

PASS IN REVIEW

SUMMER 2011



Photo by Lance Cpl. Mondo Lescaud



Pass in Review

Summer 2011

Front and back cover photos by Cpl. Austin Hazard

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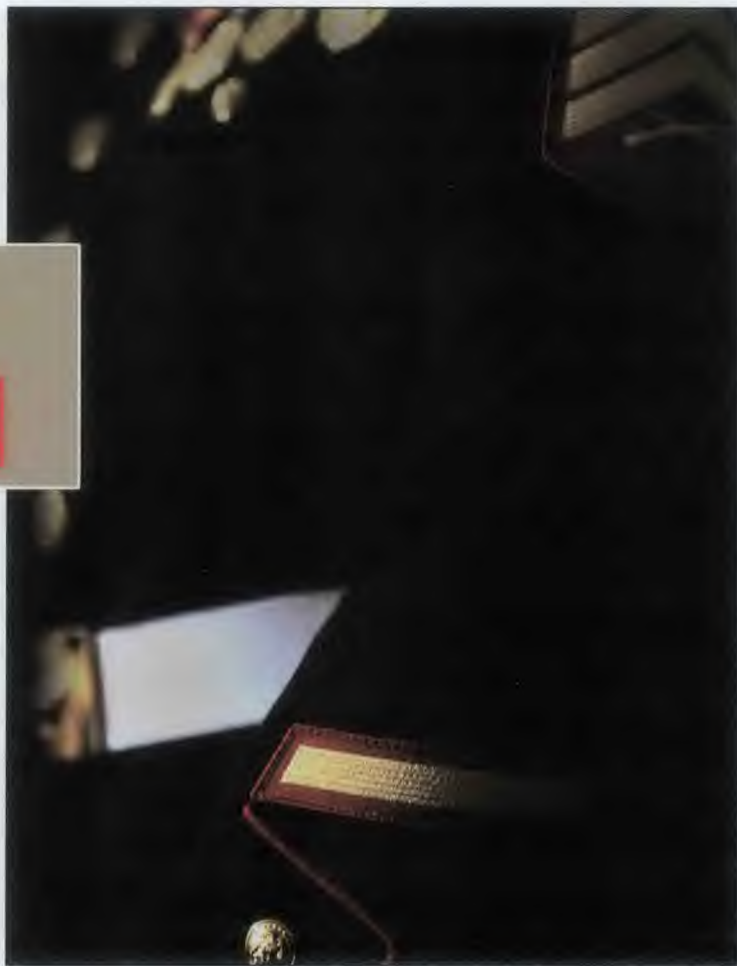


Forum

1801

By Cpl. Austin Hazard

Weeding out the Corps



In recent years, only two things prevented you from re-enlisting in the Marine Corps if you weren't ready to leave just yet: negative paperwork and submitting too late. Now, the only thing keeping you out, regardless of how early you apply, is you.

The Corps had fallen into the unfortunate practice of retaining the first Marines to re-enlist, letting good Marines go because their packages were later than others and allowing subpar Marines to stick around because they squeezed in before the spaces filled up.

With the new retention procedures, approved by the commandant of the Marine Corps in Marine Administrative Message 273/11, the better qualified Marines will stand a greater chance in the years to come.

The new policy places Marines on a four-tiered setup, where Tier 1 is "eminently qualified" and Tier 4 is "below average." The system works by averaging different statistics from your job field, such as rifle scores, martial arts belt levels, and physical fitness scores, and grading you compared to the average scores of your peers.

This is a major improvement over the old approach, which operated on a first-come, first-served basis. I saw several unworthy individuals slip through the cracks and take another four years while good, motivated Marines were out of luck because someone else got to his career planner first.

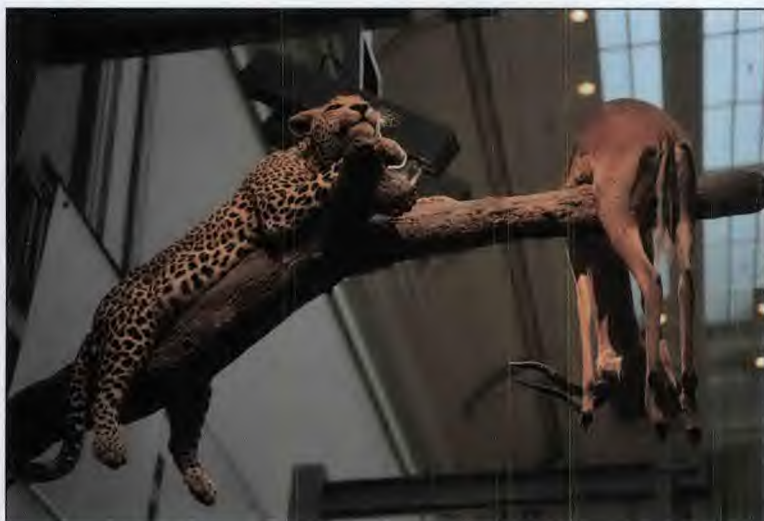
I expect to see the Corps slowly weed out its ranks and strengthen itself with quality instead of quantity as it cuts back on the total number of Marines. That better quality was the precise intent of these changes.

However, the new procedure is not perfect either and a few good Marines may be lost to it. A Marine I know, a hard worker who brings a lot to the table, a former candidate for the Marine Corps running team, almost didn't make the cut because of one low score. That score dragged him from what would have been a Tier 1 or Tier 2 position down to Tier 3, below many of the Marines he was competing against.

No, it isn't perfect, but it's certainly an improvement. A few quality Marines may be filtered out with the new policy, but far more will be saved by it, no longer wedged out by the few quick-to-act, substandard individuals.

Regardless of how you feel about the change, Marines should place more stock in their various qualifications and scores. They don't just affect your promotions anymore, they affect your overall future in the Corps.

