



POST SOLANT AMITY

With the Members of "G" Company, 2nd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment



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March 2010

Our Marine Corps - a brief and flattering portrait *W. Thomas Smith Jr.*

(W. Thomas Smith Jr. is freelance journalist and former infantry officer. These were his remarks at the time when 1st MarDiv units were about to replace members of the 82nd Airborne in Iraq.)

Not to take anything away from our Army — its soldiers have performed magnificently, and will continue to do so — but America's enemies have a particular fear of U.S. Marines. During the Gulf War in '91, over 100,000 coastline deployed Iraqi soldiers lay terrified in their bunkers about the prospect of contact with 17,000 U.S. Marines offshore, nicknamed "Angels of Death."

The moniker — first published by Pulitzer-winner Rick Atkinson in his best-selling *Crusade* — carried over into the second Gulf war, paralyzing many Iraqi combatants as reports of the seaborne "Angels of Death" being among the elements to soon strike them.

The same Marines were among the first to fight their way into Baghdad. And when intelligence indicated that foreign troops were coming to assist Iraqi diehards, Marine Gen. John Kelly asked all the Jihadist to join the battle, so "we can kill them all" at one time.

Typical Marine bravado, some say. But it works. Tom Clancy

once wrote, "Marines are mystical. They have magic."

That fear of Marines is not a new phenomenon, nor confined to Iraqi soldiers. Established in 1775, the U.S. Marine Corps came of age in a World War I battle in 1918. There, Marines assaulted a line of German machine-gun nests on an old hunting preserve known as Belleau Wood. The fighting was terrible but those Marines, not cut down by machine guns, won-out in a grisly close-quarters slugfest.

The shocked Germans nicknamed their foes, *teufelhunden* (devil dogs). "These Marines are a sort of elite Corps designed to go into action outside the United States," read a German intelligence report. "They consider membership in the Marine Corps to be something of an honor. They proudly resent attempts to place their regiments on a par with other infantry regiments."

Decades later, as the 1st Marine Division steamed toward Guadalcanal, a Japanese propagandist taunted "Where are the famous United States Marines hiding? They are supposed to be the finest soldiers in the world, but no one has seen them yet?" Over the next three years,

Trivia Question 1: Between 1Jan65 and 28Mar73, how many Americans served in Vietnam? (See answer on page 4.)

Marines would further their reputation at places with names like Tarawa, Saipan, and Iwo Jima. Then, in 1950, into the Korean War.

"Panic sweeps my men when they are facing the American Marines," confessed a captured North Korean major. It was a fear echoed by his Chinese allies. Premier Mao Tse Tung put out a contract on the 1st Marine Division. "The Division," he wrote to the commander of the Chinese 9th Army Group, "has the highest combat effectiveness in the American armed forces. It seems not enough for our four divisions to surround and annihilate its regiments. You should have one or two more divisions as a reserve force." But, his Chosen *trap* failed.

Indeed, Army General Frank Lowe later announced, "The safest place in Korea was behind a Marine platoon. Lord, how they could fight!"

A decade plus-two years later, they were the first major ground force in Vietnam, where the Army's General Westmoreland, commanding all U.S. forces in-country, at one point was prompted to acknowledge that he "admired the élan of Marines."

In the '82 invasion of Grenada, Army General Vesey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, telephoned one of his officers and demanded to know why there were "two compa-

Trivia Question 2: Of those serving in Vietnam 1/1/65-3/28/73, what percentage were "in combat, providing support or were fairly regularly exposed to enemy attack?" (See answer on page 4.)

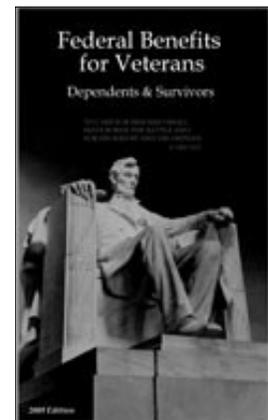
nies of Marines running all over the island and thousands of Army troops doing nothing. What the hell is going on?"

