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checks
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p. 8

MARINE CORPS RECRUIT DEPOT SAN DIEGO

CHEVRON

AND THE WESTERN RECRUITING REGION



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“WHERE MARINES ARE MADE”

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2012

Co. A learns communication, teamwork

BY LANCE CPL. BRIDGET M. KEANE
Chevron staff

The sun was bright Oct. 10 aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., as recruits of Company A, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, marched toward a large sign with white lettering on it.

On that sign was the citation of Medal of Honor recipient Gunnery Sgt. Jimmie E. Howard, who received the medal for his actions while serving as platoon sergeant in Vietnam in the summer of 1966.

Recruits gathered around the sign and quickly went to the position of attention, while Staff Sgt. Cesar Gonzales, senior drill instructor, Platoon 1006, Co. A, began to read the citation.

“For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty...” said Gonzales, as he read the citation.

Gunnery Sgt. Howard was

see **CRUCIBLE** ▶ 2



Lance Cpl. Bridget M. Keane

A recruit of Company A, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, posts security as the rest of his fire team moves through Howard's Assault course Oct. 11 aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif. The course simulates movement as a fire team and allows recruits to practice communication skills.



Cpl. Crystal J. Druery

Company B, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, recruits run their Inventory Physical Fitness Test Oct. 12, aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego. This test allows the recruits to see how they've progressed since they arrived to the depot.

Test measures physical progress

BY CPL. CRYSTAL J. DRUERY
Chevron staff

Callused hands gripped the pull-up bars aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, as Company B, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, recruits performed as many pull-ups they were physically capable of, Oct. 12.

This was Co. B's Inventory Physical Fitness Test which consisted of a timed three-mile run, max pull-ups and max set of crunches in a two minute time span. Recruits take this test to help prepare them for

their Final PFT score that carries on with them into the Marine Corps.

“The Inventory PFT lets the recruits see their progress since they arrived here at training,” said Staff Sgt. Roger Reyes, senior drill instructor, Platoon 1030.

Co. B trained everyday mentally and physically, doing pull-ups and crunches during their free time and running almost everywhere they went. Having recruits do these tasks routinely gives them a better chance to score higher on their test because it gives them muscle

memory, the drill instructors have realized.

“We also do pull-ups everywhere we go,” said Recruit J'vari Williams. “One event we've had to do, that I think really helped prepare us, was carrying logs.”

Log Drills is just one of the many obstacles designed to strengthen their bodies. They also have Circuit Courses, Combat Conditioning and many more.

During week four of training, recruits had the chance to

see **TEST** ▶ 2

Son follows father's footsteps, joins Corps

BY CPL. ISAAC LAMBERTH
3rd Marine Aircraft Wing

Newly minted Marines, lined in nice neat rows, stand at attention. They are men now, having passed the most difficult entry level training of any service. Having shed their boyish demeanors, they stand with a sense of pride and purpose. Among the dozens of rows of Marines, one stands a bit taller than the rest.

Pvt. Rudy Arietta, a Marine graduate with Platoon 3066, Mike Company, 3rd Recruit Training Battalion, feels a sense of pride during his graduation. Somewhere in the crowd in front of him, watching, sits his father, a battle-hardened veteran of the Corps with nearly 30- years of service under his belt.

