

# The 2/4 Association

# Sea Horse



Second Quarter, 2004

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## The Newsletter of the Second Battalion, Fourth Marines Association

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efforts of many, so far I think we have missed only three. I would now like to add a page to the website (I'll check on the legality first) of mentioning the hospitals where those members of 2/4 that were WIA are recuperating so that members can send cards or visit.

Semper Fidelis...Jim Mazy

Second Battalion, 4th Marines—the Best in the Corps  
“Unfortunately, America usually only remembers its veterans when they’re needed.”

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### President's message

Dear Friends, Members, Marines and Corpsmen,

This being the last issue prior to the reunion in Benld, IL, which is being held on Labor Day weekend, I want to remind everyone that it is also an election year for a new slate of officers to head up our association. In addition to those who have already expressed their intent, anyone interested in running for an office (president, vice president, secretary, treasurer or as a director) should send me a note via U.S. mail or an e-mail stating your name and the office you are seeking.

I will be putting together a web page for the election this year so those who are internet-capable can cast a vote, and, for those who do not have that capability, I might send out a postcard for a mail-in ballot. The first thing I will have to do is look through the bylaws and see if my intention is in compliance with them.

Without going into detail, I would like to say that our younger brothers of active duty 2/4 are doing the battalion proud in their efforts in Iraq.

I have instituted a program that is attempting to have a representative of the association present at each funeral or service for any 2/4 person KIA in Iraq. Thanks to the

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### 2004 reunion details

Submitted by Jim Mazy. (Editor's Note: Please register as soon as possible for the reunion. **A reunion registration form is provided on the last page of this issue of the Sea Horse. Fill it out and send it in today!**)

The dates are set and plans are in process for our reunion for 2004. It seems that the good folks in Benld, Illinois, didn't get enough of the 2/4 Association during the last time they hosted our reunion, or maybe it just took this long for them to recuperate from it.

The Benld, Illinois, area (Sawyer'sville) was the home of SgtMaj John Malnar, 2/4's Sergeant Major who was KIA on May 2, 1968, during one of the Vietnam War's bloodiest battles, Dai Do.

As it is now (and these dates are rock solid so as to coincide with the city's centennial celebration), the reunion is scheduled to commence on Thursday, September 2, 2004, and end the evening of Sunday, September 5, 2004. The following day is Labor Day. I know this is out of the ordinary for our reunion times, but this is when their 100-year celebration is, and this is what the general membership voted on and approved.

So far, the itinerary is set up as follows, but this is subject to change as they find other things for us to do:

**Thursday, September 2:** Registration and general get-together (aka: "organized grab ass") in the designated hospitality and meeting room at the Baymont Inn.

**Friday, September 3:** The executive meeting will be held Friday morning and will be immediately followed by the annual membership meeting. This will be an election year to see who is going to lead the association for the next few years. After the meeting, there will be a free day to mingle and see the city. The association picnic is Friday evening and will be filled with fun, food, and games, including something called bocce ball.

**Saturday, September 4:** We will hold our memorial service Saturday morning. This will be held in the cemetery where Big John is buried. Another free day to do whatever you please (lots of fun things in the city park, as it is their centennial celebration also). The banquet is

scheduled for Saturday night, to be followed by entertainment and dancing.

**Sunday, September 5:** The morning is free for you to attend church services or do as you wish. That afternoon around 5:00 PM, we will join together as a drill team and amaze the townsfolk with our clockwork symmetry and graceful rendition of the famed 8th & 1 Silent Drill Team in DC. Yeah sure, would you believe we stumble down the street while trying to keep in step with the likes of John Hembrough and Bob Bliss?

The reunion will officially close Sunday at the conclusion of the parade, but all are welcome to continue the Benld centennial celebration in the city park.

If anyone has suggestions for activities, please send me an e-mail.

So far, two hotels have committed to placing a block on rooms to accommodate the 2/4 Association: The Baymont Inn and the Super 8, both in the city of Litchfield which is nine miles from Benld. From what I have

been able to find out, the Baymont is offering a rate of \$75.60 plus tax per night and the Super 8 will be approximately \$59 plus tax. The Baymont will be the Command Post.

Baymont Inn & Suites  
1405 West Hudson Drive  
Litchfield, IL 62056  
217-324-4556

Super 8 Motel  
211 Ohren Lane  
Litchfield, IL 62056  
217-324-7788

The Baymont offers an indoor swimming pool, sauna, fitness room, and many other amenities too numerous to mention here.