The Corps is the smallest branch of our armed forces. It is a rapid deployment, combined Naval and infantry force directed by the Secretary of the Navy with a philosophical approach to training AND combat which differs from other branches. Marine boot camp — more of a rite-of-passage than a training program — is the longest and toughest recruit indoctrination program of any of the military services. Men and women train separately. All Marines, whatever their rank, are considered first-and-foremost: Riflemen. Special operations units in the Marines are not accorded the same respect as they are in other branches. The Marines see special-ops as but another realm of war-fighting. Marines are Marines, and no unit is more elite than another.

(Continued on page 2, column 1)

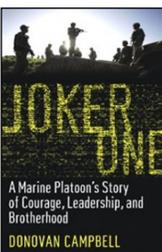
VA Benefits

The 172 page Acrobat version of the 2009 Department of Veteran's



Affairs "Federal Benefits for Veteran's and Dependents" is available on our website, listed on the left side of the first page.

Joker One: A Marine Platoon's Story of Courage, Leadership and Brotherhood



Donovan Campbell's *Joker One* is only somewhat reminiscent of another Ivy leaguer's effort, Nathaniel Fink, and his best selling *One Bullet Away* of 2005.

Campbell relates from a platoon leaders perspective what it was like for his platoon, with radio call sign *Joker One*, while fighting in-on and from the streets, ravines and rooftops of Ramadi, Iraq in 2004. Forty men went in-country as part of a battalion having the expressed

purposes to clean-out and contain the environment. Thirty-nine came out alive after seven months of exposure to IEDs, persistent mortar and sniper fire. And the author has little difficulty is ascribing a goodly part of their success to elements not found in the Marine Corps Guidebook and relentless training: Faith and the moral guidance found in religious conviction.

Can you imagine the consternation amongst the Pentagon's center core leadership, when reading that? A published pronouncement of a young man's Christian convictions amidst a horde of Islamo-

jihadists has got to have generals and panty-waisted politicians ripping their short-hairs out.

What distinguishes his presentation from other combat narratives is most aptly defined in a Ray Nothstine review, "Campbell has written what is essentially a love story. While there are many military accounts from Afghanistan and Iraq, some that even tell more gripping stories or offer more humor, there may not be one more reflective of what it means to be a leader, and what it means to love the men you serve and lead." Men, **I would add**, whose lives you, as leader, are asked to *judiciously* expend.

Trivia Question 3: How many military personnel served in Vietnam between 1960 until 1964? (Answer 3 on Page 4)

Newly minted Marines believe themselves superior to other soldiers, spawning understandable inter-service resentment. Rivals argue it's not so much their ability to fight — though that's never been a question — but that they are masters at public relations.

President Truman once declared Marines “have a propaganda machine...equal to Stalin's.” Fact is, while other services lure recruits with promises, the Marines ask only “for a few good men [and women]” with the mettle to join their ranks.

Then, there have been numerous efforts — primarily by Army and Navy officers — to have the Corps disbanded or absorbed into the Army or Navy. Even after the stellar performance of the Corps in World War II, Army General Frank Armstrong proposed folding them into Army ranks and condescendingly referring to the Corps as “a small bitched-up army talking Navy lingo.”

In '97, Assistant Secretary of the Army Sara Lister took aim at the Corps before a Harvard audience saying that Marines “...are extremists...and risk a total and dangerous disconnect with society.” She of course, was fired.

Despite its detractors, the Marines have become an American institution — like baseball players, cowboys, and astronauts — in the eyes of most Americans. They may be extreme, but America loves them. And fortunately for America, her enemies in the war against terror continue to shudder upon hearing, “the Marines have landed” and are about to kick some ass.

“Hey, forget about your ammo, water and Kevlar:”



Littoral ship, ahoy!

