here Nov. 16.

Sgt. Jessica Barringer, a Headquarters and Service Company Marine, executes a return sword drill movement during a noncommissioned officer ceremonial drill school evaluation at the Barracks Nov. 16.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
CPL. MONDO LESCAUD

The crispness of the uniforms, the way the feet glide across the parade field, the booming voices and precise movements are not things that are easily learned. They are hammered into each Marine stationed at the Corps' oldest post through the rigorous ceremonial drill school.

The program is in the good hands of the Barracks drill master, Gunnery Sgt. Anthony Davis. Throughout his career, teaching and learning about drill has been continuous. The native of Macon, Ga., served as a drill instructor

at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Paris Island, S.C., and as the Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 31 ceremonial officer. He is currently on his second year as the Barracks drill master.

Every year, from the start of the fall season through spring, the drill master starts CDS.

His mission is to ensure his students break free of the stiff, close-order drill every Marine learns during basic training and embraces the distinctly smooth

ceremonial drill that has been a part of Barracks tradition for more than 50 years. It's a daunting task for which he is only afforded a few short weeks.

"The biggest difference in the way we do drill as opposed to the way the rest of the Corps drills is our emphasis on smoothness of execution," said Davis. "It can be difficult for a Marine to learn this style after years and years of drilling a different way."

Barracks drill is expected to be

performed on the outer edges of perfection. To achieve this, extra care is placed on ensuring the nuances of each drill movement are preserved and passed on correctly. As Davis focuses on the consistency in instruction throughout the numerous courses, his principal instructors are charged with providing the majority of the hands-on instructing.

This year, Maj. John Barclay, Capt. Christopher Biello and Capt. David Bouchard are the hand-selected instructors for the officers' CDS, while Gunnery Sgt. Faith Osborne, Staff Sgt. Andres Delacueva and Staff Sgt. Prince Covington are the enlisted Marines' instructors. Each of these Marines have extensive experience, all having served as members of the marching staff during numerous Friday Evening

Parades.

Throughout the course, Marines learn everything from the feet-together position of attention that is only used here, to ceremonial sword handling, to the Barracks uniform regulations.

"It was really rewarding for me when I came here, went to CDS, and made the marching staff," explained Covington, whole-heartedly. "The transition wasn't easy for me, especially after training recruits how to drill with intensity at Parris Island for years and years, but now I'm teaching Marines how to drill the Barracks way, nice and smooth."

The concept of smooth drill is not a break from tradition, but the recent incorporation of NCO's, regardless of occupational specialty, into ceremonial

drill school certainly is and the result has changed "ceremonial excellence" from just a buzz word among some Marines into an adherence to a standard.

"This is my second year at the Barracks, the first year I didn't go to ceremonial drill school, but always heard the term ceremonial excellence," said Sgt. Jessica Barringer, fiscal clerk. "In some ways the term was a bit abstract, but after going through CDS for NCO's I have a lot better appreciation for what it really means."

The Marine Corps has always held true to its traditions, and so is the same for the oldest post. With extra emphasis being placed on every Marine attending CDS, age-old traditions are being upheld as the Barracks marches on.



“As I sat there and heard the President of the United States speak, all I could think about is last year’s Independence Day. I was sitting with a cast on my leg and crutches by my side outside the barracks watching the fireworks, worried that I would be dropped from boot camp - my dream, over.” said the 26-year-old lance corporal as he remembered the citizenship ceremony held at the White House.

Mamadou Diallo, currently assigned to Marine Corps Institute Company as an online message board clerk, would have a long journey before his American Dream. Like many immigrants, Diallo comes from humble beginnings. Born and raised in Conarky, the capital city of Guinea in West Africa, he spent the majority of his young life fighting to survive. In a city stricken with poverty and violent unemployment strikes Diallo had little prospects for success. At age 19 Diallo knew it was time for change. Change for a better life.

“The elders and even people with an education weren’t able to find anything,” said Diallo. “I needed to find a way to better my situation and that’s when a friend spoke to me about the lottery.”

