



The 2/4 Association

Sea Horse

Fourth Quarter, 2004

The Newsletter of the Second Battalion, Fourth Marines Association

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President's message

To all the members of the Association I send wishes for a happy and healthy holiday season. As we age it is more important that we take better care of ourselves and our bodies and minds. So get that MRI you've been putting off and have that annual physical that "would take too long and can wait until I'm not so busy."

At the reunion we discussed different ways to distribute the *Sea Horse*. Due to the tight schedule for printing and the late date of the reunion, we have not been able to come up with a plan as yet but I assure you that we are working on it. It may mean that the newsletter will be shorter or that to cover the costs of printing and mailing, we will have to ask for a subscription fee (maybe \$5.00 annually), but we will allow every member the opportunity to have a say in how it is done.

We are in need of a new membership director to join our team. Bob Bliss, who has been in that position for some time and has done a great job for the association, is researching and writing a book on Con Thien and cannot continue in that position much longer. He has agreed to wait until we find a new one but we have already taxed his kindness.

We are also going to need someone to help us distribute the *Sea Horse*. Our former president, Jim Mazy, has handled the task for four years now. After three major hurricanes, the death of his father-in-law, his mom being sick, and his own health not being the best, Jim has asked to be relieved. Jim, thank you for your hard work and dedication for all these years.

I have asked Ken if we could add a "Where are they now" column to the newsletter but it will require your help. I thought it would be interesting to find out just what has become of us since the 1960s. Did you go to college on the GI Bill like I did? Did you remain in the Corps? Are you a businessman, a writer, a lawyer or a postal worker like I was? Tell us about yourself. We knew what each of us wanted at 18 or 19 or 23, but what about now? Thirty years is a lot to catch up on in just a few days during our reunion, so let's get to know each other again, my friends.

Just one more thing, I wanted to send each of you an e-mail for the Marine Corps birthday but my system was down for two days. I hope you all had a great day and celebrated like true Marines.

Semper Fi and Happy Holidays,

Jack

PS: Help fill those Marine Toys For Tots boxes!

From the editor

The first time I prepared the 2/4 Association newsletter was in January 2002. In that first *Sea Horse* issue of 2004, I asked the help of the membership toward providing a newsletter that would be interesting and useful. Here's what I said at that time:

"This is my first stab at preparing the *Sea Horse*, so I am certainly looking forward to hearing from the membership about the information you would like to see and the way you would like to see it presented. I think that one of the important functions that the newsletter can perform is to provide a forum to let us know each other a little better. For example, in this issue we are fortunate to have a story by Frank Ramsey about his experiences as a China Marine. Columns like this can help us appreciate our rich heritage. Don't be afraid to send me an account of experiences from your service with the Corps. I can't guarantee publication of everything received, but I'll do my best."

In addition to "China Marine," we've had valuable contributions from Tom Kilduff, ("Pearl of the Orient") and Tom Hopkins ("A return to the 2/4 barracks after 34 years" and "From Kaneohe to Chu Lai"). And we've had shorter, but still very good input from several others as well. Of course, I could always depend on Jim Mazy to help me fill the issues with information for the members as well as

occasional pleas for assistance.

Jack relayed to me that at the 2004 reunion, there was discussion about having a more widespread distribution of the *Sea Horse* in printed form. The question of printing and mailing out the *Sea Horse* to a greater number of members is for discussion by others who will need to deal with the cost and logistics. (Jack made mention of this in his memo to the membership in this issue.)

Regarding content, Jack told me, "We also talked about a 'where are they now' column. Kind of tell what happened after the Marine Corps, Vietnam, Saudi, etc. What do you think? ... How about 6 issues per year?"

Newsletter content is what is important to me. Six issues a year would be quite a load, but the first question to be answered is "How do we get stories that the members want to read?" The answer is quite simple. They come from you.

Long and carefully prepared articles like those written by Tom Hopkins are great. But not everyone has Tom's gift for writing. I expect that Ed Brummett would be the first to tell you that he's not a great writer (no offense, Ed!). But for this issue, he provided a great human interest piece on Randy Kington finally receiving his Bronze Star for his actions on Operation Texas in 1966.

Whether it's a long story or a short one, your contribution is important. And if you don't send it to me, I cannot provide it in the *Sea Horse*. It's as simple as that.

2004–2006 2/4 Association Officers and Chairs

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

And another one from the editor

One of the important things about contributing your own stories to the *Sea Horse* is that you will leave me less room to fill with my own thoughts.

As Jim Mazy probably mentioned to you, printing the *Sea Horse* and mailing it to the membership can get expensive. As distasteful as it may be to some, obtaining the newsletter in electronic format means that you can get it quicker and at less cost to the association.

Unfortunately and understandably, not everyone has the computer skills to be able to access the *Sea Horse* directly over the internet. If you are one of those, but you are willing to try, I have an offer for you. Give me a call <585 482-0717> or send me an e-mail <ksympson@rochester.rr.com>. I'll be glad to give you a hand.

By the way, the last time I volunteered for something, I ended up editing the *Sea Horse*. Some people never learn.

Reunion 2005

Submitted by Becky Valdez

Hello, fellow 2/4 members. Just a note to let you know that Frank and I have made a few strides toward next year's reunion here in California. The dates are July 13–16, 2005.

We have chosen the Town and Country Resort and Convention Center in San Diego for our hotel. It is six miles from the San Diego Airport. We will provide shuttle information to those who are interested.

The price will be \$99.00 plus tax per night. The hotel will honor the price for three days prior and three days after our event. Our banquet will be held in one of their ballrooms, and the cost will be \$30.00 per person. A no-host bar (i.e., cash bar) will be provided.