So the next time you go to the rifle range, don't settle for marksman or low sharpshooter, visit the indoor simulated marksmanship trainer (ISMT) to hone your skills; don't slow down at the end of your physical fitness test or combat fitness test because you're a little tired, find that final sprint; and don't neglect your regular responsibilities or let your work ethic slip. All of those things will determine whether the Corps decides to keep you or someone else. The only obstacle in your path is you.



Touring DC: National Museum of Natural History

By Cpl. Austin Hazard

I recently took my family to see the National Museum of Natural History, a major Smithsonian site along the National Mall.

It was a big place, 325,000 square feet of exhibitions and public space according to its website, but not so big you can't knock it out in a single visit. And don't forget, it's Smithsonian, so it's free.

Like everywhere else in Washington, parking is not free and this museum doesn't have any of its own, so you'll have to fend for yourself if you drive there. However, there are several metro stations in the area, including the Smithsonian Metro Station less than a block away.

The main downside to going to any museum is that most are primarily static and therefore somewhat boring. Not to mention I never have the interest nor the patience to read through the placards on every exhibit. Yet the folks curating this museum seem to understand this; yes, there are more placards and informational stands here than I could count in a day, but several sections are interactive and many are creative and original by design.

As I'm sure many would agree, the Hall of Mammals and dinosaur exhibits were the most interesting and held our attention the longest. Especially in the elaborate Hall of Mammals, the detail and positioning of the animals were unique as well as entertaining. One of the displays was a stuffed giraffe, its front legs bowed outward as the giant mammal awkwardly bent over to drink from a pool of water. Such lifelike positions and scenes were natural and appealing, seemingly counter to what the average museum appears to aim for. This type of layout was commonplace in the Hall of Mammals.

The Sant Ocean Hall, which should have been one of the more enthralling attractions, was actually one of the more dull. Aside from the life-sized whale model hanging in the center of the room and a few

intriguing creepy crawlies in the back of the exhibit, there was little to keep us in the area for more than 15 or 20 minutes.

The Hall of Bones was a cool sidetrack, more interesting than the Sant Ocean Hall, and literally gave you an inside look of a large variety of animals. But the Hall of Human Origins that follows it is much more dense and much less entertaining. This hall simply consisted of a collection of human remains throughout the centuries and a breakdown of the differences in each track of human progression.

The museum also featured a worthwhile photography exhibit, which ended Sept. 25, and a very impressive assortment of precious gems, including the Hope Diamond, which the site states will be moved to a new setting in November. The museum hosts a number of temporary, varying exhibits throughout the year, such as the world-class photography collection, so you will see something fresh and new every visit.

If you plan on making a day of this museum, I strongly suggest you pack a lunch. I paid \$47 for two bacon cheeseburgers and drinks, and fast food would have tasted better. Beware of the desserts, too. I tried a flan, which was topped with what I can only describe as fermented berries. Our dining experience was easily sub par, but my wallet still took the hit.

The insect portion of the museum was short, but sweet, intriguing enough for how quick it was. This section actually extended further, but for a fee. With admission, you could continue on to see the butterfly pavilion and an exhibit that analyzes the evolution of and relationship between plants and insects. At \$5 a ticket, and after a nearly \$50 meal, we declined to see this corner of the museum.

Our two-year-old son grew impatient and we had to leave before we could check out the IMAX theater there, but still had time left in their business hours (10 am to 5:30 pm) when we departed. Anyone who doesn't experience an abbreviated trip like I did will likely see the entire museum, including the IMAX, within five or six hours, assuming you don't try to read every placard in the place. But even for families with small children, the museum will likely hold their attention for the majority of the trip, as it did with my son.

Overall, the National Museum of Natural History was both entertaining and informative. Original animal displays, a plethora of topnotch rotating exhibits and even a world-famous diamond should put this Smithsonian museum high on your list of sites to see in D.C.

For more information about the museum or for museum hours, visit www.mnh.si.edu.



ORIGINAL MONTFORD POINTERS
1943-1946

The Corps' Living Legacy

Story by Cpl. Dengrier Baez

Every branch of the U.S. armed forces has its own legacy and traditions. The Marine Corps is known for upholding its traditions and never forgetting its storied history, good or bad.

One chapter of the Corps' history depicts a tumultuous time when things changed drastically — World War II.

On top of the war, the country and military services were dealing with the cultural and social issue of discrimination. In 1941, to help address the issue, President Roosevelt established Executive Order 8802, also known as the Fair Employment Act. The presidential directive prohibited employment discrimination in the United States and gave African-Americans an opportunity to enlist in the Marine Corps.

The men came from every part of the country to start basic training, but were still segregated. African-American Marines received their basic training at Montford Point, a facility in Jacksonville, N.C., instead of the traditional boot camps of Parris Island, S. C., and San Diego.

Nearly 70 years later, part of this history was revisited when the Montford Point Marines were hosted as the guests of honor in the final parade of the 2011 season at Marine Barracks Washington, Aug. 26.

"It's an overwhelming feeling to see the original Montford Pointers being honored at an event like this," said John Tabler, a member of the Quantico chapter of the Montford Point Marine Association. "The amount of attention and respect that those guys received was amazing."

The visitors highlighted during the ceremony were a small portion of the approximately 20,000 men who received basic training at Montford Point between 1942 and 1949.

The Montford Point Marines walked the grounds prior to and after the ceremony to talk with the men and women who joined the Corps during a time of war, just as they did nearly seven decades ago.

"It was a nice experience sharing with the Montford Marines," said Sgt. Christopher Bryant, the Barracks assistant supply chief. "I considered it an honor



Gen. James F. Amos, the commandant of the Marine Corps, greets Alpha P. Gainous, a Montford Point Marine, at the doors of Truman Crawford Hall at Marine Barracks Washington, Aug. 26.

Photo by Lance Cpl. Mondo Lescaud



Sgt. Maj. Micheal Barrett, the sergeant major of the Marine Corps, shares a laugh with James Furguson, a Montford Point Marine, at a breakfast function in Truman Crawford Hall Aug. 26.

Photo by Lance Cpl. Mondo Lescaud

Montford Point Marines

being around those guys.”