Diallo didn’t gamble on numbers to become rich but instead in a U.S. visa lottery given annually to approximately 100,000 people around the world. In 2006, the college-bound youngster applied for the opportunity.

“I kept thinking about it as time passed,” remembered Diallo. “Things in my country weren’t getting any better.”

Little did Diallo know that things would change in his favor.

“A friend told me I’d been awarded a visa through the lottery,” he said. “I was very excited to see something different. See a new world.”

Arriving in the U.S. meant Diallo would have to find a way to earn his keep. For nearly 18 months, he drove a taxi cab in New York City while he stayed with his 29-year-old cousin, Binta, in the Bronx.

“Customers would always look at me strange because I look younger



Photo courtesy of Mamadou Diallo
Pfc. Mamadou Diallo shakes hands with President Barack Obama during a naturalization ceremony at the White House July 4.

than I really am,” said a smiling Diallo. “They would tell me to go back to school or do something with my life since I was so young. Everyone thought I was a young teen.”

He remembers one time being asked by an Army soldier riding in his taxi cab if he ever considered joining the military. Diallo eventually took the advice and decided to serve.

“I always heard that Marines were the best of the best and that’s what I wanted to be,” said Diallo. “I knew it would be a challenge and it was going to be hard but that’s what I wanted.”

On June 13, 2011 Diallo stepped on to Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island, S.C., as a new recruit. His dream was put on hold in less than five weeks of his arrival. Diallo received a stress fracture during training and was sent to the Medical Rehabilitation Platoon to recover.

Diallo spent 37 mind-numbing days in rehabilitation. But he stayed focused, rejoined a training platoon and graduated from recruit training Oct. 21, 2011.

“I had faith and that’s what got me through it,” said Diallo. “Earning the eagle, globe and anchor was far from easy and that’s something I’ll never forget.”

After completing his military occupational specialty he was assigned to the Barracks.

“Being new to the Marine Corps I didn’t know much about this assignment but I knew it was unique,” said the MCI Co. Marine. “I didn’t know what to expect but I was excited.”

Diallo was able to apply for citizenship after being at the Barracks for three months. Little did he know his

dream of becoming an American would culminate center stage in the East Wing of the White House or that the President of the United States would be there personally to congratulate him on his newfound citizenship.

“It was an honor and one of the highlights of my life to meet the President,” said Diallo.

After meeting President Obama, Diallo was invited back on the same day of the ceremony to watch the fireworks at the White House. While at the fireworks display, he noticed a female being harassed by a group of rowdy males. He intervened and offered to escort the woman to wherever she was going. He escorted the lady until she felt safe and bid her a good evening.

“I didn’t like the way those guys were harassing that lady and so I just walked up to them, about a group of five or six, and asked what was the problem,” said Diallo. “I was a bit nervous but I couldn’t let them know that. I walked with the lady and told her I was a Marine and that I would walk with her until she felt safe.”

Following the incident, the woman e-mailed Gen. Joseph Dunford, then the assistant commandant of the Marine Corps and one of the residing generals of the Barracks. After Dunford received the email from the woman outlining Diallo’s actions, Diallo was recognized by the general and the command here at the Barracks.

Diallo continues to lead by example today at the oldest post of the Corps, in and out of uniform. From his humble beginnings in Guinea to the nation’s capital, Diallo exemplifies what it truly means to be a Marine, an American- a citizen.



Photo courtesy of Mamadou Diallo
Pfc. Mamadou Diallo receives his certificate of naturalization after a naturalization ceremony at the White House July 4.

Journey to a Dream

Photo by Sgt. Dengrier M. Baez



Cpl. Don Rylance, Marine Barracks Washington, D.C., Guard Company Marine, carries a concrete cylinder during the Third Annual Iron Team Endurance Competition in Laurel, Md., Sept. 26.

BLOOD & TEARS SWEAT

Barracks Marines put skills to test in endurance, strength and tactical competition



A team of Guard Co. Marines work together in paddling a boat during the Third Annual Iron Team Endurance Competition in Laurel, Md., Sept. 26.