A golf course is attached to the resort. There is a footbridge leading from the hotel over to the largest shopping mall in San Diego. A trolley leaves from there (\$5.00 for an all-day pass) to go all over San Diego as far as the border at Tijuana, Mexico.

The resort is located at 500 Hotel Circle North, San Diego, California 92108. It is two miles from Old Town San Diego and three miles from Mission Bay. It is also three miles from MCRD and about eight miles from Miramar Air Base.

The website for the resort is:

<<http://www.towncountry.com>>

Please call the toll-free telephone number for reservations: the number is 1-800-772-8527. So that you are given the discounted rate, please make sure to mention that you are attending the 2/4 Association reunion.

We are excited about the location and hope it suits everyone's needs. Let us know if you have any questions.

Frank & Becky Valdez
8221 East Birch Tree Lane
Anaheim Hills, CA 92808

Telephone: 714 281-2846
E-mail Frank at <valcone@hotmail.com>
E-mail Becky at <fxala@hotmail.com>

1st Marine Division Association reunion

The annual reunion of the 1st Marine Division Association will be held from August 3 through August 7, 2005, in Kansas City, Missouri. I hope to have more information in the next *Sea Horse*. In the meantime, you may want to check the association web site at:

<<http://www.1stmarinedivisionassociation.org/index2.htm>>

2d Marine Division Association reunion

The annual reunion of the 2d Marine Division Association will be held from August 28 through September 3, 2005, in Houston, Texas. I hope to have more information in the next *Sea Horse*. In the meantime, you may want to check the association web site at:

<<http://www.2marine.com/main.html>>

2/4 Association PX Merchandise

General Items	Price
The PX is open. We have some 3" patches (\$5), some yellow car magnet ribbons (\$6.50, including postage), and some new hooded sweatshirts (on order). Contact Jack via e-mail for other items. He still has caps and t-shirts and some books (Ken Sympton, Randy Kington).	
Ordering Instructions: 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: 2/4 Association PX c/o Jack Petrowsky PO Box 7214 Las Cruces, NM 88006-7214	

3d Marine Division Association reunion

The 2005 family reunion of the 3d Marine Division Association is scheduled for August 15–21, 2005 at the Sheraton National, Arlington, Virginia. Room rates are \$89 with free parking. For more information, check the 3d Marine Division Association web site at

<<http://www.caltrap.com/>>, or contact:

SgtMaj Bill Krueger
7622 Highland Street
Springfield, VA 22150-3931
703 451-3844

Correction regarding your original military records

Submitted by Ken Sympton

(Editor's note: In the last issue of the *Sea Horse*, we mentioned that the National Personnel Records Center had plans to digitize then destroy originals of your military records. Although there are plans to digitize the records, originals will **not** be destroyed. For further information, you can go to:

<<http://vetrecs.archives.gov/>>

Or, you can call, toll-free, **1-866-272-6272**. The following is the text of a press release on this subject that was sent out by the National Archives and Records Administration.)

Press Release, September 22, 2004

False Rumor Regarding Destruction of Veterans Records Rumor Hinders National Personnel Records

Center's Ability to Answer Veterans' Reference Requests

Washington, DC.—There is a false rumor circulating on the Internet, in e-mails, and among veteran service organizations that Official Military Personnel Files (OMPFs) at the National Personnel Records Center, operated by the National Archives and Records Administration, will be digitized and then destroyed. This rumor is NOT TRUE.

Neither the Department of Defense (DoD) nor the National Personnel Records Center intend to destroy any OMPFs stored at the Center. The purpose of any electronic scanning would be to help preserve the originals and increase efficiency in handling reference requests.

The National Archives and Records Administration **preserves** and **protects** OMPFs that were transferred from the military service departments because they are permanently valuable records that document the essential evidence of military service for the veterans of our nation. NPRC stores and services OMPFs for retired, discharged, or deceased military personnel.

The National Personnel Records Center responds to approximately 4,000 requests pertaining to military records each day, totaling more than one million requests each year. Many of those requests are for Separation Documents (usually DD Form 214) and the Center answers the majority of those inquiries in ten days or less.

Requests resulting from this false rumor will have a negative impact on NPRC's ability to respond to requests from veterans with real immediate needs, such as medical treatment, employment, retirement, etc.

* * *

The above article is reprinted from the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration web site at
<http://www.archives.gov/media_desk/press_releases/nr04-92.html>.

The siege of Con Thien

Submitted by Bob Bliss

(Editor's note: This is a repeat from the previous issue. Since then, Bob has informed me that Robert Mercer and Ken Sowder have made contact and will be providing their input to the project. If you were there, speak up—here's your chance to contribute.)

I would like to hear from any of our members who took part in the siege of Con Thien during the fall of 1967. I'm specifically interested in those who took part in the battle of September 21, 1967, when 2/4 engaged elements of an NVA regiment (thought to be the 90th NVA Regiment) defending a bunker complex in hedgerows outside of the Con Thien fire base.

Research is being conducted on this subject for the publication of a book which would define the sacrifices and heroism of our Magnificent Bastards during this enemy engagement.

The author, Mark Faucett, Esq., who lost a childhood friend during this engagement, has clearly stated to me that

he wants get out a book that shows how the Marines fought with valor against an enemy who had us outnumbered and outgunned.

Did your M-16 jam as mine did on that day?

Recently, Mr. Faucett sent this email to me:

"I want this book to honor you, LCpl Charlie Castillo, and every Marine who fought and died on September 21, 1967. I want the world to know that you guys did what Marines have always done: Stood up in the face of overwhelming odds and kicked ass and took names. I want people to know about who you guys were, what you went through, and what you did for our nation."

Also, the author is looking for anyone who remembers LCpl Charlie Castillo, (KIA 9/21/67) who may have been an FO with Echo Company.