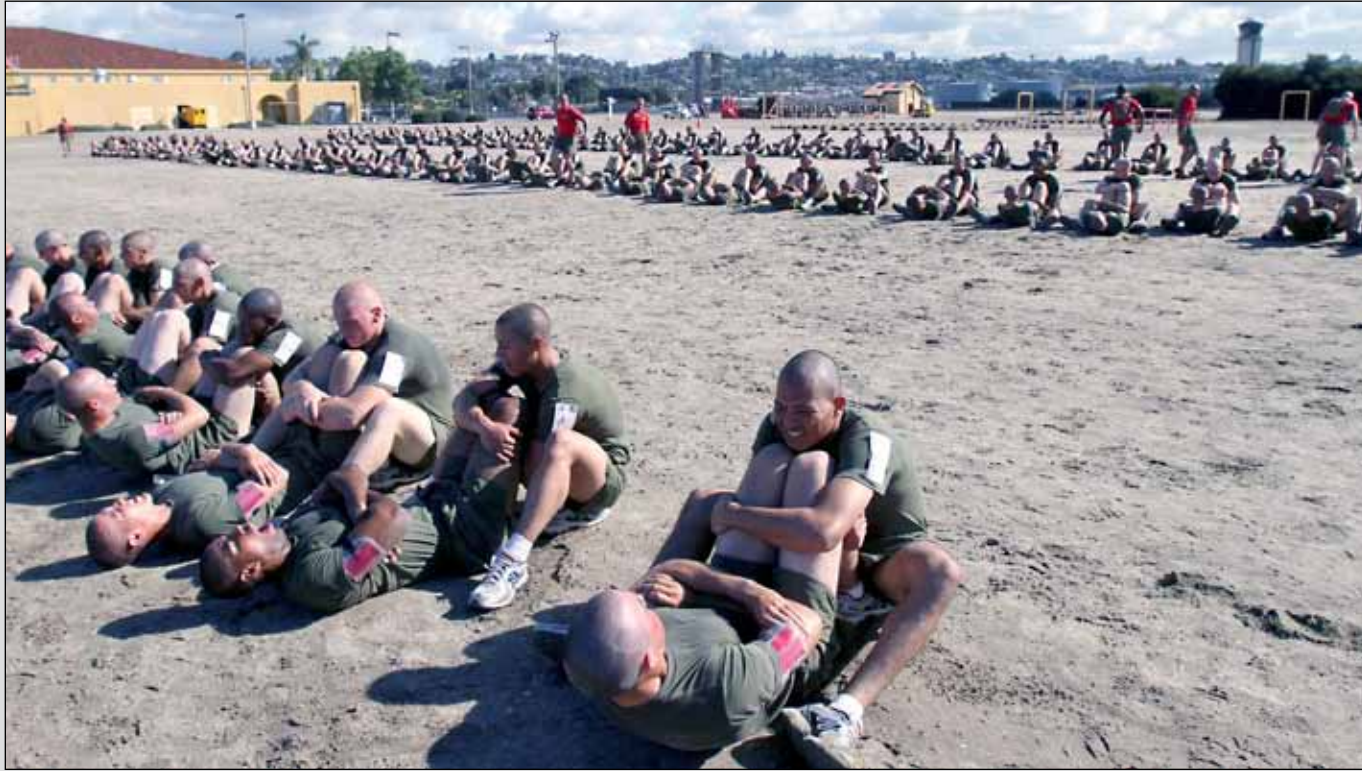
“It's such a great feeling to

see **SON** ▶ 2



Cpl. Isaac Lambirth

Brig. Gen. Daniel Yoo, left, the Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego commanding general, and Sgt. Maj. Rodolfo Arrieta, second from right, the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward) sergeant major, and Maj. Gen. Gregg A. Sturdevant, right, the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward) commanding general, stand with Pvt. Rudy Arrieta after his graduation from recruit training at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, Oct. 12. Sgt. Maj. Arrieta and Sturdevant returned from Afghanistan on a two-week trip for rest and recuperation and were able to see the new Marine graduate and follow in his father's footsteps.



Cpl. Crystal J. Druery

Recruits from Company B, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, do as many crunches as possible in two minutes during their Inventory Physical Fitness Test Oct. 12 aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot. This test helps recruits determine how hard to push themselves during the following week's Final PFT.

TEST ◀ 1

take their first PFT. Week nine they took the Inventory PFT, giving them a chance to see their progression before the following weeks Final PFT.

"It's a marker for us to see where we're at and see how hard we need to work to get where we want to go," said Williams.

Since the first test, Williams says he's improved in every category. In the beginning of recruit training he was

only able to do 85 crunches, 4 pull-ups and run a 23 minute three-mile run.

During the Inventory PFT Williams was able to push out 112 crunches, 11 pull-ups and run a 22 minute three-mile run.

"It feels amazing to be able to push myself so much and see such an improvement," said Williams, who hopes to achieve even greater scores next week.

Once they graduate recruit training

and are Marines, they will be required to take a PFT annually. This includes female Marines, though instead of pull-ups they perform a flexed-arm hang.

Co. B will be going through the Crucible soon, aboard Weapons and Field Training Battalion, Marine Base Camp Pendleton. The Crucible is a 54-hour, team building, sleep and food deprived exercise. This will be their final test before earning their Eagle, Globe and Anchor.

CRUCIBLE ◀ 1

able to man his outnumbered platoon skillfully and calmly, even though he was wounded. He dispersed his ammunition to the remaining members of his platoon, continued to give orders and soon directed his platoon to safety.

The recruits attentively listened and were then instructed to grab a flak jacket and split up into teams of four. They were about to challenge a course known as Howard's Assault during their Crucible.

The Crucible is an exhausting, 54-hour simulated field-training exercise that tests skills recruits have learned throughout training by forcing them to hike to different team-building obstacles with very little sleep and food.

"At every event during the Crucible, there are citations, each pertaining to the obstacle that they are about to challenge," explained Gonzales, a 25-year-old Viejo, Calif., native. "It's sort of like a re-enactment of the citation, allowing the recruits to relate to it and give them a different perspective."

The course's mission was to have recruits maneuver through as a fire team while transporting an ammunition can and setting up security.

"It forces them to work as a team," said Gonzales. "They get to practice their communication skills and movement through an urban environment."