Cpl. Timothy Bradbury, Guard Co., lifts a log in a log-flip event during the Third Annual Iron Team Endurance Competition in Laurel, Md., Sept. 26.



Both teams of Marine competitors pose for a group photo after the Third Annual Iron Team Endurance Competition in Laurel, Md., Sept. 26.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY CPL. MONDO LESCAUD



Before the sun came up on a brisk September morning, eight highly-trained Marines from Guard Company, Marine Barracks Washington, rode in a 12-passenger van to Laurel, Md., hauling all the supplies needed for their grueling task ahead.

For Sgt. Craig Daugherty, the team's leader, their challenge was not only to complete the Third Annual Iron Team Endurance Competition, but to win it.

The competition was hosted by the Special Operations Division of Prince George's County Police Department. The unit invited 29 four-man teams from various police units, Special Forces and SWAT agencies from all

across the east coast to test their tactical abilities & prowess on the demanding course.

Blood

With gas masks donned, each member of the two teams got their hands scraped up within 20 seconds of the starting horn as they dragged a 10-foot boat chain through the grass for 50 yards. They dropped the heavy metal links to regroup and take hold of a monstrous 1,000-pound tire and flip it 10 times, an effort that put their able bodies to the test. Then they ran to the other side of the field to navigate a station of make-shift monkey bars and pull-ups.

Competitors were also timed in completing a 25-yard log flip, 20 squats and cleans with a bar weighted by concrete blocks and chains, a concrete-filled barrel roll, individual tire flip, and sprints to finish the competition.

The team finally peeled off the masks and started the next part of the course, one that would wear out their legs, instead of mangle their hands and arms.

Sweat

A three-quarter-mile run to the lakeshore followed by a mile-long boat paddle and 100-yard boat carry. Then, a half-mile run on the sand stood before the young men and the next event.

"I'll admit, I coughed up some of my breakfast on that run," said Guard Co. competitor, Cpl. Don Rylance, with an exhausted smile.

"But my episode was nothing compared to [Cpl. Sam Gallu's]," he said, recalling his teammates struggle to keep down the morning meal. "It just shows how we all were really giving it all we had."

Already sweaty and wet from the run and boat paddle, they then

crossed the lake using a rope in the water. The entrance to a 3.5-mile trail run greeted the soaked Marines on the other side of the lake.

Tears

Daugherty said he had high hopes for his hard-charging Marines. After a respectable performance from the two youngest and least experienced teams, the second team walked up to the announcer and accepted fourth place.

"Next year, our goal will to beat out Montgomery County SWAT [the winners of the past three competitions]," said Daugherty. "But overall, I couldn't ask any more from these guys."

The two teams fought hard, and finished in the top 10, at fourth and ninth place. Next year, they said they plan to train longer and harder for the competition, with hopes of both teams finishing in the top three.



Always on the Job



STORY AND PHOTO
BY CPL. JEREMY WARE

On the crisp winter morning of Jan. 10, 2011, a Marine sergeant drove to work. Nothing was unusual about the day. He stopped by his favorite convenience store for coffee and a snack before continuing on his route to Marine Barracks Washington D.C. where he served as guide for 1st Platoon, Company A.

Traffic continued at its normal pace that day, but when Sgt. Aaron Spardone, passed near a burning garage attached to a tall green house on A Street Southeast everything changed. As Spardone looked out the passenger side window he saw something that sticks with him to this day.

“I didn’t know what I was looking at, at first. The car in front of me just kept driving like nothing was wrong, but I saw smoke and flames,” Spardone said.

In 2008 Spardone spent seven months in Iraq leading his platoon on foot and mounted patrols through the streets of Fallujah.

As a corporal responsible for 10 Marines, Spardone developed a nose for danger.

It was not a combat mission, but he sensed danger. Lives were at stake and Spardone was compelled to action.

“I pulled my car over and called 911, and then I went to see if there was anything I could do. The heat from the garage fire was too intense for me to approach the SUV in the garage, so I ran to the house to make sure no one was inside. I knocked on every door I could find but no one was answering because they were still asleep,” Spardone explained.