As for the banquet on Saturday evening, I believe it is going to be a buffet style dinner with a menu of:

- Broasted chicken
- Italian rope sausage and polenta
- Roasted pork loin with apricot sauce
- Chef's medley of fresh vegetables
- Bow tie pasta primavera
- Mashed potatoes
- Cabbage rolls
- Mixed green salad with a variety of dressings

### 2002 - 2004 2/4 Association Officers and Chairs

President	Jim Mazy, 6122 Shasta Street, Englewood, FL 34224-8161. Phone: 941 474-9431. E-mail: <President@2ndbn4thmarine.com>.
Vice President	Yahya A.A. Kariem, 7717 Reed Street, Jacksonville, FL 32208. Phone: 904 764-2241. E-mail: <ykariem50@aol.com>.
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Health & Welfare Officer	Steven O'Shields, 3151 Lake Forest Drive, Apt #86, Augusta, GA 30909. Phone: 706 729-0043. E-mail: <chesty84@usmc.net>. Web page: <http://www.geocities.com.chesty84>.
Sergeant at Arms	Michael B. McComas, 4328 Winfield Drive, Flowery Branch, GA 30542. Phone: 707 967-0973. E-mail: <SgtMac@webtv.net>.

The 2/4 Association *Sea Horse* is published quarterly, and is the official newsletter of the Second Battalion, Fourth Marines Association, Inc.

- Pineapple upside-down cake
- Kolotski cheese
- Apricots and nuts
- Coffee, tea, and a cash bar

Pricing for the banquet will be approximately \$25 per adult; we are checking on children's prices.

Benld is situated in the southwestern portion of Illinois just a short distance from Interstate 55 on Route 138. The closest commercial airport is St. Louis International which is about 50 miles southwest of Benld. Full services with rental cars are available at the airport.

### 1st Marine Division Association annual reunion

The 2004 reunion of the 1st Marine Division Association is scheduled for 11–15 August 2004, in Washington, DC. The reunion will be held at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel, 2660 Woodley Rd., N.W. Washington D.C. 20008. For further information, you can go to the association website at <<http://www.1stmarinedivisionassociation.org/2004/index.htm>>, or contact the association secretary:

MSgt Stephen R. Risch, USMCR  
(Ret.)  
3106 E 47th Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46205-1608  
317 255-2678

### 3d Marine Division Association annual reunion

The 2004 reunion of the 3d Marine Division Association is scheduled for 8–12 September 2004 in Scottsdale, AZ. The reunion for the 1st Bn, 3d Marines Association will be held in conjunction with the division reunion. For more information, check the 3d Marine Divi-

2/4 Association PX Merchandise	
General Items	Price
<b>Sands of Iwo Jima tie.</b> (Price includes shipping and handling.)	\$50.00
<b>"Gone but not forgotten."</b> 16" x 20" print of artwork by Chris Thibodeau; original created as a Christmas present to his father James Thibodeau (Hotel, '64/'65). Price includes shipping. (See 2/4 Association web < <a href="http://www.2ndbn4thmarine.com/thibodeau_art.htm">http://www.2ndbn4thmarine.com/thibodeau_art.htm</a> > for details.)	\$25.00
<b>Mugs and tumblers by Tervis.</b> Super insulated with an embroidered 2/4 patch encapsulated between two pieces of crystal clear acrylic plastic. Price includes shipping. (See 2/4 Association web < <a href="http://www.2ndbn4thmarine.com/px_items_disc.htm">http://www.2ndbn4thmarine.com/px_items_disc.htm</a> > for details.)	
12 oz Rocks Glass: Each - \$13.35; Set of 2 - \$23.75; Set of 4 - \$41.55	
16 oz Tumbler: Each - \$14.35; Set of 2 - \$25.75; Set of 4 - \$45.55	
17 oz Mug w/handle: Each - \$16.35; Set of 2 - \$29.75; Set of 4 - \$52.55	
<b>Polo shirt.</b> Red, maroon, white, or blue with "2 <sup>nd</sup> Bn, 4 <sup>th</sup> Marines" embroidered on the front.	\$25.00
<b>T-shirt.</b> Various colors with full-color 2/4 logo decal on the front. (Call or e-mail for available colors.)	\$15.00
<b>Caps.</b> White with black bill. Embroidered with "2 <sup>nd</sup> Bn, 4 <sup>th</sup> Marines, Magnificent Bastards." Navy blue or Marine Corps red. "USMC" embroidered on the front; "2 <sup>nd</sup> Bn, 4 <sup>th</sup> Marines" embroidered on the back.	\$18.50
<b>Golf towel.</b> White with red 2/4 logo.	\$6.50
<b>Logo.</b> Stitched patch, 3 1/2" x 4", multicolored.	\$5.00
<b>Logo pin.</b> For lapel or cap. (Call or e-mail for price and availability.)	
<b>Mouse pad.</b> Red and white 2/4 logo.	\$6.50
<b>Apron.</b> With pocket, for home and shop use - red with white 2/4 logo.	\$8.00
<b>Thermal travel mug.</b> Champagne with black Marine Corps emblem and 2/4 logo.	\$5.50
<b>Coffee mug.</b> Black with white 2/4 logo and Marine Corps emblem.	\$5.50
Videos	Price
<b>Dai Do Documentary.</b> (Call or e-mail for price and availability.)	
<b>2001 Reunion.</b> Includes visits to The Wall, Iwo Jima Memorial, etc.	\$10.00
Books	Price
<b>Images from the Otherland,</b> Ken Symson (hard cover - add \$2.50 for shipping and handling).	\$24.95
<b>What a Life,</b> Randy Kington.	\$17.50
<b>Ordering Instructions:</b>  Unless otherwise noted, above, please add \$1.50 per item for shipping and allow 4-6 weeks. Make your check or money order payable to "2/4 Association." Some items may be out of stock and, therefore, will not be shipped immediately. Call or e-mail Jack Petrowsky first for information. Send your order to:  <b>2/4 Association PX</b> <b>c/o Jack Petrowsky</b> <b>PO Box 7214</b> <b>Las Cruces, NM 88006-7214</b>	



sion Association web site at <<http://www.caltrap.com/>>, or contact:

Bill Ervin  
2855 Iliff  
Boulder, CO 80305  
303 494-7752  
E-mail: <[Hatch101@aol.com](mailto:Hatch101@aol.com)>

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## Marines recall Ar Ramadi battle

Submitted by: 1st Marine Division. Story Identification Number: 200441913251. Story by Cpl Paula M. Fitzgerald.

Camp Combat Outpost, Iraq (April 16, 2004)—Lance Cpl Deschon E. Otey's nights are still plagued by thoughts from four days of intense fighting.

Otey and the rest of the infantrymen from Company E, 2d Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division lost nearly 20 of their buddies during operations in Ar Ramadi April 6–10. They're back out on the streets again, having exacted a heavy toll on the enemy for killing Marines. Still, bouncing back is never easy.

In the midday hours of April 6, Marines from 3d Platoon were patrolling the streets of Ar Ramadi when they began to receive fire.



**Firefight in Ar Ramadi**

Marines from 2d Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment run out of cover during a short firefight in Ar Ramadi, Iraq. A Marine foot patrol was attacked by a unknown sniper. (Photo ID: 2004419132744. Photo courtesy Maurizio Gambarini, Deutsche Press Agentur. Photo by: Maurizio Gambarini.)

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"We had heard that Golf Company had been hit earlier," 21-year-old Lance Cpl John R. Huerkamp, a 2d Squad team leader, said. "A few minutes later we heard

that the guys from 3d Squad, 3d Platoon had also been hit."

Otey described the first few seconds of the attack.

"I remember when we got to our objective I started to hear 'tink, tink, tink,'" Otey, 24-year old from Louisville, Kentucky. "I was like, 'Man, we're being shot at. Get out of the vehicle.'"

The squad returned fire for about 15 minutes. They then raided the house from where the shooting was coming.

"After we were done, we loaded back up and were heading back to base," Otey explained. "But then on the way back we got ambushed."

The squad's convoy was split, and two humvees were under heavy small-arms fire.

Otey immediately jumped out of the unarmored vehicle and sought cover behind a concrete wall. The rest of the Marines remained inside the vehicle and returned fire.

"Our vehicle was going to help (Otey's) humvee, but we didn't make it in time," Cpl Marcus D. Waechter, 21-year-old from McKinny, Texas, added.

No one is sure what happened in the moments before the other vehicles returned to Otey's humvee. Time and events are jumbled among the survivors and recollections sometimes don't match up from one Marine to another.

One thing is certain. By the time reinforcements arrived, all but one passenger in the truck was dead. The sole survivor was Otey who was still laying down fire from behind the wall.

Twenty-one-year-old Navy Petty Officer 3d Class Adam P. Clayton, senior line corpsman, remembered the scene vividly.

"When we got to the scene, we saw a humvee canted on the side of the road with the windshield shattered," said the Vernal, Utah, sailor. "There were dead bodies all over the place and the closer I got to the vehicle I could see it was covered in blood."

But it wasn't the sight of mangled bodies that disturbed the hospital corpsman. It was a pair of military-issued glasses lying smashed on the ground. The glasses belonged to the truck's machine gunner.

"I'm still not exactly sure why seeing those glasses upset me so much, but the vision of them on the ground still gets to me," Clayton said.

One of Clayton's close friends, Navy Petty Officer 3d Class Fernando Mendezaceves was also riding inside the doomed humvee. It appeared Mendezaceves died trying to save a Marine. His body was found near that of 3d Platoon's platoon sergeant. Clayton believes Mendezaceves was treating the staff sergeant before being shot and killed.

"We all took cover. There was firing coming from all directions," Otey said. "They were shooting AK-47s, RPK machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades."

After a fierce fight, the squad was able to gain control of the situation but not before losing most of their own Marines. The remaining Marines were divided up amongst the other two squads in 3d Platoon.



**Lance Corporal John R. Huerkamp, Echo, 2/4**

LCpl John R. Huerkamp, infantryman with Company E, 2d Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, watched as one of his close friends was killed during a firefight April 6. Huerkamp, 21-year-old from Lacrosse, Wisconsin, met LCpl John Sims almost three years ago when they were roommates at Camp Pendleton, California. (Photo ID: 2004419131410. USMC photo by Cpl Paula M. Fitzgerald.)

Meanwhile, Huerkamp and his squad were already enroute to help quell the remaining violence.