Trenches, barbed-wire, tunnels and walls were some of the obstacles that the recruits had to face while one member of their fire team carried the ammo can.

Recruits used verbal commands as well as hand and arm signals to communicate to their fellow fire team members. If a recruit went ahead or was left behind, the whole fire team had to start the course over.

Even though the course teaches how to move through a combat environment, an important lesson learned is moving together as a team, explained Pfc. Austin Adams, Plt. 1006.

"It always makes you more aware of your surroundings when you have to look out for someone else," said Adams. "You have to make sure everyone gets through." Throughout training, recruits are taught that no Marine ever gets left

behind.

The Crucible is the chance for recruits to build up the brotherhood and allow them to complete each mission successfully through teamwork, without any instruction from their drill instructors.

"They've done a pretty good job keeping each other motivated through this (Crucible)," said Gonzales. "The recruits push each other through."

Completing Howard's Assault allowed Co. A to move on with the Crucible to the dreaded 10-mile Reaper Hike, Oct. 11. In the early hours of that morning, the recruits held out their hands and received their Eagle, Globe and Anchor and finally earned the title Marine.



Lance Cpl. Bridget M. Keane

A Company A recruit helps a fire team member work his way under razor wire during the Crucible. Recruits must know how to work together as a team to be successful.

SON ◀ 1

have finally finished and joined my dad's brotherhood," said Rudy, a San Diego native.

On a bus heading for the depot straight out of high school, Rudy said he was very proud to follow in his father's footsteps.

"Before he was just my dad, but now that I'm a Marine, I have more respect for him," said Rudy. "I understand what he's gone through and some of the things he's done. I'm a part of this brotherhood and to me that brings us even closer together."

Now that he has completed recruit training, Rudy will spend his leave with his father, Sgt. Maj. Rudolfo Arietta, who has returned home on a rest and recuperation trip during a tour in Afghanistan. Rudolfo, the sergeant major for 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward), is currently deployed with the unit in Helmand province in southern Afghanistan. He timed his trip home so he could see his son graduate and be able to call him Marine.

"I deployed knowing he would graduate," said Rudolfo. "I was going to try my hardest to come here and see him gradu-

ate. I'm very proud of my son for what's he decided to do with his life and what the future holds for him."

Walking off the parade deck next to each other, the father and son will spend the next week and a half with each other before Rudolfo returns to Afghanistan. Rudy will then head to Marine Combat Training at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton.

Upon completion of MCT he will report to Marine Detachment Fort George G. Meade, Md., to receive training to become a combat videographer.

BRIEFS

Vote

There are just 22 days left until the general election.

If you or your family members have not registered to vote, you should do so ASAP. Even if you have voted absentee in a recent election, you should submit a Federal Post Card Application again now as many states require annual submission. Don't assume your registration or absentee ballot request from the 2010 election is still valid.

Sign up for state-specific election information at <http://www.fvap.gov/contact/subscription.html>. The Federal Voting Assistance Program's call center is available at 1 (800) 438-8683, DSN 425-1584, or at vote@fvap.gov.

For more information, contact Juan Gomez at (619) 524-8737/8 or your Unit Voting Assistance Officer: H&S BN: (619) 524-1979, 12th MCD: (619) 542-5556 and RTR: (619) 524-0367.

Halloween Party

The depot Recreation Center hosts a Halloween Party at the Locker Room Oct. 26 at 6 p.m.

Come for the costume contest, drink specials, happy hour food, disk jockey & karaoke! Prizes go to 1st and 2nd place costumes! The Costume Contest begins at 8.

The event is for adults 21 and over only.

Attendees must be active duty or authorized patrons to participate.

Water Survival

The depot's Water Survival Section conducts a Water Survival Advance course Oct. 31 to Nov. 2, in Edward L. Parke Hall.

Marines will be screened, trained, and qualified in the conduct of WSA per the LOI.

Those with questions concerning the course or on how to get a copy of the LOI/Schedule, should call the depot Swim Tank at (619) 524-6054/5851 or email zachary.curran@usmc.mil.

Disaster preparedness

Many individuals and families are confused about what really happens before and after a disaster. There are many misapprehensions in understanding what are the best methods prepare for disaster.

Go to www.emergencymgmt.com/training/12-Myths-Disaster-Preparedness.html to read about the "Disaster Dozen: 12 Myths of Disaster Preparedness." For addition information call G3 Mission Assurance at (619) 524-8432.

CG Cup Racquetball

Those who wish to participate in a Nov. 6 CG Cup (singles) racquetball tournament should register Oct. 29, between 11 a.m. and noon, at the MCRD Fitness Center training room, building 13; or contact Rachel Dickinson (dickinsonr@usmc-mccs.org or (619) 524-0548).