Earlier this summer, the Montford Point Marines had a chance to enjoy part of the parade experience when the Silent Drill Platoon performed at the opening of the association's convention, held in Atlanta in mid-July.

“Performing at the convention was definitely a great experience,” said Lance Cpl. Steven Akarim, a member of the SDP. “It's definitely a good feeling to be able to show our appreciation to these gentlemen for what they've done and what they stood for.”

The Montford Point Marines made the final parade of the season special to the Barracks' Marines for many reasons.

“The Marines really appreciated what the men of Montford Point endured during a time of change and adversity,” said retired Gunnery Sgt. Jason Mathis, president of the Quantico chapter of the Montford Point Marine Association.

Today, Camp Johnson occupies the legendary grounds of Montford Point, named in honor of the late Sgt. Maj. Gilbert H. “Hashmark” Johnson.

Johnson was one of the first African-Americans to join the Corps, a distinguished Montford Point drill instructor and a veteran of World War II and the Korean War.

The camp remains the Corps' only Marine Corps installation named in honor of an African-American.

The contributions of the Montford Point Marines continues to this day, as their association plays a major role in supporting educational assistance in multiple communities, veterans programs, and through the promotion of community services.

The association works to improve the social conditions of their veterans, local families, youth and the growing population of senior citizens.

The Montford Point Marines, their association and its members remain a close part of the “Marine Corps family,” and a pillar in the history of the world's finest fighting organization.



Photo by Cpl. Austin Hazard

Several Montford Point Marines walk down Center Walk with Gen. James F. Amos and his wife at the start of the last Friday Evening Parade of the 2011 season Aug. 26.



Photo by Cpl. Dengrier Baez

George Kidd, a Montford Point Marine, signs the guest book at the conclusion of the last Friday Evening Parade of the 2011 season Aug. 26.

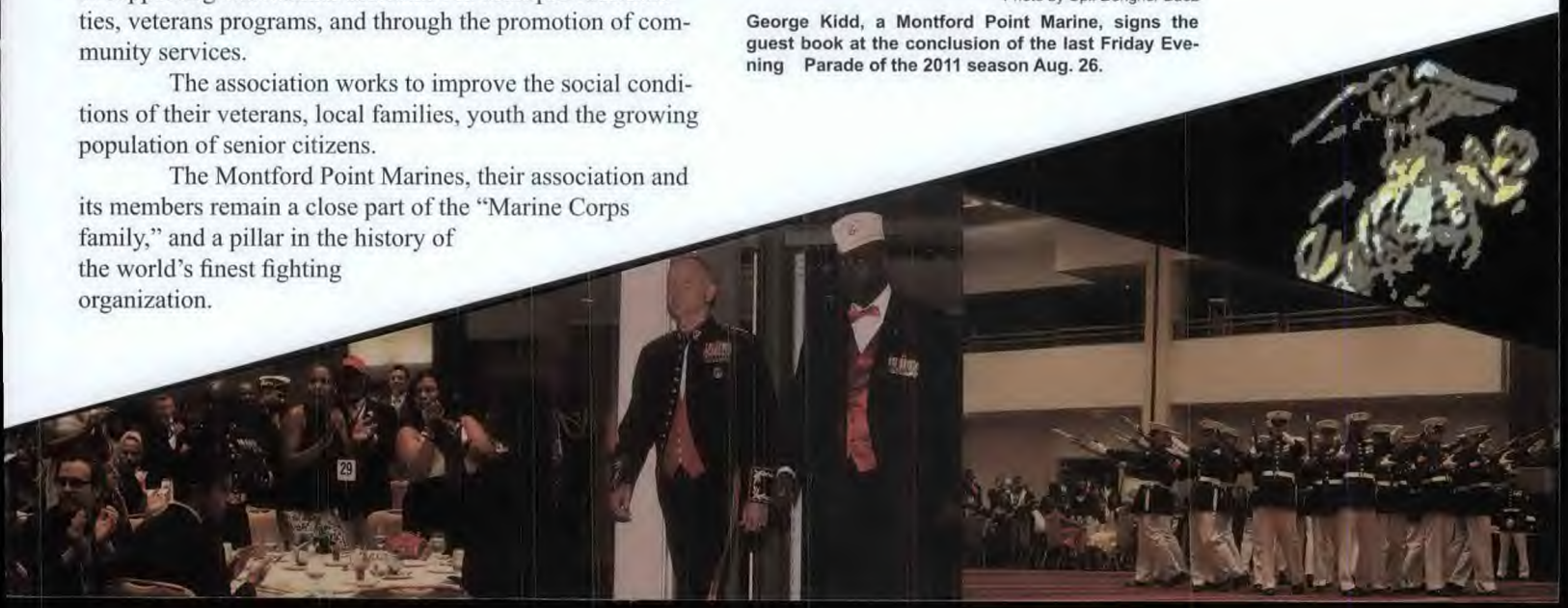




Photo by Cpl. Jeremy Ware

Cpl. Nick Boone competes in the 2011 Commander's Cup at Marine Barracks Washington May 16. The event, titled "The Beat Down," was an indoor simulated cycling event designed to introduce Marines to the sport of cycling. The overall male and female cup winners will both win an iPad.



Photo by Cpl. Dengrier Baez

Sgt. Kevin McCallister, a bugler with the Marine Drum and Bugle Corps, jumps over a barrier to complete an obstacle course run during the Rambo Challenge at Fort Meade, Md., July 18. Marines ran 1.6 miles, tackled a 400-meter obstacle course wearing a flak jacket and helmet, and sighted in for two sections of fire with the M9 pistol.