Perhaps you haven't been losing sleep, like myself, over our nations need for a “littoral combat ship.” But now, thanks to some brilliant engineering, a whole lot of money and time we're ready to take the fight to the enemy in those shallow inland and near-shore waters.

There had been rumors about the U.S. Navy's speedy new triple hulled ships, but now

you're looking at it. This is the USS Independence (LCS-2), a triple-hulled weapons based monster of a tri-maran capable of a rumored



60 knots, faster than any other ship in the Navy!

Running at 43 knots in the above photo, it's capable of making tight turns with little spreading wake and, most remarkably, no apparent bow wave. Then, too, it has a helo-deck big enough for a CH-53, below deck space for armored vehicles and the ability to fire torpedoes, missiles and ultra-fast machine guns.

They're also cheap. A real *bargain at*: \$208 million. And the Navy is to buy 55 of them with the specific intent of use for near shore, shallow river and reef area operations. BUT, clearly one can see the distinct advantage of having a craft that moves as swift and nimbly as this one for any number of special-ops including anti-pirating activities off east and west African coasts.



Sergeant Edward Hart with 2nd Force Recon meets General “Chesty” Puller .

Koreans Remember Chosen

I recently read a letter about a man whose father was honored by Koreans for his service. It brought back a memory.

About two years ago my father was invited to a luncheon arranged by the Korean Embassy in Los Angeles. When we arrived we found quite a few veterans there but later learned that the majority were Army, some Air Force and just four or five Marines. We had a great time enjoying traditional Korean music, dances and food.

Toward the end of the meeting, the veterans were all asked to line up. They were then approached by three gentlemen, two from the embassy and a mayor of a Korean town. They greeted the Army vets first and shook their hands and thanked them for their service.

When they got to my dad, the first in line of the Marines, they asked him his service branch and where he served and he answered: “United States Marines and I fought at Chosen.” At that all three men bowed and thanked him for saving their country. The mayor bowed a second time and said that the only reason his town was saved was because of the Marines at Chosen.

This was repeated for each of the Marines. The Army guys looked a little ticked-off. Not to take anything away from the Army guys, I feel that anyone who makes the sacrifice of going to war deserves our utmost respect but as one Korean said: “Every time the Army retreated the Marines advanced in spite of their smaller numbers.”

I had never seen my dad cry but that afternoon he and the rest of the Marines all shed a tear. My dad is now in his late 70's and time has taken its toll but he is still a United States Marine.

L.M. DeLaCruz
Corpsman
FMF, 1st Mar Div, 75-81

Who was that Marine?

He was born in 1928 in Waycross, Georgia, the only child of a Dr. Pepper salesman with exactly the same name and Minnie (Betty) Myrtle Morgan. Our Marine engaged in a wide range of occupations before pursuing an acting career. Early on, he attended Georgia Tech without graduating, did a two year stint with the USMC as part of the Marine Corps Band and next attended the University of Maryland, again without graduating.

Moving to Washington, D.C. in 1950, he first performed with the Arena Stage ensemble. In '52, he moved to New York and stepped more enthusiastically into his theatrical pursuits. After three on-and-off Broadway efforts, he won a Drama Desk Award in 1955 for a performance in *Macbeth*. In '57, he jumped to the west coast and signed with Columbia Pictures and began a series of successful roles on television as either a top or second banana, finally grabbing the golden ring on the show that would make him world renowned though hardly the Shakespearean thespian he saw himself as being.

He portrayed the eldest...“urbane, intense, introspective, quiet, sullen, serious and educated” son of a widower cattle rancher. He didn't like the role and had no problem airing his distain for it and the shows premise of three grown men deferring to a ramrod-like but pleasant enough father, loudly proclaiming that NBC was “perpetuating banality and contributing to the dehumanization of the industry” and remained perpetually upset about the producers refusing to allow him to discard a toupee...required of the relatively youthful role his was playing.