For more information, check <http://www.mccsmcrd.com/SemperFit/Athletics/index.html>

New depot website

Public Affairs has unveiled a new depot website at <http://www.mcrdsd.marines.mil>.

The new site has a new look and offers visitors news, photos and information about depot and its units.

Send recommendations, corrections to rdsd_pao@usmc.mil.

Send briefs to:

rdsd_pao@usmc.mil. The Chevron staff reserves the right to publish only those briefs that comply with Department of Defense regulations and the standards of the U.S. Government.

Around the depot

This week the Chevron asks: "Why is it important to have annual training events, such as the PFT, CFT, and Rifle qualification?"



"The primary mission of the Marine Corps is to be combat ready, the only way to be ready is to have your training events complete so that you're physically ready at all times. Annual training events also cause unit cohesion, team building and camaraderie."

Gunnery Sgt. Raynard Feagin, Staff non-commissioned officer in charge, Recruit Administrative Branch



"It's important because Marines need to be mission ready, physically and mentally. We use the annual training experiences to make a more versatile Marine."

Sgt. Omar Askew, career planner, Headquarters Company, Headquarters and Service Battalion



"It's important to have annual training because without standards and requirements keeping Marines combat ready, such as the CFT and rifle range, the Marine Corps would fall to pieces."

Lance Cpl. Kevin Ferris, military policeman, Headquarters Company, Headquarters and Service Battalion

CG Law Enforcement Detachments lead way in counter-drug operations

BY LT. ANDREW WILLIAMS
LEDET 108 OIC

"Disabling fire authorized," crackles over the Coast Guard precision marksman's headset.

Descending out of the night aboard a Navy H-60 Seahawk helicopter, he can see the large bales of cocaine, filling the boat as he sights-in on the go-fast's engines. He fires, two rounds going straight through the boat's outboard motors.

A Navy frigate, flying a Coast Guard ensign on its mast to show law enforcement authority, is arriving on scene. Under the authority of Joint Interagency Task Force - South and the tactical command of the 11th Coast Guard District, the frigate deploys a boat with a Coast Guard law enforcement detachment, or LEDET, aboard to detain the smugglers and seize the drugs.

In 2011, Pacific Tactical Law Enforcement Team LEDETs deployed aboard U.S. and allied naval vessels conducted 30 counter-drug boardings just like the one described above and seized more than 11 tons of cocaine, worth an estimated street value of more than \$268 million.

The LEDETs also investigated more than 150 targets of interest and assembled case packages during each interdiction, resulting in 36 narcotics traffickers being sentenced to more than 100 years in prison.

In recognition of this success, Rene Hanna, senior policy advisor of the White

House Office of National Drug Control Policy, presented the Pacific Tactical Law Enforcement Team the United States Interdiction Coordinator Award for their outstanding operational achievements.

"Receiving the USIC award is a great honor and a testament to the hard work and dedication of our law enforcement detachments and support staff," said Cmdr. Jon Totte, commanding officer of the Pacific Tactical Law Enforcement Team.

Each year, the USIC award is presented to the unit achieving the most significant counter-drug results. The units must also show the most innovation, tactics and aggressiveness.

PACTACLET is on pace to beat last year's record as this year they've already stopped more than 11 tons of cocaine and four tons of marijuana from reaching America's shores.

No single agency or nation is capable of defeating transnational organized crime alone. Coast Guard units like the tactical law enforcement team develop outstanding interoperability with agencies such as Joint Interagency Task Force - South.

IATF South conducts interagency and international detection and monitoring operations and facilitates the interdiction of illicit trafficking bringing agency capabilities from Customs and Border Protection, Drug Enforcement Agency,



Courtesy U.S. Coast Guard

This display of drugs recently seized by a Law Enforcement Detachment currently deployed off the coast of Central America, has an estimated street value of \$17.16 million.



Courtesy U.S. Coast Guard

Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment members stop and board suspected drug smuggling vessels at sea, seizing millions of dollars worth of drugs each year. These LEDETs operate not only from the decks of U.S. Navy vessels, but from the decks of vessels operated by America's allies.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Defense, the FBI and other partners together to jointly stem the flow of narcotics into the U.S. The Pacific Tactical Law Enforcement Team also represents the Coast Guard internationally by deploying

with the British, Canadian and Dutch navies as these partner countries also assist with narcotics interdiction.

Since its commissioning in 1982, the unit's primary responsibility has been the counter-drug mission, now labeled as counter-transnational organized crime operations. They also conduct a broad range of law enforcement missions, including counter-piracy operations off the Horn of Africa and port security operations in Port-au-Prince following the 2010 Haitian earthquake.

Assisting PACTACLET in achieving its operational success are the facilities and mission support provided by MCRD San Diego.