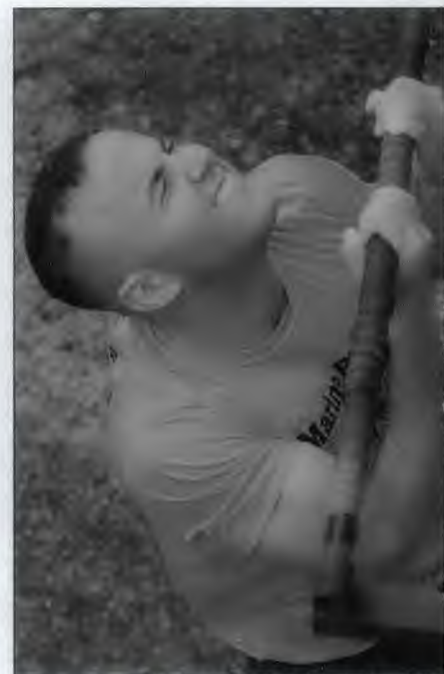


Photo by Cpl. Austin Hazard

Capt. Nicholas Schroback, the current points leader, performs his 25th pull-up in the Green-on-Green Face-off June 23.

Feeling

the BURN

Marines fight for Commander's Cup

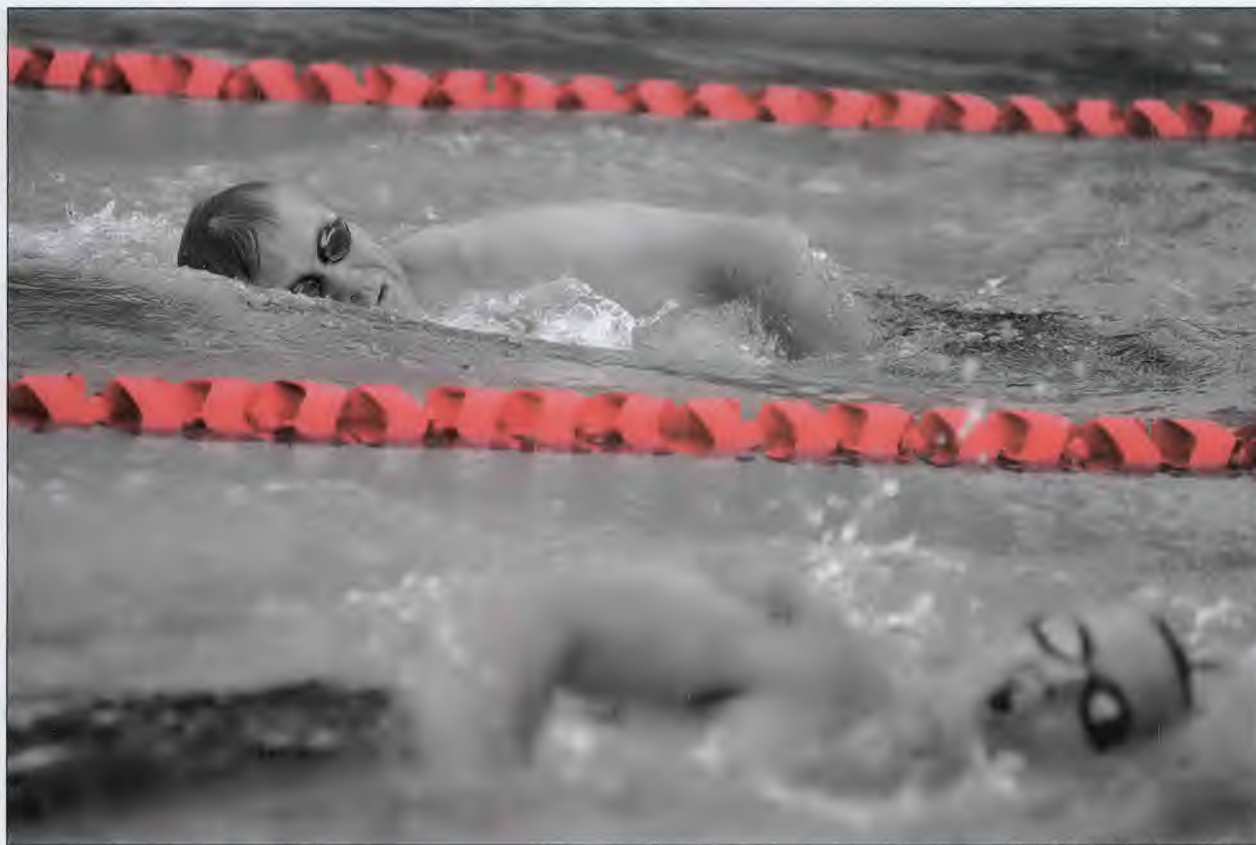


Photo by Lance Cpl. Mondo Lescaud

Col. Paul D. Montanus, Marine Barracks Washington commanding officer, swims down the pool lane during the 2011 Commander's Cup Angry Aardvark event Aug. 4. Competitors raced 1,000 meters to the finish, with Maj. Phillip Ash, Barracks operations officer, taking the event. The tournament, comprising nearly 20 events from March to mid-November, is slated to conclude with the Annapolis Challenge Nov. 16.

Don't rain on my parade

Story and photos by Cpl. Jeremy Ware



A torrential downpour flooded central Missouri, and slowly crept its way across the state toward the Gateway Arch in downtown St. Louis, as Lance Cpl. Jason Wynn donned his ceremonial dress blue white uniform in preparation for the most important show of his career.

Wynn, a marcher with the Marine Corps Silent Drill Platoon, was set to perform along with the rest of his 24-man platoon during Marine Week 2011 under the historic Arch in Wynn's hometown, but a nasty thunderstorm threatened to end the

show.

"I never want a show to get canceled, but St. Louis is my home, my mom was there with my family, so I was praying that the rain would hold off,"

said Wynn.

The Mehlville High School graduate nervously mashed buttons on his cell phone as he checked the even-

- *Lance Cpl. Jason Wynn*

ing's weather report before making his way outside for preshow warm-ups.

The platoon got into formation in a city park that stood at the doorsteps of the city's courthouse.

“Off in the distance, I could see dark, nasty looking rain clouds slowly rolling our way.”



After running through the performance sequence, the Marines were ready to perform and began the half-mile walk to the Arch. Wynn looked up at the cloud-littered sky every chance he got, hoping the storm would wait long enough for the platoon to perform for his hometown.