Fulfilling his six year obligation to profitable “banality,” he refused to renew his role, was eliminated and “Adam,” it was said, simply “moved away.” And he did, into the oblivion of TV appearances, a six year stint as *Trapper John, M.D.*, commercials and a number of TV roles culminating in a 2001 episode of *Diagnosis Murder*.

He died on 21Jan10 at the age of 81.

[Who be “He?” Well, see page four.]

Trivia Question 4: Of those men killed in Vietnam, what percentage of them were under 21 years of age? (Answer 4 on Page 4)



Super Bowl

Someone with 50-yard line tickets for the Super Bowl barely gets to sit when a man asks him if anyone is sitting in the seat next to him.

“No,” he says, “It’s empty.”

“Incredible,” said the man. “Who in their right mind would have a seat like this for the Super Bowl, the biggest sporting event in the world, and not use it?”

“Well,” came a reply, “actually, the seat belongs to me. I was supposed to come with my wife but she passed away. This is the first Super Bowl we haven’t been together since we were married back in ‘67.”

“Oh, I’m sorry to hear that. That is terrible. But couldn’t you find someone else...a friend or relative, or even a neighbor to take the seat.”

The man shakes his head. “Naaa, they’re all at the funeral.”

An I.V. League Education

In a Purdue University classroom, they were discussing the limited qualifications to be President of the United States: A candidate must be a natural born citizen of at least 35 years of age.

However, one girl in the class immediately started in on how unfair was the requirement to be “a natural born citizen.” In short, her opinion was that this requirement prevented capable individuals from becoming president.

Trivia Question 5: Effects of a leather dressed woman on men: Rapid heart beat, dry mouth and difficulty in thinking. Why is that?



(Find the answer on page 4.)

The class was taking it all in and letting her rant, but everyone’s jaw hit the floor when she wrapped up her argument by stating, “What makes a natural born citizen any more qualified to lead this country than one born by C-section?”

Cheap Personal Defense Weapon

She asked the local police department about using pepper spray and they recommended to her that she get a can of wasp spray instead.

On the heels of a break-in and beating that left a woman in Toledo dead, self-defense experts have similarly advocated its use. It is “inexpensive, easy to find, and more effective than mace or pepper spray. The cans shoot 20 to 30 feet and if its use is necessary, a quick ‘toot’ in their eyes temporarily blinds them, requires a hospital administered antidote and, SWIFTLY, ends a conflict.” Ooorah!

Precious Melissa’s Fantasy

Precious Melissa comes home from school and tells her daddy that she’d learned about the history of Valentine’s Day.

“Dad, since Valentine’s Day is really for a Christian saint, and we’re Jewish,” she asked, “will God be angry with me for giving someone a Valentine?”

“No, honey, I don’t think God would be angry. Do you have someone in mind you wish to give a Valentine card?”

“Osama Bin Laden,” she said.

“Why Osama Bin Laden?” asked the incredulous father.

“Well,” she said, “I thought that if a little Jewish girl like me could find enough love in her heart to give Osama a Valentine, he might think we’re not all bad, and maybe he’d start loving people a little bit. And, if other kids saw what I did and sent still more Valentines to Osama, he’d love everyone. Then he might start to go all over the place to tell everyone how much he loved them, and how he wouldn’t hate anyone anymore.”

Her father’s heart just swelled with emotion and, looking at her with new found pride, he extolled “Melissa, that’s the most wonderful thing I have ever heard.”

“I know, I know daddy,” Melissa responded, “and once he’s out in the open, the Marines can shoot the bastard.”

Global News Punditry

Two west coast friars opened a florist shop in **Seattle** to raise funds. A competitor, jealous of their success hired a local and noted Seattle thug, Hugh McDermott, to shut them down. Hugh beat them up, trashed the store and changed their fund raising minds, proving that “only Hugh can stop florist friars.”

A **Bangladesh** Buddhist refused Novocain during a root canal procedure because he aspired to “transcendental medication.”