Coast Guard operators received more than 200 hours of expert water survival training at the MCRD pool facility. Marine Corps swimming instructors designed a swim training program to raise the proficiency of the PACTACLET swimmers.

In addition, Coast Guard personnel used the MCRD rappel tower facility to train in vertical insertion tactics, techniques and procedures.

The USMC/Coast Guard partnership is strong and continues to be a vital component of PACTACLET's war on drugs.



Courtesy U.S. Coast Guard

Kansas native Nick Keller is a petty officer third class maritime enforcement specialist. An aviation precision marksman, his job is to use a Barrett M107 50 caliber rifle to knock out the engines of suspected smuggler boats that may achieve speeds of up to 50 knots.

CHEVRON

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Cpl. Matheus J. Hernandez

A recruit of Company G, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, fireman carries another recruit back to the starting line during his Combat Fitness Test aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego Oct. 11. The fireman carry is part of the maneuver-under-fire portion of the CFT, right before recruits are instructed to carry two ammunition-cans back and forth down the field.



Cpl. Matheus J. Hernandez

A recruit of Company G, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, low-crawls during his Combat Fitness Test aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego Oct. 11.



Cpl. Matheus J. Hernandez

Recruits of Company G, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, sprint around the track during their Combat Fitness Test aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego Oct. 11. The sprint portion of the CFT consists of an 880-yard sprint known as the movement-to-contact.



Cpl. Matheus J. Hernandez

A recruit of Company G, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, throws a simulated hand grenade during his Combat Fitness Test aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego Oct. 11. The grenade toss is part of the maneuver-under-fire portion of the CFT, where recruits must hit a designated area as they run through the course.

CFT tests physical, mental endurance

BY CPL. MATHEUS J. HERNANDEZ
Chevron staff

Endurance, one of the leadership traits all Marines must have, is defined as the mental and physical stamina that is measured by the ability to withstand pain, fatigue, stress, and hardship. In recruit training, recruits' endurance to withstand the mental and physical aspect of a challenge can be completely different as they face obstacles throughout training.

For recruits of Company G, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, their mental and physical endurance was in top shape as they tested their strength and endurance in the Combat Fitness Test aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot

San Diego Oct. 11.

"For something that equals under a time limit of ten minutes all together, it's very challenging, said Recruit Christopher K. Xiong, guide, Platoon 2142. "It opens up my eyes to what Marines go through, and it motivates me to keep pushing."

The CFT has three events which include: movement-to-contact, ammunition-can lifts and maneuver-under-fire.

"It's breathtaking, but fun at the same time," said Recruit Sergio De La Cruz, guide, Plt. 2141. "The mental aspect of it is definitely tougher than physically. You're being challenged as you run through and it hurts and you want to quit but you can't. You're almost done, so you might as well put out all the way to the end."

Movement to contact is an 880-yard run in boots and utility trousers. The second portion of the test involves raising a 30-pound ammunition-can, fully extending the arms upward for two minutes, earning points for the number of lifts done in the given time.

The last part of the test consists of a 25-yard crawl, hauling a simulated casualty using two different carries over 75 yards through cones, a sprint while carrying two 30-pound ammunition cans over 75 yards through the same cones, throwing a dummy hand grenade into a marked circle 22.5 yards away, 3 pushups and a sprint with the ammo cans to the finish line.

"As I went through it, I was thinking I'm tired, but I can't give up. I have to beat