The forecast looked bleak that night; lightning storms, high wind and up to five inches of rain were expected to pummel the area when the platoon was scheduled to perform.

“The Arch is St. Louis. The opportunity to march there during Marine Week, words can’t express how special that is,” said the 21-year-old.

With show time quickly approaching, the platoon staged near the Arch. Wynn got into line and

took another peak at the heavens. Directly over the performing area, white clouds peppered the sky.

“Off in the distance, I could see dark, nasty looking rain clouds slowly rolling our way,” Wynn recalled. “I was pretty confident we were going to perform, but I’ve been wrong before.”

Around the same time, Wynn’s mother, along with his family and recruiter, staked their claim to the best seats they could find among the tens of thousands of spectators there to see the show, and waited in palpable anticipation of watching their hometown hero.

As show time arrived, Wynn and his platoon waited under the famous 630-foot-tall Gateway Arch. Just before marching out to perform, Wynn

Cpl. Oscar Franquez Jr. and Lance Cpl. Michael Madulka, members of the Marine Corps Silent Drill Platoon inspection team, warm up before a performance at Marine Week 2011 in St. Louis June 25.



took one more look toward the sky and saw his prayers answered.

The storm didn't make it in time to spoil the performance. In front of thousands of spectators, the SDP performed what Capt. Brian Wilson, the platoon commander, would later call one of the best performances of the year.

Wynn and the rest of the SDP concluded their performance to an explosion of applause from an electrified crowd.

"I am so very proud of him! He has accomplished so much since he has been in the Corps," exclaimed Wynn's mother, Cathy. "Seeing him the way he was before compared to the way he is now, I know joining the Marines was probably the best decision he will ever make. Watching him perform under the Arch with the Silent Drill Platoon was the highlight of my year."

Shortly after the performance, storm clouds enveloped St. Louis and two inches of rain drenched the city.



Lance Cpl. Jason Wynn and Lance Cpl. Michael Madulka, members of the Marine Corps Silent Drill Platoon inspection team, perform with the platoon during Marine Week 2011 in front of the St. Louis War Memorial in St. Louis June 26.



Wynn throws out his rifle during the inspection sequence of a performance in front of the St. Louis War Memorial. The platoon traveled to St. Louis to perform two shows, one under the Gateway Arch and another during the closing ceremonies for Marine Week.



TESTING ENDURANCE

AND

Testing teamwork

STORY AND PHOTOS BY LANCE CPL. MONDO LESCAUD

Marines from Bravo Company, Marine Barracks Washington, conducted a fire team competition at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., Aug. 17.

The three events that comprised the competition extended over more than five miles of wooded terrain and tested the Marines' teamwork, endurance, infantry knowledge and land navigation skills.

"The competition was all about fire team execution," said Capt. John McLaughlin, the company commander. "It was nothing they haven't done as a platoon before, but when they get out of the Barracks, most likely they will be fire team leaders. I wanted them to know how to operate successfully in a fire team."

The competition broke down the platoons into random four-man teams and pitted them against each other while racing to complete obstacle, endurance and land navigation courses.

The competition began with a dash into the woods with a compass and map in hand. The teams pushed past scrub pines and underbrush to find locations marked with small metal boxes.

Speed was not the only factor during the land navigation course as each team's accuracy would determine whether they would be required to repeat the follow-on obstacle course event. Finding and correctly identifying all boxes during the land navigation course would allow a team to bypass the obstacle course portion of the competition.

"We found two out of three boxes, so we only did the O' course once," explained Lance Cpl. Alonzo Evans-Chase, a company ceremonial marcher. "It was a major advantage to not have to do it twice or three times like a lot of other fire teams."

After completing the first event, the teams jumped, hurdled and snaked their way

through the 50-yard obstacle course on their way to the endurance course.

"I was really tired during the second evolution," said Lance Cpl. Leopoldo Torres-Williams, a B Co. body bearer. "The obstacle course was no joke for us. I remember feeling exhausted when we went into the forest and started the next course."

The final timed exercise, the endurance course, comprised a five-mile run through the Virginia forest with obstacles set at mile intervals. At each obstacle, Marines were required to answer basic infantry questions.

Each correct or incorrect answer counted toward or against the team's total score. After answering, the Marines would negotiate obstacles ranging from a net-rope climb to a muddy crawl under barbed wire. The final challenge entailed each Marine assembling and disassembling various weapons, including the M9, M16A4, M249 Squad Automatic Weapon and M240B medium machine gun.

As a reward, the top performing 10 teams would each select one Marine to fire an AT-4 rocket launcher at a target of unknown distance.

"I had never shot an AT-4 before, so I was really excited," said Torres-Williams. "I was proud of my team for coming in third place, and I had a lot of fun with all the training."

The day-long event helped the Marines build camaraderie as well as strengthen some of their core infantry skills.

"Some fire teams worked together better than others, but overall, as a company, I thought they all did very well," said McLaughlin. "The Marines thought it was good training. They were tired, but they had fun."




A Marine maps out his grid coordinates before the start of the land navigation course during a day-long Bravo Company training exercise at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., Aug. 17.



Lance Cpl. Kenneth Schlegel and Lance Cpl. Patrick Gallard, ceremonial marchers, navigate their way through the forest in search of their second marker during a land navigation event.



Lance Cpl. Samuel Johnson, a ceremonial marcher, climbs up a rope during an obstacle course event.



How a hardened Chosin Reservoir veteran inspired one teenager to go...

From STEEL to STEEL

People join the United States Marine Corps, the most challenging, competitive and demanding branch of the U.S. military, for many reasons. Whether it's pressures from military families, being smooth-talked by some recruiter, or educational and financial benefits, there's always a driving force behind that oath of service. One Barracks Marine joined hoping to follow in the footsteps of a hometown veteran and mentor, and serve his country with a similar dedication.