Spardone faced a tough decision, to break down the door or wait for the fire department to do it. With the flames of the fire licking the house and growing larger by the minute he had no time to wait, the door had to come down. As he drew in a few quick deep breaths in preparation of breaking down the wooden barrier, a miracle happened. The door opened and Spardone was face-to-face with Dan Turton, the White House’s deputy director of legislative affairs for the House of Representatives and father of three small children asleep inside.

“I told him about the fire and we got everyone out of the house and to safety,” Spardone said.

Unknown to Spardone at the time, inside the burning SUV was Turton’s wife, Ashley, who had crashed into her garage and lost consciousness after losing control of her vehicle.

While the garage was destroyed, the house sustained little damage thanks to the quick actions of Spardone and the rapid response of the fire department and other emergency personnel.

Spardone was awarded a Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal for his actions that cold January morning. The award is for meritorious achievement performed above and beyond the call of duty.

“I am incredibly honored to be recognized, but I didn’t do what I did because of the award. I did it because it was the right thing to do,” Spardone said. “Any Marine would have done the same thing. I only wish I could have gotten there sooner before the fire grew, I might have been able to get the woman out of the car alive.”

KEEPERS OF EXCELLENCE

STORY AND PHOTOS BY CPL. MONDO LESCAUD



A way from the spotlight, there's a Marine whose work is viewed by the Corps' and at times the country's and even the world's most influential people. Their efforts are often unrecognized but seldom unnoticed. Wearing black slacks and a white chef's jacket, the Marines move with precision and confidence while attending to others ensuring that the mission of perfection is always achieved.

If you've never attended a social event hosted at Marine Barracks Washington, D.C., then you probably haven't encountered such professionalism. Proud men and women, in the direct service of some of the Corps' most senior officers residing here at the Barracks work tirelessly in the

shadows, ensuring an unparalleled experience for every Barracks guest. They are the Corps' ambassadors to the palate, the Marine enlisted aides.

The Barracks is home to the commandant of the Marine Corps, the assistant commandant and two lieutenant generals. These busy Marines and their equally busy wives occupy their respective abodes barely enough to call it a home, but the aides make it feel like one.

"Enlisted aides relieve the commandant, assistant commandant, and select general-grade officers of basic duties in the home," said Gunnery Sgt. Charles Hughes, second-highest ranking

for the commandant. "We do the meals, uniform preparation, entertainment during social events, and anything in-between."

Commonly called upon to be a jack of all trades, they are most commonly known for their culinary skills. Like a true artisan each beautifully prepared meal is brought to life by their skilled hands, often working late into the evening, nothing frozen or ready-made.

As dusk falls, music, laughter and the buzz of conversation fill the air in the upper chambers of the centuries-old, brick home here at the Barracks. Below, in the tight quarters of the basement kitchen, Marine aides move like a well-orchestrated ballet as they maneuver to create amazing delicacies with a speed and precision achieved only through the best training and years of experience.

The privilege of working in that kitchen is only afforded to food service noncommissioned officers who rise above their peers. After being hand-selected to participate in the enlisted aide program, Marines go through a trial period of observation.

They are evaluated on their attention to detail while cooking and cleaning, appearance, demeanor, dependability and how well they can represent the Corps while working in the home of a general. From the beginning of their evaluation to the day they leave the post the Marine aides are never hard-pressed to find work.