"We caught a ride on a 7-ton vehicle to the firefight and took up a security position on top of a roof," explained Huerkamp, of Lacrosse, Wisc. "I just started laying down suppressive fire."

That's when a sniper on the roof told Huerkamp a Marine was hit. Huerkamp ran to the aid of his close friend, Lance Cpl John Sims, who was unresponsive.

"I asked him if he was alright, but he didn't respond to me, so I tried to find a gunshot wound," Huerkamp said. "His face was blue and his eyes were dilated."

He removed Sims' protective flak jacket and searched his upper body for a bullet hole. He found it underneath the Marine's left shoulder. After getting Sims to a secure position, Huerkamp and a corpsman began CPR and were able to feel Sims' weak pulse.

"We called for a medevac and were told a helicopter was coming," Huerkamp said. "But then they said that the bird was called off and a tank was on its way."

Once Sims was loaded up for transport to medical help, Huerkamp returned to the roof to lay down fire. About 20 minutes later, word came down to Huerkamp that Sims was dead.

"I was pissed. I didn't know what to do," he said. "There wasn't much I could do so I just went on doing my job."

The company continued to fight all over Ar Ramadi for several more hours before returning to the camp.

Several more days of fighting ensued. More Marines were killed and injured. Still, the enemy paid a higher price with more killed and wounded.

Twenty-one-year-old Lance Cpl Geoffrey D. Lindsay, of Forest City, Iowa, was one of those wounded by enemy action.

"It's odd because we got hit on Good Friday," Lindsay said. "We were sweeping one of the roads for improvised explosive devices when one went off near the 7-ton I was the gunner for."

The explosion sent razor-sharp shrapnel in every direction, including into the left side of Lindsay's body. He fell to the ground instantly. The rest of the Marines dismounted from the truck to set up a security perimeter. That's when the second IED detonated, killing the vehicle's driver, Lindsay remembered.

"It was rough," he said.

Lindsay's wounds were minor. He's still recuperating and should be back on full duty within the next few weeks.

As the fighting progressed, the Marines didn't get bogged down with the losses of their brothers in arms. Instead, they pushed on with the mission at hand.

During raids throughout the week, the company, along with Company G, seized several hundred weapons systems and killed hundreds of anti-Coalition fighters.

The Marines find solace in one another.

"I talk with some of the other guys in the platoon about what happened, but it still hurts," Otey added. "Every time I walk into our living space I see the empty

racks. Those were guys I used to talk to about my problems. Now I don't hear their voices anymore.

"We all know that we have jobs to do," Huerkamp said. "Most of the Marines are just dealing with losing their friends, but they still push on."

\* \* \*

The above article is reprinted from the Marine Corps web site  
<<http://www.usmc.mil/marinelink/mcn2000.nsf/main5/32986768B100C02F85256E7B005DA53D?opendocument>>, April 19, 2004.

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## 'Magnificent Bastards' honor their fallen

Submitted by: 1st Marine Division. Story Identification Number: 2004421114623. Story by Cpl. Paula M. Fitzgerald.

CAMP BLUE DIAMOND, Iraq (April 20, 2004)—The reflected sunlight, glaring off the aluminum slates of engraved metal, hung in silent tribute to Marines and sailors killed fighting the enemy in Ar Ramadi.

Marines paused, heads bowed, to remember their dead.

A memorial service was held at Camp Combat Outpost, Iraq April 11. Marines from 2d Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment honored their fallen from the previous two weeks' fighting.

It was a final salute for the 1st Marine Division warriors who call themselves the "Magnificent Bastards."

"The most honorable act a warrior can perform is to conduct himself with courage and honor in the face of the enemy," said SgtMaj James E. Booker, battalion sergeant major.

According to many of the battalion's Marines, that's exactly how their buddies died and that's how they will be remembered.

"Those that do and do not return from that encounter deserve to be memorialized by their brothers that have returned from battle," Booker added.

Seven of the 16 fallen men killed were from 3d Platoon, Company E. In fact, one squad alone lost four Marines and one Navy hospital corpsman during an ambush.

Twenty-one-year-old Cpl Marcus D. Waechter was the squad's leader.

"We lost our whole squad that day," Waechter explained. "They split the rest of us in the other squads. It's been a hard adjustment, but we just do it."

Navy Petty Officer 3d Class Adam P. Clayton knew many of the Marines who were killed and was close friends with the fallen corpsman. He said most of the battalion is marching forward despite their losses.

"The first few days after the fighting," Clayton remembered, "you could see the hurt and pain in the guys' eyes, but now they know there is no more time for being upset. It's time to go on with the mission."

Booker said the Marines are hitting the streets even harder than before.



**Sixteen ID tags**

Sixteen sets of identification tags dangle from an inverted rifle honoring Marines and sailors killed in fighting in Ar Ramadi, Iraq. Marines with 2d Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment held a memorial service April 11 at Camp Combat Outpost. (Photo ID: 2004421115449. Photo courtesy David Swanson, Knight Ridder.)