Lance Cpl. Jonathan Patrick lived the simple life before he joined the Marine Corps. Raised in a quiet suburban neighborhood in Roanoke, Va., by his mother and step-father, the dream of becoming a Marine was planted in his head while working his first job with MPS Steel Fabrication Co.

During his high school years, Patrick spent a lot of time getting to know the company's owner, Bill McLaren. McLaren, nicknamed "Big Red" for his enormous stature and red hair, would talk to the young Patrick about his experience in the Marine Corps and his exploits as a scout sniper in the Battle of Chosin Reservoir in 1950 during the Korean War.

During lunch breaks, McLaren would recount the personal tales of the brave Marines who endured freezing temperatures and overwhelming odds to defeat the 60,000 Chinese troops that had surrounded them.

At 16, Patrick always looked forward to sitting on the steps in the back of the factory and talking with McLaren over their meals.

Eventually, their bond grew stronger, and on any given day, Patrick could be found on McLaren's multiple-acre personal shooting range, shooting targets and talking about the Corps.

HELL

Story and Photos by Lance Cpl. Mondo Lescaud

The stories of the legendary Chosin Reservoir Marines only watered the seed of inspiration for the boy, and before long, the roots grew too deep for Patrick to extract.

Five days after graduating high school, on his 17th birthday, Patrick joined the United States Marine Corps with one intention: to join the fight and the pantheon of heroes in Big Red's tales as part of the Corps' legacy.

Patrick's prospects of seeing combat seemed promising. He enlisted as an infantryman in 2008, while the Marines were heavily engaged in Afghanistan, and places like Farah and Helmand Provinces were hotbeds of insurgent activity.

Patrick's career was also off to a good start. He had endured more than three months in the Corps' blast furnace at Parris Island, S.C., called Marine boot camp, and been forged like steel into a United States Marine. He had nearly completed training at Infantry Training Battalion at Camp Geiger, Jacksonville, N.C., where he was learning to shoot the weapons he had dreamed of, but only talked about at Big Red's range, when he found out his career would be diverging off course.

Patrick had been selected to be a ceremonial marcher at Marine Barracks Washington and would not be sent to one of the Corps' fleet infantry units like the majority of his fellow infantry Marines. In an instant, Patrick's dreams of joining the fight crumbled.

"I was angry and disappointed," said Patrick. "I dreamed I would join the Marine Corps and go off to war. That's what I wanted."

Patrick's heartache soon turned to happiness when he arrived at the Barracks a few weeks later and discovered





Lance Cpl. Jonathan Patrick marches in his platoon during the pass in review at the end of a Tuesday Sunset Parade at the Marine Corps War Memorial in Arlington, Va., July 19.



Patrick shares a joke with a friend at the conclusion of a Friday Evening Parade at Marine Barracks Washington July 23.

the opportunities he would be afforded here. As a ceremonial marcher for Bravo Company and rifleman, Patrick would be leading Marines and representing the Marine Corps in ways that most infantrymen could not imagine.

"I knew I was undeployable, but I found other things to look forward to," said Patrick. "I had to focus on the opportunities for success and being a good leader."

After his arrival, Patrick quickly overcame his apprehension and started to make a name for himself as a marcher, infantryman and leader.

"When he first got here, we knew he was going to be special," said Staff Sgt. Manuel Saldivar, the platoon sergeant for 1st Platoon. "The way he acts, carries himself, leads Marines and his work ethics were always very impressive, and still are."

Before long, Patrick began to stand out more than his peers and was sent back to Camp Geiger to attend Squad Leaders Course, a rigorous 45-day school designed to give infantrymen the knowledge and skills needed to serve as squad leaders in infantry platoons. The school is normally reserved for Marine noncommissioned officers and Patrick's admission required a direct endorsement by his commanding officer.

"This course had not only grunts, but Marines that were infantry tactics specialists, Marine combat training and Infantry Training Battalion instructors," Saldivar said. "Marines that had a lot more leadership and combat experience than Patrick."



Patrick and his squad run back to the firing line after a successful execution of the first part of a squad tactics range at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., July, 13.

Patrick excelled and completed the course as honor graduate. Upon his return to the Barracks, Patrick was moved up from his team leader position, where he was responsible for four Marines, and put in charge of 12 Marines as a squad leader. It was news that Patrick took in stride and his fellow Marines met with approval.

“I was excited to get Patrick back as my squad leader,” said Lance Cpl. Kyle Broussard, a 22-year-old ceremonial marcher. “He was always a good leader, and he really cares about all of his Marines.”

Since then, Patrick has settled into his squad leader position and has been an inspirational leader to his Marines. He has also represented the Marine Corps in performances for thousands of spectators at countless parades and ceremonies around the country and the world.

“I actually feel like the Barracks set me up for success in the fleet,” said the young squad leader. “I was put into leadership roles here that most Marines don’t get in their first year in the Corps, or even their first couple of years. I learned a lot and got a lot of good experience from being a squad and team leader.”

When Patrick leaves the Barracks this fall, he will report to Camp Pendleton, Calif., with 2nd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division. They are slated to deploy to Afghanistan in spring 2012, where he plans to solidify a place in the Corps’ fighting legacy alongside Marines like Big Red.



Patrick throws a smoke grenade to signal his squad to disengage during a squad rushing tactics range.



Photo by Lance Cpl. Mondo Lescaud

Breaking the barrier

Marines learn an Afghan national language

Story by Lance Cpl. Mondo Lescaud

Approximately 20 Marines from Marine Barracks Washington, started learning Pashto June 21, one of two national languages of Afghanistan.

The year-long project will help prepare the Marines for possible deployments to Afghanistan with future units by teaching them the language and culture of the Afghan people.

“The decision for the Bravo Company Marines to learn the language was made in order to provide effective young infantrymen to the fleet,” said Capt. Raul Chiriboga, the Barracks training officer. “Probably only a couple of Marines in any given fleet infantry platoon will know Pashto. We have a good portion of our infantry company learning the language, so when they get to the fleet, they will already have a specialty.”