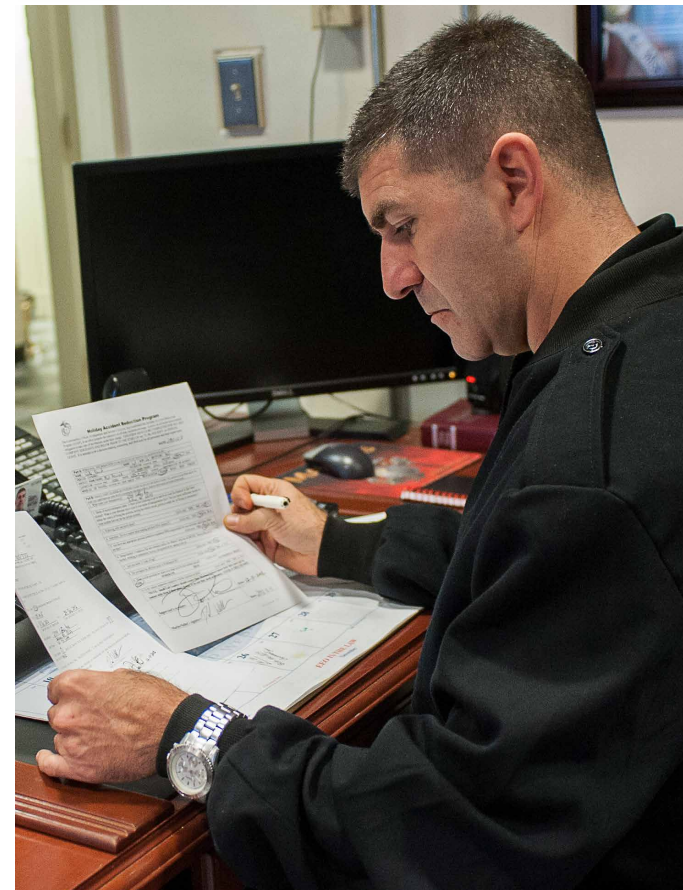
"There's always something to do," said Master Sgt. David Peacock, top enlisted aide for the commandant, chuckling, as he made good use of the down time to organize his desk. "Gunnery Sgt. Hughes and I have gotten used to the 18-hour days."

A lot is expected of the noncommissioned officers and staff NCOs that work for their respective generals. Throughout the year they are called upon to make elaborate cakes, exquisite dinner-party foods, and even occasionally bring forth their artistic side with an ice carving.

The nature and demands of service to the Corps' top generals make the Marine aides here well-respected within the military's enlisted aide community and the highly sought-after skills attained and honed here can provide a gateway to service outside the Corps.

"There's always progression for us," explained the middle-aged Hughes, with two other Marines emphatically agreeing with him as they darted around the office space in the basement. "After all of the training we go through, our billets are equivalent to, or higher than, an executive chef in the civilian sector." Additionally, the skills attained from working as a Marine enlisted aide can lead to other assignments within the Department of Defense or even the White House, said Hughes.

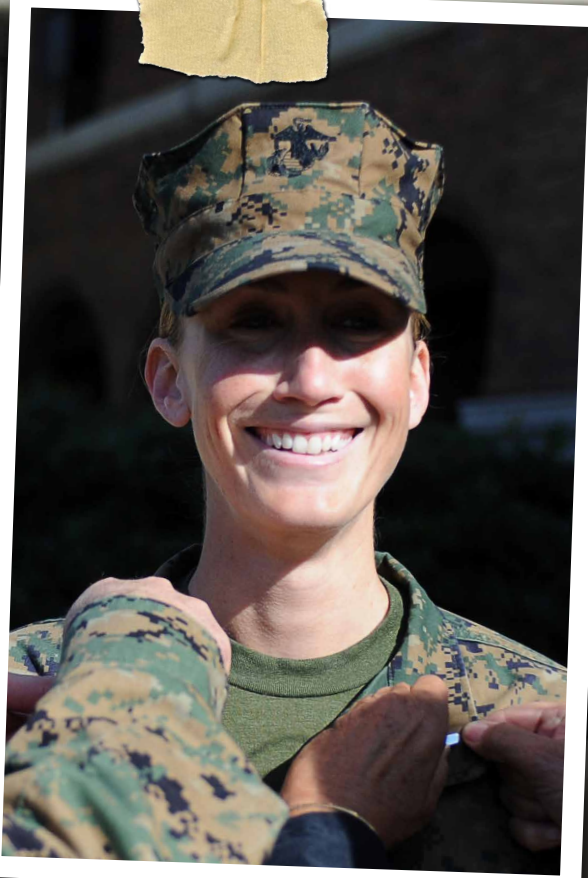
For Marines like Hughes, the job of an aide is both rewarding and demanding, but whatever the challenge, these unseen men and women will continue to serve as the Corps' ambassadors of the palate, ensuring that their mission of perfection is always achieved.