"The ultimate way a Marine deals with losing their buddies is to take the life of as many of the enemy as they can," he explained. "Then Marines feel that they have not let their brothers' lives go in vain and they can hold their heads high if they reap a hell of a payback on the bad guys."

Clayton, who's no stranger to combat, agreed with the sergeant major.



"I don't think we can kill enough of the enemy to make up for what we lost," he said. "But we're sure as hell going to try."

\* \* \*

The above article is reprinted from the Marine Corps web site <<http://www.usmc.mil/marinelink/mcn2000.nsf/main5/E38EA3A4AEAC041C85256E7D0056A4DB?opendocument>>, April 21, 2004.

## Brothers in arms

Submitted by: Ken Sympson

Back in March, Tom Hopkins sent the following to me in an e-mail message:

"...I have a friend whose son is a 1stLt in the Marine Corps stationed at MCRD-San Diego as a Series Commander. His name is Matt Zummo and he fought in the invasion of Iraq as a Platoon Commander of a Tank Platoon. He was wounded when his Humvee was hit by an RPG.... A few days ago Matt was decorated with a Bronze Star with a Combat V."

At the time, I did not have a specific story of a similar sort about a 2/4 Marine, but I thought the membership would enjoy hearing Lt Zummo's story. A flurry of e-mail messages then erupted among me, Tom, Lt Zummo and his father, Pete. In short order, I had Lt Zummo's permission to include an article in the *Sea Horse*. Plus, I had the complete texts from the award recommendation and the citation, itself. Here's a portion of the "Summary of Action" portion of the award recommendation:

"On 2 April 2003, Lieutenant Zummo's platoon led the battalion as it passed through lead elements of RCT-5 and moved to contact. The Battalion's mission was to seize a key bridgehead over the strategically important Tigris River located in the city of An Numaniyah. Lieutenant Zummo's aggressive leadership served to focus his platoon as they made contact with enemy forces on both sides of the road. Calmly reporting the developing situation, he returned fire and continued to move forward. As the conflict unfolded with the lead tanks' engagements with main gun and machine gun fire, he identified enemy positions and continued to engage and report. While he controlled the movement of his platoon, he continued to keep the Battalion apprised of developments as he crossed the Tigris and cut Highway 6. He was actively engaging the enemy with direct fire from his own .50 caliber machine gun while ensuring critical pieces of battlefield information were relayed both up to the Battalion and down to his platoon. The end result of this engagement with an estimated battalion sized

enemy force supported by armor, was the rapid seizure of a bridgehead over the Tigris River and subsequent control of north/south traffic along Highway 6; the main line of communication (LOC) between Saddam Hussein's regime in the north and his forces in Southern Iraq.



**Lt Zummo receives the Bronze Star with combat "V"**

Depot Commanding General Brig Gen John M. Paxton Jr., pins the Bronze Star with combat "V" on 1stLt Matt Zummo, assistant series commander, Special Training Company. Photo by: Lance Cpl Jess Levens.

"On 3 April 2003, Lieutenant Zummo's courage, skill, and situational awareness were critical to the success of the Battalion's mission. As his platoon took point in front of the lead tank company, which was the main effort for the Battalion, its mission was to pursue a fleeing enemy and continue to expand a critical LOC on Highway 6 enroute to Baghdad. Leading from the front, he uncovered a company-reinforced ambush, forcing the enemy to engage prior to the arrival of the Battalion's main body and foiling his attempt at a successful ambush. Personally engaging enemy rocket-propelled grenade and machine-gun teams from an exposed position, he courageously continued to

destroy enemy targets, lead his platoon, and provide accurate, timely reporting to the Battalion command group and adjacent units after receiving wounds of an urgent nature from an enemy RPG. Refusing to be evacuated until the enemy had been completely defeated, he displayed truly noteworthy devotion to duty and courage under fire. The end result of this engagement with an estimated battalion sized enemy force supported by armor, was the expansion of the 1st Marine Division's LOC by some 55 Kilometers and subsequent control of north/south traffic along Highway 6."

The President of the United States takes pride in presenting the BRONZE STAR MEDAL to

FIRST LIEUTENANT MATTHEW P. ZUMMO  
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

For heroic achievement in connection with operations against the enemy as Scout Platoon Commander, Regimental Combat Team 5, 2d Tank Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, from 2 to 3 April 2003, in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. First Lieutenant Zummo courageously led his Scout Platoon through a harrowing engagement against a determined enemy, ultimately resulting in the battalion's successful seizure and crossing of the strategically important Tigris River. On 3 April 2003, during some of the most intense fighting the battalion faced, First Lieutenant Zummo led his Scout Platoon on a dangerous movement along Highway 6. He displayed exceptional courage and skill under enemy fire while leading the battalion through a surprise enemy ambush. He reported the size, location, and disposition of enemy elements in the battalion's zone, while inflicting heavy losses on the enemy with his organic direct fire weapons systems. Although seriously wounded, he refused to be evacuated until the enemy forces in the battalion's zone were decisively defeated. By his zealous initiative, courageous actions, and exceptional dedication to duty, First Lieutenant Zummo reflected great credit upon himself and upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service.