Please let us hear from you for this important project. We are looking for your memories of that battle, what you did and what you saw.

This is your opportunity to leave behind some history of your service to your country, for our nation and for your families.

You may respond to me at <rbliss@hvc.rr.com> or by mail:

Bob Bliss
43 Meads Mountain Rd.
Woodstock, NY 12498

Or, you can contact the author directly by e-mail at
<markfa@worldnet.att.net> or by regular mail:

Mark Faucett, Esq.
401 McDermott Apt. 1107
Deer Park, TX 77536

Thank you for your support.

Companies that go beyond the call

Submitted by Ken Sympson

Bob Bliss recently sent me an e-mail about what Sears is doing to help reservists from that company who have been activated:

"...Sears is voluntarily paying the difference in salaries and maintaining all benefits, including medical insurance and bonus programs, for all called up reservist employees for up to two years."

So I thought I would check it out. Here's what I found on <<http://www.snopes.com/politics/military/sears.asp>> (that's Snopes.com, one of the web sites that keeps track of internet hoaxes):

"Sears is indeed one of the employers who take additional steps to show support for employees involved in serving their country by guaranteeing the continuance of their civilian pay (for up to 24 months) and health benefits (indefinitely). Many other companies, large and small, do the same for their workers, but as one of the nation's oldest

and largest employers, Sears gets the publicity for setting a prominent example.”

It turns out that quite a few companies are going beyond the legal requirement. To find out who they are and what they are doing, check out the following web site:

<<http://www.coldfury.com/HF/index.html>>

These are the “good guys” who we should frequent with our shopping.

Congratulations to Randy Kington on his Bronze Star

Submitted by Ed Brummett and Gary Brown.

(Editor's note: Ed did just the right thing here—passing along good news about a member so that we could share it with everyone in the association. Thanks, Ed.)

On March 21, 1966, LCpl John R. Kington earned the Bronze Star on Operation Texas. Randy, as he is known by his friends, unfortunately had to wait a very long time before his actions were properly recognized.



Randy Kington receives Bronze Star from Operation Texas in 1966

BGen Gary Brown, USMC (Ret), left, congratulates Randy Kington on the receipt of his belated Bronze Star. Randy's wife, Patty, is standing behind him and Ed Brummett is on the right.

Randy received his due this year at the Marine Corps Ball in Naples, Florida. On hand to congratulate him was BGen Gary Brown, USMC (Ret), who back in 1966 was Randy's Platoon Commander.

After presenting the award to Randy, Gary had the following to say:

“I would like to close by saying that what Randy has done since his debilitating wound confined him to a wheelchair is

further testimony to his courage. He returned to college and earned his degree and taught for some years. Then he started his own accounting business and worked in real estate development and has written a very inspiring book describing his Marine Corps experience. He is a very successful and respected man and continues to do good works in his community, including frequent speaking engagements.

“Randy epitomizes the essence of what it means to be a Marine. His indomitable spirit and pursuit of excellence was never dampened by the results of his wounds. He could have withdrawn into himself and became very bitter and resentful. Not this Marine. What an example he has set for all of us.”

For the complete text of the citation, please see page six.

Semper Fi

The story of Fallujah isn't on that NBC videotape

From the Wall Street Journal editorial page, Thursday, November 18, 2004 12:01 a.m. EST.

Some 40 Marines have just lost their lives cleaning out one of the world's worst terror dens, in Fallujah, yet all the world wants to talk about is the NBC videotape of a Marine shooting a prostrate Iraqi inside a mosque. Have we lost all sense of moral proportion?

The al-Zarqawi TV network, also known as Al-Jazeera, has broadcast the tape to the Arab world, and U.S. media have also played it up. The point seems to be to conjure up images again of Abu Ghraib, further maligning the American purpose in Iraq. Never mind that the pictures don't come close to telling us about the context of the incident, much less what was on the mind of the soldier after days of combat.

Put yourself in that Marine's boots. He and his mates have had to endure some of the toughest infantry duty imaginable, house-to-house urban fighting against an enemy that neither wears a uniform nor obeys any normal rules of war. Here is how that enemy fights, according to an account in the Times of London:

“In the south of Fallujah yesterday, U.S. Marines found the armless, legless body of a blonde woman, her throat slashed and her entrails cut out. Benjamin Finnell, a hospital apprentice with the U.S. Navy Corps, said that she had been dead for a while, but at that location for only a day or two. The woman was wearing a blue dress; her face had been disfigured. It was unclear if the remains were the body of the Irish-born aid worker Margaret Hassan, 59, or of Teresa Borcz, 54, a Pole abducted two weeks ago. Both were married to Iraqis and held Iraqi citizenship; both were kidnapped in Baghdad last month.”

When not disemboweling Iraqi women, these killers hide in mosques and hospitals, booby-trap dead bodies, and open fire as they pretend to surrender. Their snipers kill U.S. soldiers out of nowhere. According to one account, the Marine in the videotape had seen a member of his unit killed by another insurgent pretending to be dead. Who from the



COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS

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

LANCE CORPORAL JOHN A. KINGTON

UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

For heroic achievement in connection with combat operations while serving as a Platoon Radio Operator with Company E, 2d Battalion, 4th Marines in action against Communist North Vietnamese forces in the Republic of Vietnam. On 21 March 1966, during Operation Texas, Lance Corporal Kington's platoon was designated as the assault unit against one of the most heavily fortified hostile villages encountered in Vietnam to that date. When the platoon had approached to within 50 meters of the objective, the enemy unleashed a heavy volume of fire on the Marines, wounding several in the initial burst. Reacting instantly and disregarding his own personal safety, Lance Corporal Kington's first action was to move to an exposed location that permitted him to transmit the platoon situation to higher headquarters. Fearlessly braving the incoming fire, he moved from position to position with his Platoon Commander and assisted him in directing the Marines' fire on the enemy by giving clear and cogent instructions on the radio. Facing a quickly deteriorating situation, Lance Corporal Kington moved to a relatively exposed position on top of a dike with his Platoon Commander to gain a clear view of the battle area to facilitate transmitting requests for air and artillery support. Shortly after their arrival at this position, Lance Corporal Kington's Platoon Commander was wounded by one of two enemy soldiers emerging from concealed positions. With complete disregard for his safety, Lance Corporal Kington courageously exposed himself killing one enemy soldier by rifle fire and sustained a serious wound from the second enemy in the process. By his exceptional courage, presence of mind in a dire emergency and unfaltering dedication to duty throughout, Lance Corporal Kington served to inspire all who were involved in the engagement and upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service.

The Combat Distinguishing Device is authorized.

For the President,

M. W. Hagee

Commandant of the Marine Corps

safety of his Manhattan sofa has standing to judge what that Marine did in that mosque?

Beyond the one incident, think of what the Marine and Army units just accomplished in Fallujah. In a single week, they killed as many as 1,200 of the enemy and captured 1,000 more. They did this despite forfeiting the element of surprise, so civilians could escape, and while taking precautions to protect Iraqis that no doubt made their own mission more difficult and hazardous. And they did all of this not for personal advantage, and certainly not to get rich, but only out of a sense of duty to their comrades, their mission and their country.

In a more grateful age, this would be hailed as one of the great battles in Marine history—with Guadalcanal, Peleliu, Hue City and the Chosin Reservoir. We'd know the names of these military units, and of many of the soldiers too. Instead, the name we know belongs to the NBC correspondent, Kevin Sites.

We suppose he was only doing his job, too. But that doesn't mean the rest of us have to indulge in the moral abdication that would equate deliberate televised beheadings of civilians with a Marine shooting a terrorist, who may or may not have been armed, amid the ferocity of battle.

* * *

The above article is reprinted from Wall Street Journal at the WSJ.com web site at <http://www.opinionjournal.com/editorial/>, November 18, 2004.

Corporal among 2/4's twice bitten

Submitted by: MCB Camp Pendleton. Story Identification #: 2004101163917. Story by Sgt. Robert M Storm.

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. (Sept. 30, 2004)—As Cpl Logan Degenhardt sits in a chair outside his barracks room drinking a beer and talking to his friends, he realized his experiences in Iraq—including wounds sustained in two separate fires—will live with him forever.

The 21-year-old from Boscobel, Wis., is one of a handful of Marines receiving two Purple Hearts for service with 2d Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment—the unit that lost more Marines than any other so far in Operation Iraqi Freedom. But Degenhardt doesn't complain about being wounded twice, or try to make himself into a hero.

"I really don't think about getting shot that much. After a while, the shock value of being in a firefight wears off," Degenhardt said.

"You can't take it too seriously in Iraq, or you'll go insane. We actually used to cheer

when mortar rounds or enemy fire got close."

Degenhardt says he was shot while "just doing my job."

On April 10, while raiding a suspected terrorist's house, his squad came under heavy enemy fire. He was the first to find cover. While members of his squad followed him into a room, he provided cover fire even after taking a round in his left shoulder. Even now, pieces of shrapnel are embedded in his shoulder.

The second time Degenhardt was shot, he was clearing a house. After clearing a room with a grenade, his team entered the house, only to find the assailant still fighting, barricaded and largely protected from the explosion.

"As we came in the room we came under immediate fire. I went for cover in a niche in the wall and took a couple of grazing shots. I've never tried to make myself so small in my entire life," Degenhardt said.

Both raids were successful; Marines subdued the attackers and took prisoners, Degenhardt said.

"Earning two Purple Hearts is definitely unusual, it is not a common accomplishment," said Maj Mike P. Wylie, 2/4's executive officer, noting that Degenhardt was not alone in collecting two badges denoting blood sacrifice.

After his time in Iraq, Degenhardt said he appreciates home a lot more now that he's had to spend so much time away.

"You learn not to take your freedoms for granted; it's the little things that would normally escape a person's notice—like being able to go buy a steak, or smoke a cigarette outside without being shot at," Degenhardt said.

"The hardest part is when you lose your friends. We remember them by the way that they made us feel, how they made us laugh, the jokes they told."

Asked about the war and the controversy surrounding it, a spark of passion lights his eyes.

"If people could see the good we're doing in Iraq," he said. "Just in the time I was there, the areas are cleaner. We're fixing the streets and lights. When you hand out candy, pencils or balls to the kids and see the smiles on everyone's faces, it's great.

"People don't see how the Iraqis live, so they can't imagine the way of life over here. I'll know for the rest of my life I did the right thing."

* * *

The above article is reprinted from the National Review Online web site at
<<http://www.nationalreview.com/smitht/smith200411110835.asp>>, November 11, 2004.

Battlefield to boardroom

Veterans of elite units go beyond defending America.

By W. Thomas Smith Jr. A former U.S. Marine infantry leader and paratrooper, W. Thomas Smith Jr. is a freelance journalist and the author of four books, including the *Alpha Bravo Delta Guide to American Airborne Forces*.

"In the twelve weeks of hell and transformation that were Marine Corps boot camp, I learned the values of achieving a successful life that have guided and sustained me."—U.S. Senator (and former Governor of Georgia) Zell Miller, in *Corps Values: Everything You Need to Know I Learned in the Marines*.