Master Sgt. David Peacock, top enlisted aide for the commandant of the Marine Corps, executes administrative duties relating to the Marine enlisted aide program at the office inside the Home of the Commandants, Dec 13.



A Marine enlisted aide cooks a meal in the kitchen of the Home of the Commandants prior to an event in the house Dec. 14.



Around  Barracks



TACTICAL Practical

Running plays a big role in the Corps' physical training, what's the best fit?

STORY BY CPL. JEREMY WARE

Marines run a lot. Even our annual physical fitness test requires us to run three miles, a longer distance than any other branch. Before I joined the Marine Corps I ran a little, however, I would never describe myself as a runner. Running often, whether recreational or for training, has made me become a runner.

With this status change came a few growing pains. Shin splint and lower back pain started due to the running I did at my military occupation school. I ran in the shoes I was issued in recruit training because I didn't know any better.

As the pain increased, I began to seek out help to fix my problem, and I soon realized my shoes were essentially broken.

I had my eyes opened to the endless choices of athletic footwear when I went to the local footwear store. Figuring out exactly what I needed required some help and the gentlemen dressed up as referees were more than happy to assist.

There are four basic types of running shoes – trail, flats, road and barefoot, also known as minimalist.

Road shoes are designed for long runs on concrete surfaces. They

offer a lot of cushion to the runner's heel. They also feature a distinct drop from the heel to the toe of the shoe. This is the manufacture's way of fixing your stride, and minimizing the shock to your knees if you strike the ground heel first. The most important thing about road shoes is they are designed to last for approximately 500 miles; this distance varies from runner to runner. The cushioning compresses over time rendering the shoe counterproductive. This is what happened to me at training school.

Trail shoes are made for the off-road. They are built in a similar fashion to a road shoe, but they have better grip on the bottom of the shoe and some armor around the toe and heel. These features give the runner protection from rocks and other obstacles on the ground.

Flats have no drop from the heel to the toe. This design promotes the runner to strike the ground mid-foot first. They are best used for running 200 to 400 meter sprints, or middle distance runs. They offer little to no cushion between your foot and the ground, so a track is where this shoe performs the best.

The newest trend to the running industry is the barefoot or minimalist shoe. It offers no drop from the heel to the toe of the shoe, and very little padding or protection from the elements. This style of running is best for trails

and not made for long runs on concrete surfaces, because there is no protection from shock on your joints.

All four kinds of these shoes can be found at your local shoe store, and the internet allows you to find items that might not be carried locally.

When I first went online I was overwhelmed by the vast choices available. But I soon found runnersworld.com and their shoe advisor program.

The website initially asks several questions, ranging from your height and weight, to how much you run and how your foot strikes the ground. After running all your answers through an algorithm, the site shows you approximately 20 options that should suit your running style. I felt much less overwhelmed and alone with this program assisting me.

Since I run on the unforgiving streets of Washington, D.C., I chose a trainer running shoe. It features a lightweight design and plenty of cushioning for those long runs to the Washington Monument and beyond.

These shoes should last me about four months, maybe a little longer because of the winter. When it starts to warm up again I know, I'll need a new pair of running shoes, and I'll return to the internet to find a flash pair for the next 500 miles. Such is the life of a runner.

LANCE CPL. BRIAN ROCHELLE, A BODY BEARER, SALUTES DURING A CEREMONY AT ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY, VA., NOV. 10. WREATHS WERE PLACED AT THE GRAVESITES OF VARIOUS NOTABLE MARINES AS PART OF THE COMMEMORATION OF THE CORPS' BIRTHDAY. THE 21-YEAR-OLD MARINE IS PART OF COMPANY B, MARINE BARRACKS WASHINGTON, D.C., AND IS A NATIVE OF PULASKI, VA.



PHOTO BY SGT. DENGRIER BAEZ

	Road	Flats	Trainer	Barefoot
The Shoe				
				