The Combat Distinguishing Device is authorized.

Here's a little more colorful information about Lt Zummo's injury. It is excerpted from comments made

by Capt T. P. Sudmeyer, A Co Commander, 2d Tank Bn:

"At this point, he still appeared in command of himself and his platoon, though his injuries appeared to be causing him discomfort. Capt Bar-dorf and I ordered Lt Zummo to come with us to the ambulance so that the MO could inspect his injuries. Lt Zummo refused to leave his command in the face of our direct orders. It was only upon the promise of physical force that he willingly complied. My opinion, having observed Lt Zummo professionally on numerous occasions, to include having served as his commanding officer for three months, is that Lt Zummo simply did not want to abandon his Marines while he still was coherent and had the capacity, however limited, to lead them. Lt Zummo was then escorted to the ambulance where he was examined by the Medical Officer and subsequently ordered to be evacuated. When I last saw Lt Zummo, he gave up his personal GPS to me to replace another that had been destroyed by a sniper's bullet."

With official information like this, you just don't need someone like me to try to make up a good story. But to hear Lt Zummo tell it, nothing special happened that day. Here's what he wrote to Tom Hopkins:

"As far as the whole award goes, I did not do anything that yourself or any other Marine would not have done in that situation. I simply did what was expected of me as a Marine; the award itself is a direct result of the outstanding Marines I had in my Platoon. They gave everything they had every single day."

But, you see, this does not turn out to be the whole story. His replacement was 1stLt Brian McPhillips. I discovered this when Lt Zummo's father sent me the following:

"There's another part to the story that needs to be told. Matt was wounded on 3 April 2003 and eventually evacuated to a field hospital in Southern Iraq. Upon Matt's departure from 2nd Tanks, a young 25 year old, 1stLt Brian McPhillips, volunteered to take Matt's command. Lt McPhillips was a Tow Platoon Commander and his Marines were assigned among the various tank companies in the battalion. On 4 April 2003 1stLt McPhillips and the Scout Platoon he was leading, were ambushed by a group of non-Iraqi terrorists and he was killed in action. Lt McPhillips' uncle is a friend of mine, making the tragedy more personal for our families. I had the honor of attending Lt McPhillips funeral and burial.



The memory of his dedication and commitment are forever etched in my mind.”

The President of the United States takes pride in presenting the BRONZE STAR MEDAL (Posthumously) to

FIRST LIEUTENANT BRIAN M. MCPHILLIPS  
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

for service as set forth in the following

**CITATION:**

For heroic achievement in connection with operations against the enemy as Scout Platoon Commander, 2d Tank Battalion, Regimental Combat Team-5, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, on 4 April 2003, in support of Operations ENDURING and IRAQI FREEDOM. First Lieutenant McPhillips skillfully and courageously led his platoon as the lead element of a battalion level attack along Highway 6 near the town of Al Jisr, Iraq. As the battalion approached the southeastern suburbs of Baghdad, it became the target of a ferocious ambush by a determined enemy force. First Lieutenant McPhillips chose to position himself in the lead vehicle to facilitate his ability to develop the tactical situation, understanding fully the position made him the focus of the enemy's direct fire. Rather than retreat to the protection of his armored vehicle after being targeted by the enemy, First Lieutenant McPhillips selflessly remained exposed in the vehicle's turret to return fire with his .50 caliber machine gun. While delivering effective fires against the enemy, he courageously continued to report the developing situation to his battalion until the moment he was mortally wounded. His efforts allowed the battalion to effectively fight through the ambush and saved the lives of countless fellow Marines. By his zealous initiative, courageous actions, and exceptional dedication to duty, First Lieutenant McPhillips gallantly gave his life for his country and reflected great credit upon himself and upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service.

The Combat Distinguishing Device is authorized.

With Pete Zummo's help, I made contact with Brian McPhillips' uncle and finally his father, David McPhillips. David sent me an e-mail that said in part:

“I went to Camp Lejeune to receive Brian's Bronze Star and had a chance to talk to the Marines who were there. Mat Zummo led the Scout Platoon from day one out of Kuwait. They traveled ahead of Regimental Combat Team 5, which was a very long Marine column that could have been as long as 100

miles. That was a lot to ask of a Scout Platoon which had no armored vehicles. LtCol Oehl, 2d Tank Battalion CO, told me that the plan was when the Scouts ran into trouble, then a company of tanks were to push ahead on their flanks for their protection and that worked well until April 4th. Mat was wounded on April 3d, and that is why 1stLt McPhillips was Platoon Commander that day instead of Matt Zummo.”

The story doesn't quite end here. As his son after him, David McPhillips was also a Marine. As he wrote to me:

“I was a Vietnam Marine in 1969 with the 1st Engineer Battalion which was next to Marble Mountain, a landmark that is familiar to a lot of 1st Division Marines. My time in Vietnam was spent doing projects and making my way back to base for protection at night. The action that Lieutenants Zummo and McPhillips were involved in was a much more intense, the sort of thing where you really don't know what's around the next corner.”