Veterans Day takes on a special meaning this year as some of our best-trained, most-committed troops are currently rooting out some the nastiest cutthroats in the city of Fallujah. There, the battle has been billed as the worst urban fight since the struggle to retake Hue City during the TET Offensive in 1968. Then, as now, the brunt of the combat has been borne by the best-of-the-best: Marines, Army special forces, Navy SEALs, and other special-operations combatants and members of elite units.

America has been fielding elite units since the founding of this country. They are vital for both our current security and in taking the fight to the terrorists. But elite military forces serve a collaterally equal cause.

Aimless young civilians always have benefited from military service. It has given them direction and purpose; and they are returned to society as better, more-productive men and women. But service in elite or special-operations units, literally has proven to be an investment in the future leadership of America.

"Our Corps is downright good for the manhood of our country," wrote Marine Lt. Gen. Victor "Brute" Krulak in a 1957 letter to Gen. Randolph M. Pate. "Marines are masters of a form of unfailing alchemy which converts un-oriented youths into proud, self-reliant stable citizens—citizens into whose hands the nation's affairs may safely be entrusted."

Lt. Col. Howard T. Rowell agrees.

A career U.S. Air Force Reserve officer, Rowell contends his three, short years in the elite Marine Corps shaped him far more than his 23 years in the USAFR.

"I built a multimillion dollar business from scratch, sold it at an excellent price and retired," Rowell tells National Review Online. "Frankly, I couldn't have done that without the experience of the Marine Corps which taught me a unique brand of discipline that has carried over in for everything I have since done in the way of finance, habits and goals."

Rowell's belief mirrors the philosophy of Walter Anderson, the publisher and chief executive officer of *Parade* magazine, the "largest-circulation" magazine in the nation. "It [the Marine Corps] gave me pride, direction, and confidence, and forced me to believe in myself," said Anderson, then-editor-in-chief of *Parade* in a 1996 interview for *Marines* magazine. "They taught me to trust in the importance of knowledge and learning. What I am today is a result of the Marine Corps."

Last year, following his keynote speech at a national media symposium in New York, Anderson was asked what was the proudest moment in his life: He answered, "the day I was promoted to lance corporal [in the Marines]."

Former Navy SEAL commander Richard Marcinko—the author of 13 *New York Times* bestsellers, including *Rogue Warrior*—points to himself and others as proof that service in elite units builds the real movers and shakers of American society.

"Look at the success of Jesse Ventura," Marcinko tells NRO. "He made it through UDT/SEAL [Underwater Demolition/SeaAirLand commando] training, tours to Vietnam, got out of the Navy as a Petty Officer 3d Class. Then he had success as a professional wrestler, mayor of a small town, talk-show host, governor of Minnesota, a visiting fellow at Harvard's elite John F. Kennedy School of Government, a movie star, a TV sportscaster, etc. It is this drive to succeed at anything which is a result of self-confidence, discipline, aggressive attitude, and an absolute inability to accept defeat."

Marcinko adds that special-operations training instills in young warriors the idea that one succeeds in life and war, not for self-gratification, but to advance a personal belief or philosophy that can then permeate a group and be shared with others.

In elite or special-operations units, “the food chain works both up and down the chain-of-command,” he says. “Shooters [special operators] attack life daily. They always lead from the front and set the pace and example.”

But is membership in an elite military organization—where killing is considered an art form—a plus on a resume for future civilian, executive leaders?

“So many people—when they think of Special Forces—think of terms like snake-eater and knuckle-dragger,” Army Brigadier General David L. Grange, a former special-operations commander, tells NRO. “In reality, service in special forces does things that opens up your mind, making you think off the map. Thinking is omni-directional in special-operations units, whereas the mindset is more linear in conventional military units.”

According to Grange, “Most special-operations soldiers don’t stay in special operations. They move into other branches within the Army, and their mindset and standards of excellence permeate the ranks. In terms of those who pursue civilian careers and how service in special operations contributes to the future of America, former special-forces soldiers learn to deal with stress and uncertainty, and are the ones who often come up with new, unusual, and effective ideas.”

Major Neal F. Pugliese, commander of the Maritime Special Purpose Force for the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit during Operation Iraqi Freedom, tells NRO that simply “being a Marine, means overcoming overwhelming odds, everyday without exception, regardless of task.”

Pugliese, who today serves as the Depot and Eastern Recruiting Region’s security manager and antiterrorism force protection officer, says he in fact thrives on storm and stress.

“Like thousands of other Marines, I’m attracted to adversity because of the challenge and the more difficult the better,” he says. “When locked in battle or something less, Marines do not think in terms of winning or losing. In the minds of most Marines, victory is always certain and defeat is unacceptable both personally and professionally. It continues to amaze me how much Marines accomplish with very little in the way of resources.”

He adds, “When I leave the Corps someday, I will take with me a greatly heightened sense of what is possible, because the Marine Corps has demonstrated, times too numerous to chronicle, that *anything* is possible.”

When asked by a reporter why he left the Corps in 1966, *Parade* Publisher Anderson responded, “I wanted to be a writer, but I have never not been a Marine.”

* * *

The above article is reprinted from the Marine Corps web site at <<http://www.nationalreview.com/smith/smith200411110835.aspx>>, September 30, 2004.



Marine whose photo lit up imaginations keeps his cool

LCpl James Blake Miller, 20, a country boy from Kentucky who has been thrust unwittingly and somewhat unwillingly into the role of poster boy for a war on the other side of the world from his home on the farm.

Miller is the young man whose gritty, war-hardened portrait appeared Wednesday (November 13th) in the Los Angeles Times, taken by Luis Sinco, a Times photographer traveling with Miller’s unit: Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment. (The material here is reprinted from the Los Angeles Times web site at <<http://www.latimes.com/>>, November 13, 2004.)

Autobiography from the association’s new secretary—Phil Skaggs

Submitted by Phil Skaggs.