Then, the stewardess of a departing **Little Rock** flight to Trenton refused passage to a man attempting to board with two quite dead and undressed pheasants in hand saying “I’m sorry, sir, only one carrion allowed per passenger.”

Essence of New York Chutzpah

A little old lady sold pretzels on a street corner for 50 cents each. Every day a young man would leave his office building at lunch time and, as he passed the pretzel stand, he would leave her a half-dollar, but never take a pretzel.

This went on for four years. The two of them never spoke. One day, as the young man passed the old lady’s stand and left his half-dollar as usual, the pretzel lady spoke to him.

“Sir, thank you for your business. You are a good customer, but I have to tell you that the pretzel price has gone up to 75 cents.”

That Viagra Warning....

You know, since first and ever-after hearing that Viagra commercial line “If an erection lasts more than four hours, seek medical

Trivia Question 6: According to research by K. G. Sears, Ph D, the number of Vietnam War draft dodgers and related anti-war activists was staggering. What were their numbers and their persistent impacts? (See page 4.)

attention,” I’ve been wondering whether the advise was directed to the *erector* OR the *erectee*.

The “Red Coat” Query.

Long ago, when Britain and France were at war, the French captured an English major and brought him before a French general for questioning.

The general asked, “Why do your officers all wear bright red coats? Don’t you realize the red material makes for a distinct target?”

In the bland fashion for which the British are notorious, the major responded saying, “Ahhh, yes, you are correct. But, you see, we wear red coats so that, if shot, blood won’t be so apparent, and our personnel won’t panic.”

And that is why, according to military historians ever since, French officers wear brown pants.

“Uhhh, that’s when....”

When, recently, I took my wife of thirty years to a restaurant, the waiter, for some reason, took my order first.

“I’ll have the strip steak, medium rare, please.”

To which he jokingly responded, “Aren’t you worried about the mad cow?”

“Naah, she can order for herself.”

Well, that’s when the fight started 😊



SKIPPER'S PUB

FOOD & SPIRITS

Enlightening Odds and Ends for your reading pleasure:

FIRST: Remember the upcoming March 14th beginning of the HBO special presentation of "Pacific."

Next, the email below illustrates, succinctly, why the Solant Amity website exists. What was but a means to reach the former members of G-2-6 has become a repository of historical documents of importance to a great many beyond ourselves:

From: Kellie Reedy
Sent: Tuesday, February 02, 2010
Subject: Gearing

Thank you so much for recounting the events of the Gearing at the hi-jacking of the Santa Maria. My father was on the USS Gearing at the time. This last Christmas, I gave him a model of the Gearing. Once he has it all put together and on display I am going to print and frame your story to hang next to his "ship".

May God bless you and your G-2-6 family.

Delwin "Bill" Bailey, 3rd Platoon, is recovering from recent eye surgery. He remains in good sorts and, as all can attest to that speak with him, is a pleasure to talk with.

George Bitsoli, 3rd Platoon, remains chained to his computer in Kal-i-fornia, where late into each night...between LARGE glasses of O negative... he disperses countless anti-government missives to the politically illiterate masses across America. [Keep 'em comin,' George. I hear Rahm Emanuel is beginning to see the light.]

Trevor Davies, 3rd Platoon, is in his eighth month of *No Smoking* and feeling great. "While I've put on some weight, the doctor pointed out it won't kill me but the cigarettes will," said Trevor.

Both he and Ruth are REALLY looking forward to an end to this

Trivia Question 7: What term was first used in the 13th Century in connection with a border war between Christian & Islamic factions? (See answer to the right.)

winter. "It's been murder! But one of my better past times, while house bound, has been the opportunity to speak with so many members of our G-2-6 community. THAT, has been great!"

Ed Hart, 1st Platoon, is spending his winter in Jacksonville, Florida. He plans to visit the Gettysburg, PA battlefield this coming summer, having learned that a long-ago relative died there at the age of 16.