Marines who have fought in every clime and place

have experienced language barrier challenges, and the Marines patrolling the river valleys of Afghanistan today are no exception.

More than 30 languages are spoken in Afghanistan, with Pashto being the most commonly spoken dialect as a first or second language. Teaching the Marines Pashto gives them a tactical edge in a conflict where a key component to wresting away and maintaining control of an area is often reliant not only on winning battles, but also winning the support of local populations.

“If the Marines know even a little of the language, they will be able to communicate with the Afghan people,” said Chiriboga. “We’re trying to win the hearts and minds of Afghanistan.”

Understanding the Afghan culture and values can

be a major determining factor of success or failure for the Marines who are currently working closely with local populations and tribal leaders in the fight against an insurgency.

"It's hard to grasp the concepts sometimes," said Pfc. John Taylor, a B Co. ceremonial marcher. "But we're learning simple sentences and phrases, and we're starting to get the hang of it. I know as long as Marines are in Afghanistan, this is going to be useful."

Gul Bahar Qaim, who was contracted through the Defense Language Institute to instruct the Marines, lived in Afghanistan for 21 years and keeps close ties with his native country through family who still live there.

"It's a lot more authentic to have an Afghan teach you his language instead of Rosetta Stone, or an American," said Taylor. "Him being here brings an aspect to the lessons that I wouldn't get any other way. I look forward to going to the class every single time."

Most of the Marines in the Pashto classes say the language is very difficult to learn and the same lessons often need to be taught multiple times. Qaim is frequently required to move around the classroom and go over lesson ideas with Marines individually until they all understand. Teaching

the Marines is more than a job for Qaim, who said he has a personal interest in the Marines learning the Afghan language and culture.

"When the Marines go over there to my country, it will be very important to know the customs of my people," said Qaim. "I will teach them all I can. I don't want them to go and have any problems. My family still lives there, me and my wife and kids are the only ones in the USA."

Upon completion of the program, Marines can elect to take a language proficiency test via the foreign language proficiency pay program and get money added to their base pay if they ever use the language for the Marine Corps.

- Gul Bahar Qaim

All infantry companies throughout the Corps train according to the Infantry Training and Readiness Manual, however, Barracks Marines often do not get opportunities to gain combat experience like their peers do in the fleet.

The intent of the program is to better equip current Barracks Marines to handle possible deployments with their future units with the knowledge gained from these classes. The classes provide the Marines with a skill that fleet infantry Marines don't typically have.

“When the Marines go over there to my country, it will be very important to know the customs of my people. I will teach them all I can.”

Afghanistan

Uzbek and Turkmen speaking provinces



Dari speaking provinces



Pashto speaking provinces







Honoring the Flag

Story and photos by Cpl. Dengrier M. Baez

The national ensign has been the symbol of our nation's strength and unity since its inception. It serves as a source of pride, inspiration and is a prominent icon in our national history. The current 50-star and 13-stripe ensign is flown at every U.S. embassy and base, around the world.

However, at Marine Barracks Washington, a historic American flag is flown almost every Friday during the summer months.

The 1801 American flag, which bears 15 stars and stripes representing the 15 states of the Union at the time the Barracks was founded, is only authorized to be flown at the Barracks and Fort McHenry in Baltimore, Md.

The American flag that flew over Fort McHenry in 1814 served as the center piece of Francis Scott Key's poetic efforts and inspired him to write "The Star Spangled Banner," which became our national anthem. The flag is still flown during daytime hours at the post, while a standard American flag is flown there at night for weather purposes.

Three Marines are chosen to lower the 1801 flag here at the conclusion of every Friday Evening Parade. One of the Marines of this year's detail is Lance Cpl.

Christopher Engeron.

Engeron, an administrative clerk at the Barracks, volunteered to be part of this selective three-man team.

"They were looking for a motivated Marine that met the standards and I jumped right up for the chance," said the 20-year-old native of Elberta, Ala.

A week prior to the first parade, practices were held all day in order to get the team members on the same page and the routine flawless. Now, the team practices once a week for an hour.

"At first we would practice for hours," he said. "It took the team a few days to get it just right, but eventually we got there."

When he attended Foley High School near his hometown, Engeron participated in sports such as soccer, cross country and track and field, and because of it he says he understands the importance of being part of a team.

After thinking about a

proposition to enlist in the Corps by his uncle, a Marine who served during the Korea and Vietnam conflicts, Engeron decided he would join with the hopes of traveling the world as a Marine security guard.

"I always wanted to travel the world and see different places, and what better opportunity than the MSG program?" said Engeron. "The program places you in embassies all over the world. That's something I really want to do."

Although the young Marine is not currently fulfilling his dreams and aspirations to travel the world, he gets to meet visitors from all over the world that attend the parades at the Barracks.

"It's motivating when I speak with visitors before the parades and they talk about where they're from," said Engeron. "Some come from halfway around the planet. I'm not traveling the world right now, but it's like the world is coming to me in a sense."

Engeron, who's on his first enlistment, said that things are a bit different at the Barracks compared to other parts of the Corps, but it's definitely a special place with a long and illustrious history. He added that being part of the detail is being part of that history.

"It's definitely an honor to participate in the parades," said Engeron. "The Barracks is full of history and it's special to be part of it."

Engeron is currently working on his requirements to join the MSG program, which is still a goal for him. He's also looking forward to next year's parade season because he wants to participate in the flag lowering detail again.



The three flag lowerers carefully wrap up the 1801 flag at the conclusion of a Friday Evening Parade. The flag is retired to a room where it is properly folded and stored until the next Evening parade. Right, the Marines catch the flag as they lower it to prevent it from touching the ground.



dc*i* to D&B

Barracks Marines return to world-class musical competition and recruiting grounds

Story and Photos by Cpl. Dengrier Baez



The D&B's drum line performs during the opening ceremony of the DCI World Championships.



The D&B performs during the closing ceremony of the DCI World Championships. The event featured world-class drum and bugle corps and serves as a prime recruiting ground for the D&B. Approximately 25 percent of the D&B was recruited from DCI events.