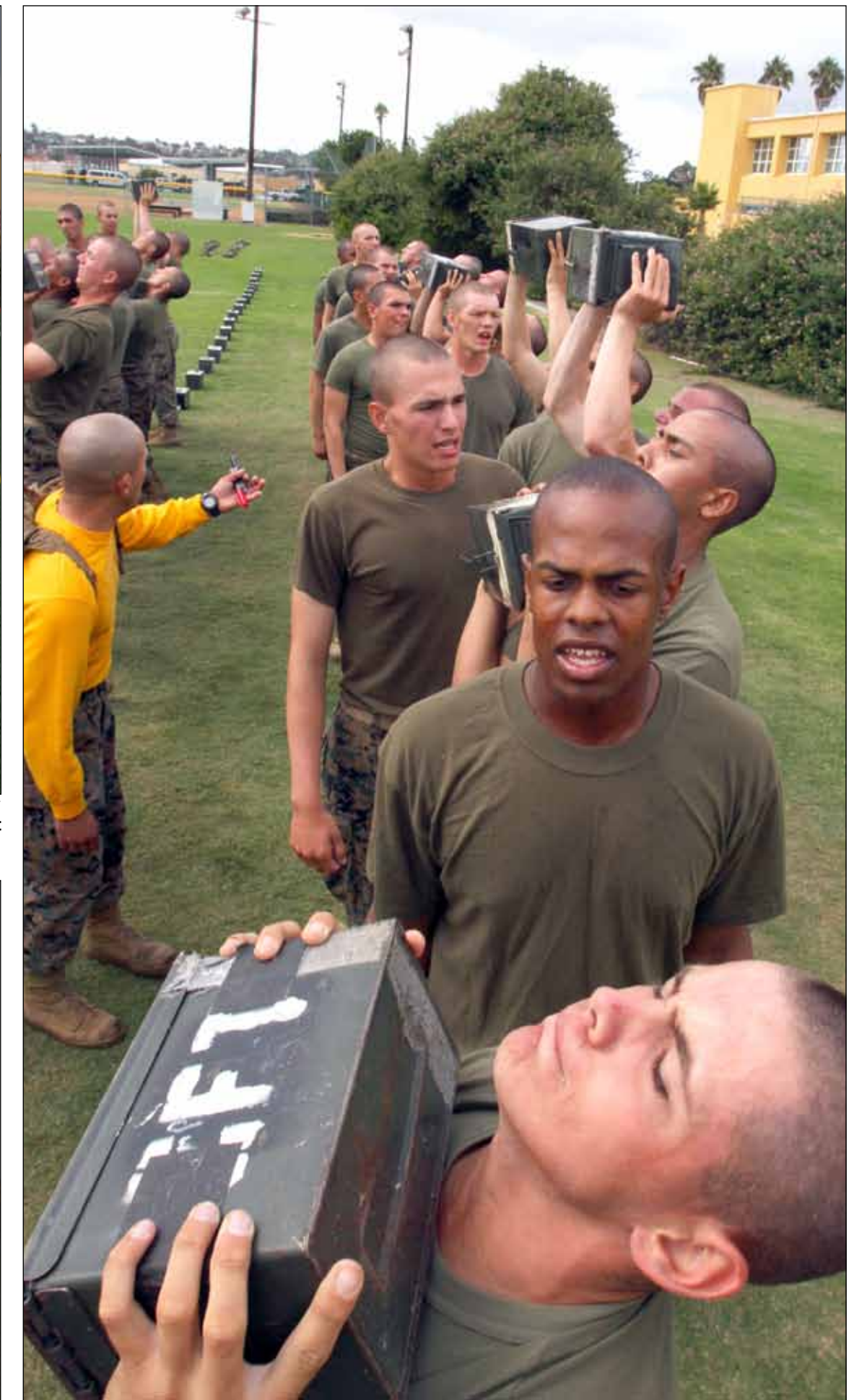
the person next to me," said Recruit Justin Quintanilla, guide, Plt. 2143. "As a leader, my performance doesn't just represent me; how well I do represents my platoon. I set an example for all of the recruits in 2143."

The CFT is more dynamic and anaerobic which gives a broader spectrum of physical fitness.

"It's just like the motto goes, pain is weakness leaving the body, and it's true, you can definitely tell in the CFT," said Xiong, the White Bear Lake, Minn. Native.

The CFT was another final event recruit needed to complete before graduation.

Overall it has improved their combat readiness and will allow them to be better prepared, should they earn the title Marine.



Cpl. Matheus J. Hernandez

Recruits of Company G, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, thrust ammunition-cans into the air during their Combat Fitness Test aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego Oct. 11. The ammunition-can lifts is one of three portions of the CFT, where recruits must lift a 30-pound ammunition-can fully extending their arms above their head, bringing it back down below their chin.

Recruit bases decision to serve on defining moment in life

BY LANCE CPL. BRIDGET M. KEANE
Chevron staff

The choices made in life could all be traced back to one defining moment. A moment that seems to happen in slow motion and can leave an impact so great it can influence someone to change their life's goals.

For Pvt. JaMarkus Floyd, Platoon 1005, Company A, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, his moment happened when he was 14-years-old. When trying to help his mother, who suffers from a mental illness, he witnessed her being violently thrown to the ground by police officers. While trying to defend her, Floyd struck an officer and was also taken to the ground.

"I just laid there and watched my mom cry," said Floyd. "I felt helpless. I kept thinking to myself, 'What can I do? How can I help? I'm just a kid.'"

Floyd was released later that night to his uncle, a former Marine, who took him into his home. The day's events still haunted him and a sleepless Floyd wandered around the house.

He looked at the many pictures displayed of his uncle during his military career and seeing his uncle's accomplishments, Floyd knew that he had to do something with his life in order to take care of his mother.

Throughout his youth, Floyd went from wandering the streets of Dallas with his mother to living with his grandmother on and off for years. This caused him to miss more than a year of school.

And after a year of being homeless with his mother, she forced him to go live with his grandmother in Texarkana, Texas. Floyd reluctantly agreed and then dedicated himself to his school work in order for him to get caught up with his studies.