I joined the Corps in Sept of ‘66. I’m a Hollywood Marine. Joined with my twin brother; as you can imagine it was pure Hell!!! Got out of boot camp in November. Went to Camp Pendleton for ITR. Got to go home for Christmas. Went back to Pendleton for BIS was trained to be a Butt-Plate. From there I went to staging battalion at Mainside; I think I was there for one month.

I left for Nam in March of ‘67 by ship, the USS *Upshire*. Got to Da Nang in April. Was assigned to 2/4 which was attached to the 1st Marine Division outside of Da Nang. Stayed in the rear about a week and was assigned to Golf Company, 2d Platoon.

Went out to bush. Platoon was on patrol; had to wait for Lt Blair to come back to assign us to a squad. They had been in a fire-fight and had lost a couple of men in guns. The lieutenant asked if anyone wanted to join the gun team. Like a dummy I joined thinking guns were in the rear!! That’s how I ended up in machine guns.

From Da Nang we moved up to a little hill named after LCpl Evans. We were there about four months running patrols around Quang Tri, and Hill 51, in the jungle. From there to Con-Thien around DMZ. Ran patrols out of C-2, Got hit bad at bridge between C-2 and Con Thien. Went to

Subic Bay for replacements, I think we were there for one week.

Went back to Nam, to Quang Tri. Was as guard for the new airbase they were building. From there back to DMZ. Tet hit and we were sent down to Route 9 by Camp Carroll. Ran patrols and ambushes out of there to April of 68. I left Nam the 1st of April 68. Went home on leave, got assigned to 2d Marine Div., 2d Med Bn. Spent 2½ years there, got out of the Corps—couldn't stand Jacksonville.

Autobiography from one of the association's new directors—Ed Brummett

Submitted by Ed Brummett.

E Company 2/4, March 1964 to March 1966. Weapons Platoon, 2d Platoon, 3d Platoon. Squad Leader, Right Guide, brief time as Platoon Leader, Platoon Sergeant. And I still love my Corps.

I worked for American Airlines for 28 and 1/2 years and retired. I am still a Marine at heart.

I love old Fords and have a restored 1953 Custom and a restored 1965 Ford Galaxy Convertible. The rest is history.

(Editor's note: Ed subscribes to the idea that a picture is worth a thousand words. So here are a couple thousand more for his autobiography. Thanks, Ed.)



Ed Brummett (before)

Ed's photographer must have been an art student. What else could explain taking the photo at a 45° angle?



Ed Brummett (after)

And here's Ed with his wife, Anita. The photo was taken at the 2/4 Association reunion in 2003.

The history of the Magnificent Bastards

(Editor's Note. SgtMaj Robert Singer, USMC (Ret.), a life member of the Association, directed me to a web site that contains a history of the 2d Battalion, 4th Marines, from its inception in April 1914 through 1998. The site belongs to an organization called GlobalSecurity.org. The battalion has made a lot of history since 1998, and it would be good to get this page brought up to date on the internet. Regardless, there's some great information here, and I thought you would enjoy reading it. Thanks to SgtMaj Singer for bringing it to my attention.)

The long and illustrious history of the Second Battalion, Fourth Marines began in April of 1914 during WWI when it was activated as one of the three battalions of the Fourth Marine Regiment. Shortly after being activated, the battalion deployed to Mexico for expeditionary duty. Internal political strife in Mexico had become very tense and the safety of U.S. citizens in Mexico was in question. The presence of American forces offshore proved to be sufficient enough pressure on the Mexican government to act to end the threat to Americans.

In 1916 civil war broke out in the Dominican Republic and the Dominican Government was unable to end the strife. President Woodrow Wilson dispatched American forces, which included 2/4, to protect American lives and bring stability to the Caribbean nation. Unlike its deployment to Mexico, 2/4 went ashore in the Dominican Republic and, after several clashes with rebel forces, successfully put down the revolution. Occupation duty followed pending the establishment of an elected government. The battalion departed the Dominican Republic in August 1924 for San Diego, California.

During October 1926 the Federal government directed the Marine Corps to furnish units to guard the mail because the postal service had experienced several robberies. The battalion was directed to safeguard mail transported by rail

and truck west of the Mississippi river. The robberies promptly stopped.

April 1927 found the battalion en route to Tientsin, China to once again protect American lives. Their mission was to reinforce American forces already in place against rebelling Chinese nationalist forces. Eventually the threat to the international settlement eased and this caused a reduction in strength of the Fourth Marine Regiment. On 4 October 1927, Second Battalion, Fourth Marines was re-designated as Second Battalion, Twelfth Marines. With this re-designation 2/4's lineage and honors were transferred to 2/12. A new 2/4 would be activated in the future, but for lineage and honors purposes it would in no way be connected with the old 2/4.

On 18 September 1932 in Shanghai, China the new 2/4 was activated. This began the lineage of the 2/4 we know today. The battalion supported the American sector of Shanghai after fighting nearby had broken out between Chinese and Japanese forces. The battalion's presence deterred a Japanese takeover of the settlement after they had driven Chinese forces from the surrounding area.

Deteriorating relations between the United States and Japan caused 2/4 to be withdrawn from China in November 1941. The battalion transferred to Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines and was given the task of protecting the Olongapo Naval Station (later known as Subic Bay Naval Station, which closed in December of 1991). The battalion was ordered to move to the island fortress of Corregidor in the mouth of Manila bay after the attack on Pearl Harbor. After unrelenting bombardment the Japanese launched an amphibious assault on the island in May 1942. Though under-equipped and outnumbered, the Fourth Marine Regiment fought valiantly; they were eventually forced to surrender on 6 May 1942 under orders from Major General J. M. Wainwright, U.S. Army.