\* \* \*

Lt Matt Zummo is now stationed at MCRD San Diego, serving as assistant series commander, Special Training Company. Lt Brian McPhillips is now a fond memory in the minds of his friends and family. As a fellow Marine and brother in arms, you can honor that memory by a donation to his scholarship fund.

### **BC High launches scholarship to honor fallen Marine**

By Meghan Dorney

Family members and friends of U.S. Marine 1stLt Brian McPhillips, a Pembroke native who died during the war in Iraq, honored his memory Oct. 8 by announcing an academic scholarship to Boston College High School in his name. McPhillips, 25 when he died, graduated from BC High in 1996.

“After graduation from Providence College, there were lots of things that Brian could have chosen to do,” his father, David, told *The Pilot* shortly after his son's death. “He chose the Marines. He chose them because he felt that it was his obligation, not just his duty [to serve his country]. He felt very strongly about that.”

However, McPhillips' father, a former Marine who fought in Vietnam, described his son as much more than a hero: “He was a generous and caring person.” He also touched upon his son's religious faith, saying he had gone to war with rosary beads and a crucifix.

**Donations to the scholarship can be mailed to the 1st Lt Brian McPhillips Scholarship at Boston College High School at 150 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Mass. 02125.**

Editor's note: The text here is excerpted from an article that appeared in the November 14, 2003, issue of *The Pilot*, a publication on the web of the Archdiocese of Boston <[http://www.rcab.org/pilotstories/2003/ps031114/BC\\_scholarship.html](http://www.rcab.org/pilotstories/2003/ps031114/BC_scholarship.html)>.



### The road to Baghdad

First Lieutenant Brian McPhillips, killed in action on April 4, 2003. Lt McPhillips was awarded the Bronze Star with Combat "V."

## From Kanehoe to Chu Lai

The first part of Tom Hopkins' story of the 2/4 journey from Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, to Chu Lai in 1965 appeared in the last issue of the *Sea Horse*. The conclusion is now scheduled to be included in the third quarter, 2004, issue. I apologize for not being able to include it in this issue.

## Marines honor corporal's heroic sacrifice

Submitted by: 1st Marine Division. Story Identification #: 20045143251. Story by Sgt Jose L. Garcia.

CAMP AL QAIM, Iraq (April 29, 2004)—Recruits at the Corps' two recruit training depots will know Cpl Jason L. Dunham. They will know that the 22-year-old Marine lived up to the Corps' largest legends and laid down his own life to save those of his Marines.

Dunham, a machine gunner for Company K, 3d Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment was memorialized by his battalion April 29th here. A crowd of more than 500 Marines, sailors and soldiers gathered under a dark and cloudy sky for a memorial service to pay their last respects to a brave hero.

Dunham, from Scio, N.Y., died from his wounds April 24. Ten days earlier, the Marine dove on top of a grenade, absorbing nearly all the blast with his own body to save his fellow Marines.

"His was a selfless act of courage to save his fellow Marines," said SgtMaj Daniel A. Huff, sergeant major for 3d Battalion 7th Marine Regiment. "This generation of Marines is as good as any generation we've ever had in the Corps."

Dunham was manning a vehicle check-point near Husaybah after a convoy was ambushed April 14. He observed car pull up and a man jump from the vehicle, sprinting away. Dunham—in full combat gear—chased the man down, tackling him to the ground. Other Marines came to assist in the apprehension when the terrorist pulled a pin from a hand grenade. Dunham dove onto the grenade, taking the blast into his own body, saving the lives of his Marines. Dunham suffered serious wounds, along with two other Marines. But were it not for his actions, all three might have died.

"He new what he was doing," said LCpl Jason A. Sanders, 21, from McAllester, Okla., and a mortar man with Company K. "He wanted to save Marines' lives from that grenade."

Another mortar man with the company, LCpl Mark E. Dean, 22, from Owasso, Okla., described Dunham as an unselfish Marine. Dunham's enlistment was to end in June, but he voluntarily extended his contract to join his Marines.



### Marines honor corporal's heroic sacrifice

April 29, 2004. More than 500 Marines, sailors and soldiers gathered for a memorial service held April 29, to honor Cpl Jason L. Dunham's memory and pay their last respects to the hero. Dunham, a machine gunner with Company K, 3d Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, jumped on a grenade April 14 and prevented other Marines from injuries. Dunham was seriously injured and later died April 24 from the wounds. (Photo ID: 20045143949. USMC photo by Sgt Jose L. Garcia.)

"We told him he was crazy for coming out here," Dean explained. "He decided to come out here and fight with us. All he wanted was to make sure his boys made it back home."

"The only way to honor him is in his own way," said Capt Trent A. Gibson, commanding officer for Company K. "We must continue to do our duty, take care of our Marines, lead by example and take the fight to the enemy."

Dunham dreamed of joining the Los Angeles Police Department after his tour.