Throughout high school, Floyd's mother still struggled with her illness. She was in and out of his life and decided she was going to leave the state. Floyd wanted to go with and give her the protection that she needed but soon realized that if he went with her, he'd run the risk of not graduating or being able to pursue a military career. He desperately wanted to take care of her.

Floyd made the heartbreaking decision to stay in Texas. Although he felt abandoned and alone, Floyd knew that it was time to start his life. In 2011, Floyd enlisted in the Marine Corps and joined the delayed entry program.

The constant reminder that his mother was somewhere alone made him eager to leave for recruit training. While waiting to graduate high school, Floyd began to take accelerated classes to help him graduate six months early. He eventually arrived at recruit training aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego June 23.

Once aboard the depot, Floyd began to feel homesick, constantly thinking about the condition of his mother. This robbed him of his desire to train.

"He had problems when he first got here," explained Sgt. Pastor Aguirre, senior drill instructor, Plt. 1005. "He didn't have any confidence and clearly



Lance Cpl. Bridget M. Keane

Pvt. JaMarkus Floyd, Platoon 1005, Company A, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, enlisted in the United States Marine Corps to further help his mentally ill mother. With thoughts of his past in his mind, Floyd overcame his emotions and pushed himself physically and mentally to become successful in recruit training.

didn't want to be (here)."

The thought of quitting lingered in his mind. As he went on with training events, he did not put forth any effort and soon began to develop an attitude.

Floyd's thoughts and feelings toward training changed after a talk with his senior drill instructor. Since Floyd lacked a father figure in his life, he respected his senior's words and took them to heart.

"He explained to me that things happen for a reason," said Floyd. "That we all go through

this transformation and use our experiences to become a better person."

Floyd looked back on his childhood and realized the only way to be successful was to move on. He turned himself around and began to give recruit training his all, said Aguirre, a 27-year-old Modesto, Calif., native.

"He became more confident and began to stand up for what was right," explained Aguirre. "He applied himself and became successful."

Floyd now proudly claims

the title Marine. He will move on to Marine Combat Training aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., then to Motor Vehicle Operator Course aboard Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., where he will learn to be a motor transportation operator. He wants to make the Marine Corps a career and plans on supporting his mother.

Although he doesn't know her whereabouts, his feelings for her never changed and continues to hold hope that he will be able to provide her with the care she needs.

Sgt. Maj. Robert Hightower

Parade Reviewing Officer

Sgt. Maj. Robert Hightower enlisted in the Marine Corps in May 1982, and attended recruit training at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C. Upon graduation, he was meritoriously promoted to PFC.

Hightower then attended the Basic Supply Clerk's Course at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C.

In October 1982, Hightower reported to Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., where he served with 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines. He was meritoriously promoted to lance corporal in March 1983.

In October 1985, Hightower reported to Parris Island for duty as requisition clerk with Headquarters and Service Battalion, and served as a military policeman with the Provost Marshall's Office.

In April 1988, Hightower reported to Okinawa, Japan for a tour of duty with 3rd Combat Engineer Battalion. He transferred to Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., in January 1989, reporting to The Basic School for duty as a supply clerk with the school armory and battalion supply.

In October 1991, Hightower reported to Drill Instructor School at MCRD, San Diego, Calif. Upon graduation, he was

assigned to Company B, First Recruit Training Battalion where he served as a drill instructor and senior drill instructor. This tour produced two honor platoons and the Moral Leadership award.

In February 1994, upon completion of drill instructor duty, Hightower received orders to Inspector & Instructor Staff San Diego, 4th Tanks for duty. There he served as the color sergeant, public affairs senior noncommissioned officer and platoon commander for the Barbel U.S. Naval Sea Cadets. He also served as supply chief for 4th Medical Battalion.

Hightower transferred to Okinawa in September 1996, reporting to 1st Stinger Battery for duty as the supply chief and platoon sergeant for H&S platoon.

In February 1997 Hightower graduated from the career course as a distinguished graduate.

In October 1997 Hightower served as the chief instructor for Marine Air Control Group-18's Corporal's Course.

In September 1998, Hightower graduated from the Advance Course as a distinguished graduate and the recipient of the Gung-Ho Award.

Hightower reported to the Staff Noncommissioned Officer's Academy in Okinawa in November 1998, where he served as a faculty advisor for Career Course, and as senior non-commissioned officer in

charge of the Sergeant's Course.

In August 1999, Hightower completed the Army's Master Fitness Trainer Course at Fort Benning, Ga.

In October 2000, Hightower reported to 3rd Force Service Support Group where he served as the Materiel Support Element logistics chief for G-3.

In April 2002, Hightower was transferred to 3rd Transportation Support Battalion, 3rd Force Service Support Group, where he served as the company first sergeant for Landing Support Company.