On February 1, 1944 the battalion was reactivated on Guadalcanal with the Marines from Fourth Battalion, First Raider Regiment. The battalion's first assignment was to take part in the assault on Emirau Island. The objective of this operation enabled the construction of airfields on the island so American planes could bomb the large Japanese base at Rabaul. The landing and seizure was unopposed.

During the remainder of WWII the battalion saw action in both Guam (2/4 was the first ashore) and Okinawa. On Okinawa, the battalion was involved in the fighting for the Motobu Peninsula, the capture of Naha and the assault on the Oruku Peninsula. Once organized resistance ended the battalion was redeployed to Guam to prepare for the assault on mainland Japan.

Following the surrender of Japan, General Shepherd (Commanding General, 6th Marine Division) selected the Fourth Marines to seize and occupy the large naval base at Yokosuka in Tokyo Bay. This gesture was designed to avenge the capture of the "Old Fourth" on Corregidor. The Marines of Second Battalion, Fourth Marines were the first American combat troops to set foot in Mainland Japan, landing on Futtsu Cape. They were sent ashore to ensure the

approaches to Tokyo Bay were secure. During the latter part of 1945 the battalion maintained perimeter defense for the Yokosuka Naval Base, provided an interior guard for the base, and continued disarming the Japanese forces. On 1 January 1946 the battalion was relieved of all duties in Japan and sailed for Camp Pendleton, California. In February, as part of the demobilization, 2/4 was deactivated.

Second Battalion, Fourth Marines was reactivated on 8 March 1946 in Tsingtao, China. Its first mission was to assist in repatriation of Japanese civilian and military personnel, as well as provide security for the American Naval base at Tsingtao. The battalion was relieved of this mission and sailed for Camp Lejeune, North Carolina in September 1946. 2/4 was again deactivated on 18 November 1947.

The battalion was reactivated on 2 September 1952 for the Korean conflict; however, they did not see action because of the end of hostilities. The battalion arrived in Japan as part of the Fourth Marines on 24 August 1953 and was assigned the mission of defending southern Japan. To maintain its combat readiness the battalion trained in amphibious operations on Iwo Jima and Okinawa. The Fourth Marine Regiment was transferred to Hawaii in 1953 and here the battalion became part of the First Marine Brigade. The battalion then settled down for a ten year tour of duty.

Second Battalion, Fourth Marines was once again committed to ground combat operations, this time in Vietnam. In May of 1965 the battalion landed at Chu Lai. Initial contact with the enemy was minimal; however, this soon changed as the battalion took part in more aggressive offensive operations. The first major engagement for the battalion was Operation STARLITE (the first regimental sized battle for American forces since the Korean War) in August 1965. It was a combined amphibious/helicopterborne assault on enemy fortified positions of the Van Tuong Peninsula, 15 miles south of the Chu Lai airstrip. Six days after the operation had begun; the 1st Viet Cong Regiment was decisively defeated. During operation STARLITE, Lance Corporal Joe C. Paul (Hotel Company) became the battalion's first Medal of Honor winner: Paul placed himself between the enemy and his fellow wounded Marines until they could be evacuated. Although mortally wounded, he remained in the battle until he collapsed. His actions saved the lives of many of his fellow Marines.

In 1966, combat operations measurably increased as several significant battles characterized by assaults upon well fortified enemy positions occurred in March. The battalion had two major encounters with the enemy near Quang Ngai City that month during Operations UTAH (4-7 Mar) and TEXAS (20-25 Mar). Because of the threat of infiltration across the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) and enemy build up in that area, the Marines launched Operation HASTINGS, a coordinated Marine/South Vietnamese Army (ARVN) search and destroy mission, on 7 July near the DMZ. The battalion played a significant role in frustrating the North Vietnamese Army's (NVA) attempt to penetrate

the area in force. HASTINGS was immediately followed by Operation PRAIRIE I. After the NVA's defeat during HASTINGS they mistakenly assumed that the Americans would not move back into the Quang Tri Province area. PRAIRIE I originally began as a force reconnaissance operation but was later expanded. During Operation PRAIRIE I, Captain Howard Vincent Lee, Commanding Officer, Echo Company, became the battalion's second Medal of Honor winner.

The next major confrontation between 2/4 and the enemy came during the siege of Con Thien in 1967. The battalion, along with 3d Battalion, 4th Marines, was involved in stopping the enemy's attempt to overrun the American outpost. During a month of bloody fighting Sergeant Paul Hellstrom Foster (Headquarters and Service Company attachment) and Lance Corporal Jed Colby Barker (Fox Company) were awarded the Medal of Honor (posthumously) for their actions during the battle. The 1968 TET OFFENSIVE resulted in an increase in tempo of combat activity for 2/4. Bitter clashes between the battalion and NVA broke out near Dong Ha. In this area 2/4 moved forward to seize the fortified village of Dai Do. After three days of bloody fighting, 2/4, with the assistance of reinforcements, artillery and naval gunfire, was able to secure the enemy stronghold. Though the cost was high for both sides; the enemy lost nearly 600 killed, while 2/4 suffered 80 dead and 256 wounded. The list of wounded included the Battalion Commander, Lieutenant Colonel William Weise. Two more Medals of Honor were awarded as a result of the fighting; Captain James E. Livingston, Echo Company Commander, and Captain M. Sando Vargas, Golf Company Commander received medals for their actions.

Contact with the enemy tapered off during the fall of 1968, but picked up again in December. The battalion was involved in a series of violent clashes near the DMZ and, with the aid of artillery and air strikes, they were able to overrun a massive bunker complex. Late in 1969, 2/4 was withdrawn to Okinawa as part of the United States policy of gradually turning the war over to the South Vietnamese.