The U.S. Marine Drum and Bugle Corps performed in front of thousands of cheering spectators at the Drum Corps International World Championships in Indianapolis, Aug. 13.

Dubbed "marching music's major league," the event featured at least 46 world-class drum and bugle corps from across the country and globe, each competing for the title of DCI World Champions. The event was the culmination of more than 10,000 miles of travel throughout 57 days from June to August, featuring 115 competitive events in 40 states.

Nearly a quarter of the Marines in the D&B were recruited from events such as DCI and the world class drum corps that participate in DCI.

The event served as a chance for D&B Marines to showcase their talents and professionalism to new DCI drum corps members and reconnect with old members of their former drum corps.

"It is important to stay connected with the drum corps that participate in Drum Corps International," said Gunnery Sgt. Keith Martinez, D&B assistant drum major. "These kids already know what we do since their organizations are composed the same way. Because of this, a good portion of our recruiting effort goes to events such as DCI."

Before the world championship, which is the culminating event of the tour, the intensity of the D&B's practices and performances is elevated, Martinez added. Some of the members know the feeling of being part of the big show and reminisced on their touring days.

"It was an amazing performance and they did so well," said Sgt. Benjamin Schoffstall, a bugler with the "Commandant's Own" and former member of the Cavaliers Drum and Bugle Corps. "Every time I see them perform, it gives me goose bumps and takes me back to my old days playing with them. It's a family, and you always feel proud of it."

Many members of the D&B could relate to Schoffstall's feelings, as they were once members of drum corps that participated in DCI and were recruited from such events. Maintaining a connection with DCI is important to keeping the ranks of the Corps' musical programs full, but the process starts with the recruiter.

"The Marine Drum and Bugle Corps is an excellent option for someone who has an interest in both marching and music and wants a career that offers opportunities to do both," said Gun-



The U.S. Marine Drum and Bugle Corps performs during the opening ceremony of the Drum Corps International World Championships at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis, Aug. 13. The event featured world-class drum and bugle corps organizations from all over the U.S. and abroad, who traveled more than 10,000 miles over the summer while performing at more than 35 sanctioned events.

nery Sgt. Jason Knuckles, a music placement director with the 9th Marine Corps District. "That's why it is critical that we participate at DCI on every level."

Individuals interested in the Marine Corps' musical programs must first meet initial Marine Corps standards. Once initial standards are met, applicants then undergo a series of auditions that range from phone auditions to more formal ones with a musician placement assistant.

Ultimately, every Musician Enlisted Option Program prospect that wishes to be a member of the Marine Drum and Bugle Corps has to audition and be approved by the musician placement director for the D&B, Master Sgt. Roger H. Wright.

"Talent comes from everywhere," said Wright. "Once the prospects show potential, they also need to demonstrate that they are mentally, physically and morally qualified to serve in the Marine Corps."

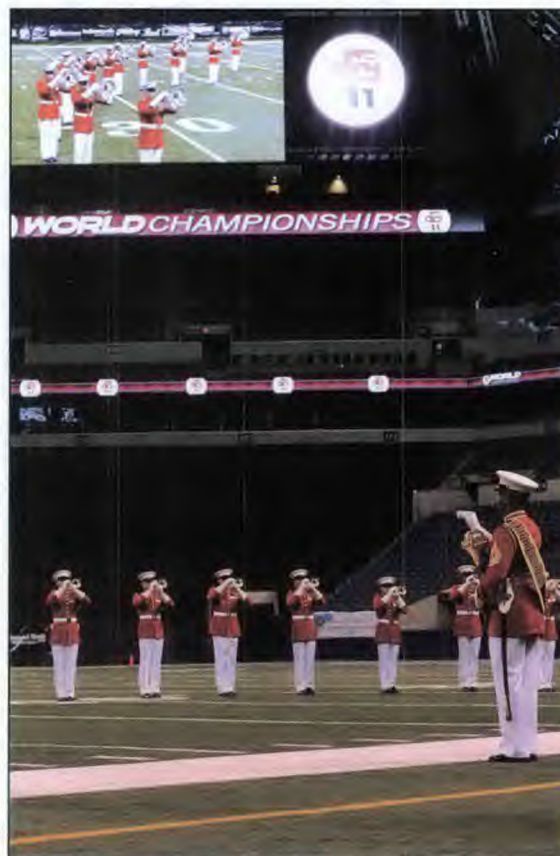
Wright speaks at high schools all over the nation, talking to young band members about performance and techniques.

The Corps' musical programs give high school graduates with musical talent an opportunity to serve in the Marine Drum and Bugle Corps or bands to include the United States Marine Band. The program's incentives include formal school training, accelerated promotions and duty station choices.

Marines with the D&B and other Marine Corps field bands undergo the same 13-week recruit training as every Marine.

"I always wanted to join and serve my country," said Michael Hoskins, a native of Bedford, Ind., and a MEOP prospect. "Playing for such a professional organization and serving at the same time is one of the highest honors for me."

The D&B conducts hundreds of performances around the country and abroad annually. New talent is constantly being accepted into the Commandant's Own, as the Corps continues to highlight the traditional values of the few and the proud.



Master Gunnery Sgt. Kevin Buckles, D&B drum major, conducts the D&B during the opening ceremony of the DCI World Championships.



Around the Barracks





MARINES WALK THE PARADE FIELD IN THE RAIN PRIOR TO A FRIDAY EVENING PARADE AUG. 19. ALTHOUGH THE MAIN PARADE WAS CANCELLED DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER, A MODIFIED PARADE WAS HELD INDOORS.



MEMBERS OF THE SILENT DRILL PLATOON CARRY A LOG TO PREPARE APPROPRIATE COVER FOR A TRAINING EXERCISE AT MARINE CORPS BASE QUANTICO, VA., AUG. 8. THE MARINES USED LOGS AND SANDBAGS FOR COVER DURING FIRE TEAM RUSH DRILLS.