In September 2002, Hightower transferred to 1st Marine Division where he served as the battery first sergeant for Battery "T", 5th Battalion, 11th Marines. He participated in Operation Iraqi Freedom with this unit from Jan. 27 to July 24, 2003.

In December 2004, Hightower deployed with the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit and, in January 2005, he participated in Operation Unified Assistance off the coast of Indonesia.

In November 2005, Hightower was reassigned to Headquarters Battery, 11th Marines Regiment where he served as the battery first sergeant. In April 2006, he was reassigned as the inspector-instructor sergeant major for 4th Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion.

In May 2009, Hightower received orders to Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron-466 where he served as the squadron sergeant major. In December he assumed duties as the Marine Aircraft Group-16 sergeant major at Marine Corps

Air Station Miramar, Ca.

In May 2011, Hightower received orders to serve as the 4th Marine Division sergeant major in New Orleans, La.

Hightower's personal decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal with two gold stars in lieu of third award, the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with two gold stars in lieu of third award, the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal with three Gold Stars in lieu of fourth award, the Combat Action Ribbon and the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal.

Hightower has been inducted into the Honorable Order of Saint Barbara recognizing his contributions to the Field Artillery community in 2006.



"Marines of Company A - congratulations! You are to be commended for earning the title United States Marine. As you depart with your family members and loved ones, never forget that you are a member of the most elite fighting organization the world has seen. I challenge each and every one of you to stay motivated and adhere to our ethos. Of all the traits and principles we espouse as Marines, I would submit the foundation of all we are and say we are as Marines is the principle of "Discipline." You never get a second chance to make a good first impression.

Again, congratulations Marines and do great things for our Corps!"

Co. E improves through ability groups

BY LANCE CPL. BRIDGET M. KEANE
Chevron staff

Physical development is important throughout recruit training. Recruits are tested during each phase to see where they stand through training events, which are designed to measure one's physical strength, agility, endurance and improvement.

The recruits of Company E, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, were seen sprinting back and forth between yard lines as they participated in ability groups for the second time Oct. 11 aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego.

The purpose of having recruits run in ability groups is to see how they've developed physically since they ran their initial strength test when they arrived at the depot three weeks prior, explained 1st Sgt. Kevin Hutson, company first sergeant, Co. E, 2nd RTBn.

"The first phase of training is to build up strength and prepare recruits for future physical events, basically setting a foundation for them," said Hutson. "Ability groups are

just one way of building up that strength."

Depending on the recruit's performance during these training events, drill instructors will be able to identify the weakness of a recruit's physical performance and will give that recruit proper re mediation.

Each dynamic exercise specifically focuses on improving strength and endurance for running, so that recruits can get a higher score when they run their physical fitness test, explained Hutson.

The PFT is an annual event that every Marine must run. It consists of pull-ups, timed sit-ups, and a timed three-mile run.

Recruits are split into eight groups, each lead by a drill instructor. Every station has exercises that vary from sprints, crunches, planks, push-ups, cut-drills, and ammunition can lifts that are intended to help improve cardio, endurance, strength, balance and agility.

They are required to be at each station for a minute. Once the minute is up, they go to the next station until the next whistle blast.

Once the stations are over, they are then split up

into ability groups based on their initial strength test run time. Then, they go for a two-mile run set at a drill instructor's pace.

"I feel that these drills and exercises really do help us improve," said Recruit Ted Rahmlow, Co. E, Platoon 2115. "It shows you where you stand physically and what you should be doing to develop yourself."

Rahmlow, a 19-year-old Manitowoc, Wis. native, explained how he struggled during the two-mile run during the first ability groups.

"Running is definitely one of my weak points," said Rahmlow. "I was able to keep a steady running pace this time, so I've been improving."

Company E is scheduled to run their initial PFT Oct. 19. Based on their performance during ability groups, the recruits now have an idea of what they need to do in order to be successful.

"Most recruits don't know their limits when they get here, they don't know how to push through that threshold of pain," said Hutson. "Events like these push them out of their comfort zone and make them perform."



Lance Cpl. Bridget M. Keane

Company E recruits, plank on the left side during ability groups Oct. 11 aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego. Ability groups has specific dynamic exercises that focus on building up strength and endurance.



Lance Cpl. Bridget M. Keane

Company E recruits run sprints up and down the football field yard lines during ability groups Oct. 11, aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego. Ability groups are specific, dynamic exercises that focus on building speed and agility in order to improve a recruit's run time.



Lance Cpl. Bridget M. Keane

Running speed drills lets recruits test their agility and endurance. Being able to rapidly respond to change allows the recruits to efficiently build up speed and learn to control their movements.



Lance Cpl. Bridget M. Keane

Recruits stretch with ammunition cans as part of the dynamic exercises during ability groups Oct. 11 aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego. This exercise helps recruits build up their strength and coordination.