In the early 1970's 2/4 participated with other units from the 3d Marine Division in providing Battalion Landing Teams as part of the Special Landing Force (SLF) off the coast of Vietnam. During the 1972 EASTER OFFENSIVE, 2/4 actively supported Vietnamese Marines, U.S. Army Rangers and U.S. advisors ashore, from nearby amphibious ships.

During the summer of 1972 the battalion participated in a massive disaster relief effort, Operation SAKOLO conducted in the northern part of the Philippines. In April 1975, 2/4 took part in Operation EAGLE PULL, the evacuation of Americans from Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Less than 15 days later they took part in Operation FREQUENT WIND, the evacuation of Saigon, followed, a short while later, by the recovery of the USS MAYAGUEZ.

The battalion moved to Camp Lejeune to join the Second Marine Regiment in October 1981; they began participating

in the Unit Deployment Program (UDP). During the late 1980s, 2/4 was reassigned to the 8th Marine Regiment to participate in the dedicated Marine Amphibious Unit (MAU), now called the Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable), rotation to the Mediterranean.

The battalion was once again called upon for a real-world contingency mission during the summer of 1990. The West African nation of Liberia was experiencing a civil war. The battalion, as the Ground Combat Element (GCE) for the 22d MEU(SOC), set sail from Toulon, France on 27 May, arriving on station 3 June for Operation SHARP EDGE. On 5 August, the battalion was committed to go ashore to take defensive positions at the U.S. Embassy to protect U.S. citizens and foreign nationals. The Marines embarked on amphibious shipping on 21 August after having successfully completed a Non-Combatant Evacuation Operation of 1,650 Americans and foreign nationals.

In late December 1990, 2/4 deployed by air to Al Jabayl, Saudi Arabia for Operation DESERT SHIELD. During Operation DESERT STORM the battalion fought as a Mechanized Infantry Armor Task force (Task Force Spartan) during the Second Marine Division's attack into Kuwait. After the cease fire the battalion remained in Kuwait with Eighth Marines and conducted security and contingency operations west of Kuwait City. 2/4 was the last Marine infantry battalion to withdraw from Kuwait, arriving in the U.S. on 15 May 1991.

The battalion deployed from White Beach, Okinawa, on November 10, 1998. The battalion set in the defense outside of Kuwait City in order to prevent Iraq from taking the city again, over Christmas in 1998. The battalion did not see any action, but was awarded: The Armed Forces Expeditionary medal, Navy Unit Citation, and Meritorious Unit Citation.

As per traditional heraldry, the battalion coat-of-arms is a composition of references to past deeds and honors.

The basic colors of the insignia that makes up 2d Battalion, 4th Marines' crest are scarlet and gold, the historic dress and display colors of the Marine Corps. The blue background signifies the battalion's role as "Soldiers of the Sea."

The "Sea Horse" symbolizes our amphibious nature.

The "Palm Tree" represents the 2d Battalion's duty in the Caribbean and Hawaii.

The "Torri" represents our tours of duty in the Far East.

The Motto "Second to None" is self-explanatory.

The present coat-of-arms was designed and reproduced by Lieutenant Colonel Doxey, the Commanding Officer of 2d Battalion, 4th Marines from 11 September 1963 to 3 June 1964, and his wife. In 1964, Lieutenant Colonel "Bull" Fisher modified the insignia by adding the lower pennant and the words "The Magnificent Bastards."

* * *

The above article is reprinted from the GlobalSecurity.org web site at <<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/agency/usmc/2-4.htm>>, November 12, 2004.

Membership Application, Second Battalion, Fourth Marines Association

Name: _____ Home phone: (____) _____
Address: _____
Work phone: (____) _____

E-mail address: _____

Current rank if active duty or highest rank if discharged or retired: _____

Personal awards and decorations: _____

Period(s) of service (total): From _____ To _____; From _____ To _____; From _____ To _____

Period(s) with 2/4: From _____ To _____; From _____ To _____; From _____ To _____

Place(s) served with 2/4: _____

Unit(s) assigned to while with 2/4: Company _____ Platoon _____; Company _____ Platoon _____; Company _____ Platoon _____

Other military affiliations: _____

Married _____ Single _____ Widowed _____ Spouse or significant other's name: _____

Dues Information

Life membership can be paid in up to three installments over a period not to exceed nine consecutive months. Dues guidelines are the same for Regular Membership and Associate Membership. Please indicate below the type of membership you desire.

Membership Class:	Regular Membership: _____	Associate Membership: _____
Life Member	____ 54 and under:	\$175 (Lump sum or two payments of \$58.34 and one payment of \$58.32)
	____ 55 to 64:	\$125 (Lump sum or two payments of \$41.67 and one payment of \$41.66)
	____ 65 and over:	\$75 (Lump sum or three payments of \$25.00 each)
Annual Member	_____	\$20

It is the applicant's responsibility to schedule payments, since the association will not send invoices. If the applicant fails to complete payment of life membership dues as set forth above, amounts paid and received towards life membership will be converted and credited as annual membership dues.

Please mail checks (payable to "2/4 Association") and application to:

2/4 Association
c/o Mr. Robert Bliss
43 meads Mountain Road
Woodstock, NY 12498

If you have a picture of yourself, either as an individual or in a group setting, from your Marine Corps/Navy years (boot camp, cruise book, etc.) and/or a recent photo, please enclose with this form. Also, please identify all persons in each photo. The photos will be returned after scanning. The scanned photos, along with the identification information, will be assembled into a computer CD photo album for historical purposes of the 2d Battalion, 4th Marines Association.

2/4 Association Roster Manager

6122 Shasta Street

Englewood, FL 34224-8161

Postage

here

Address Correction Requested