He was born Nov. 10, 1981 and joined the Marine Corps July 31, 2000. The Marine completed recruit training at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, South Carolina. He joined 3d Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment in September 2003, serving with 4th Platoon as a machine gunner.

Huff said commanders with the battalion are still awaiting eyewitness statements from Marines before determining at what level they will recommend Dunham for a decoration. "What Corporal Dunham did equates to what a lot of heroes of our past have done to earn the nation's highest honor," explained Sgt Maj Wayne R. Bell, 1st Marine Division's sergeant major. "If it were up to me, he'd be put in for the Medal of Honor. From bits and pieces of what I'm hearing, it very well could be.

"He'll be in the history books, like many of our Marines here," Bell added.

Dunham survived his wounds for ten days when his parents, Daniel K. Dunham and Natalie J. Sherwood made the decision to end life support for the Marine. According to Bell, Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen Michael W. Hagee and Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, SgtMaj John L. Estrada were at Dunham's bedside with his parents at Bethesda Naval Hospital in Maryland when he died.

"That in itself speaks volumes knowing that no matter who it is—general officer or a corporal—his act alone warrants a visit from the Commandant," Bell said. "I



#### Marines and Sailors

"This photo appeared in several places last Friday (April 9, 2004) with the caption, 'U.S. Marines pray over a fallen comrade at a first aid point after he died from wounds suffered in fighting in Fallujah, Iraq, Thursday, April 8, 2004.' While it tells of a poignant moment experienced by our Marines, it does not tell the whole story.

"Notice that the individual standing second from right has a pair of bandage scissors and a rubber Penrose drain (used as a tourniquet to draw blood and start IVs) in his left breast pocket. Also, note that the individual kneeling at right and the one kneeling third from right are wearing rubber surgical gloves. These personnel are Sailors—hospital corpsmen. As they have for nearly 106 years, Navy hospital corpsmen have served alongside their Marines, sharing the risks of battle and the pain of loss.

"During recent combat action in the Al Anbar Province of Iraq, HM3 Fernando Mendezaceves died as a result of a gunshot wound while assigned to Echo Company, 2d Battalion, 4th Marines, 1st Marine Division. HM3 Mendezaceves was assigned to the 1st Marine Division as an augmentee from the Naval Medical Center San Diego.

"As we go about our daily business at the Navy Memorial, honoring men and women of the sea services, let us not forget that the service and sacrifice of our Marines and Sailors is not confined to the conflicts of distant history. It is lived out each day around the world." (Editor's Note: Credit for the photo belongs to AP Photo/Murad Sezer. The text came from Mark T. Hacala, Director, Education Institute, U.S. Navy Memorial Foundation.)

know that the Marines who are alive today, because of what Corporal Dunham did, will never forget that Marine as long as they live.

"Corporal Dunham is everybody's hero," Bell added. "He sacrificed his life so his Marines could continue the mission." "God made something special when he made Jason," Dean said, "It was a privilege and honor to know him. It's sad he is gone but he is living it up in heaven and I'm happy for that."

\* \* \*

The above article is reprinted from the Marine Corps web site <<http://www.usmc.mil/marinelink/mcn2000.nsf/main5/F420EFCFDEFA5E1385256E87002EF42D?opendocument>>, April 29, 2004.



**Reunion Registration Form**  
**2d Battalion, 4th Marines Association, Inc., 2004 Reunion**

Labor Day Weekend: September 2, 3, 4 & 5, 2004  
Hosted by the city of, and held in, Benld Illinois

**Please complete this form and return to Fran Peters at the address below (with or without your check) by August 15, 2004, so that we can inform the caterers of proper counts.**

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ MI: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Guest: \_\_\_\_\_ Number Attending: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Rank, Dates & Unit w/2/4: \_\_\_\_\_

- |    |  |                            |
|----|--|----------------------------|
| 1. | Registration fee for all above the age of 13 . . . . .         | \$12.00 X _____ = \$ _____ |
| 2. | Late registration for forms after Aug 15, 2004 . . . . .       | \$15.00 X _____ = \$ _____ |
| 3. | Friday evening picnic . . . . .                                | \$ 7.50 X _____ = \$ _____ |
| 4. | Saturday evening banquet (comfortable attire) Adult . . . . .  | \$26.00 X _____ = \$ _____ |
|    | Child (12 and under) . . . . .                                 | \$16.00 X _____ = \$ _____ |
| 5. | 2/4 Assoc. & Benld Centennial Celebration tee-shirts . . . . . | \$11.00 X _____ = \$ _____ |
|    | Sizes: XXX _____ XX _____ XL _____ L _____ M _____ S _____     |                            |
|    |  | <b>Total \$ _____</b>      |

Make checks payable to Frances Peters and mail to:

Frances Peters  
209 N. III  
Benld, IL 62009  
E-mail: <franp34@hotmail.com>

Special seating requests for the Saturday banquet (not a guarantee), but you can always move around.

_____	_____	_____	_____
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_____	_____	_____	_____

**2/4 Association Roster Manager**  
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