"I don't know which side he fought on," said Ed. "It really doesn't matter though, does it?"

[Editor's note: The photo of Ed Hart with Gen. Puller on page 2, was taken during a "Mess Night" held in the parachute loft at 2nd Recon. The General had been the guest of honor. In the forefront was Sergeant Ken Hall, who was killed in Vietnam shortly thereafter. May his soul rest in peace.]

Rod "Bird" Parrott, Weapons Platoon, and his wife Barbara recently completed a January Carnival Cruise to Nassau. Missing, of



course, were salt water showers and the still remembered smells of diesel fuel, cosmoline, bore cleaner, shoe polish, and S.O.S.. But, then, you can't have EVERYTHING.

Roland Craig "RC" Peyton III, of the 3rd Platoon, has been enjoying his review of the website and acknowledges that there's still a lot to see and read.

He and his wife Linda will be vacationing in Myrtle Beach during April. However, neither expressed very much interest in "renewing their vows" on Parris Island, despite its reasonable proximity. 😊

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See the whole story at
SolantAmity.com

The First Marines to Land in Monrovia

Meredith T. "Mat" Phillips, 3rd Platoon, and Emily are well and haven't been effected by the west coast's weather and earthquake activity of late.

He's looking throughout the cracks and crannies of both his home and elsewhere for photos of his stint with the Corps as well as his PI graduation book. When collected, scanned and website displayed, we'll all have still more images of yesteryear and perhaps a few more photos of other members on the Company Roster.

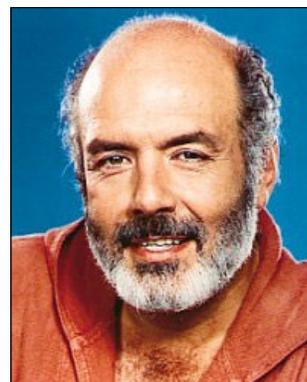
As so many of the names...for some of us anyway...connected with our past have been forgotten, seeing the faces connected to those names puts on that little light in our heads. Then, there comes that "Holy crap!" exclamation followed by a flood of memories; which is, in part, the point of the website's existence. I look forward to seeing Mat's collection.

Lastly, the editor gets to make a few points in closing this issue.

Thank you for eight years of involvement. We've had amazing success in finding some of the many. And I ask you all to find just one more former member.

My quarterly "thanks" to the following who provided various elements to this issue of the newsletter: Ed Hart, George Bitsoli, Ron "Bird" Parrot, Ross Plasterer - our former Lieutenant helo-pilot during Solant I and now retired General, Tom Poole - Dentist aboard the Hermitage, Joe Teklits, "Anonymous" - the world's most prolific author and, of course, the *Oh, so smart* "Precious Melissa."

And to, I offer a special thanks to former Cpl Oliver A. Pettit, USMC [PI 63 RVN 65-67] who was so instrumental in finding "RC" Peyton and "Mat" Phillips.



Pernell Elvin Roberts, Jr.

Trivia Answers:

1. 2,709,918 Americans.
2. Approximately 40-60%.
3. 50,000.
4. 61% and 11,465 were under 20!

The numbers provided above were taken from Veteran's Administration documents.

5. She smells like a new truck.
6. There were 16,000,000 draft dodgers, which along with one or more sym-pathetic parents, a friend, aunt, uncle and more made for 50,000,000 anti-war activists. And now, according to Dr. Sears, they continue to rationalize their cowardice of yesteryear during their waning, faded years of influence in academia, the entertainment, literary arts and publishing industries.

7. It was *guerra fria*, or "cold war!" Proving: Nothing IS new!

Mailed as a black on white copy, a fully colorized version can be found at our website, where on page one you'll find a link to a downloadable version.

I hope you've enjoyed this latest effort. Send in your stories by e-or-snail mail to make for an even better next issue.

Semper Fi; *Ed Shea*