



Co. G builds teamwork with logs

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MARINE CORPS RECRUIT DEPOT SAN DIEGO

# CHEVRON

AND THE WESTERN RECRUITING REGION



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“WHERE MARINES ARE MADE”

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## Co. I learns importance of detecting IEDs

BY LANCE CPL. BRIDGET M. KEANE  
Chevron staff

Throughout the years, the capabilities of America's enemies have evolved.

As service members of the United States military, members of the Marine Corps must evolve with them, staying one step ahead of adversaries.

Recruits of Company I, 3rd Recruit Training Battalion, learned about improvised explosive devices during the Crucible at Edson Range aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., Dec. 11.

An IED is a homemade bomb that can be triggered by remote control, pressure plates or by trip wires. They are used to directly attack convoys or patrols and can be used to cause distractions.

“IEDs are going to be a constant threat in the future, no matter who we face,” said Sgt. Jack Thompson, field instructor, Field Company, Weapons and Field Training Battalion. “They will always be evol-

see IED ▶ 2



Lance Cpl. Bridget M. Keane

Recruits of Company I, 3rd Recruit Training Battalion, gather around a field instructor as he shows examples of improvised explosive devices at the end of the IED lane at Edson Range aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif. Dec. 11. Recruits are educated on different examples of IEDs they could encounter during a deployment.

## MCMAP an essential part of Marine Corps recruit training

BY CPL. LIZ GLEASON  
Chevron staff

During recruit training, recruits undergo many challenges that will help them face future deployments upon graduation; one of those challenges is the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program.

MCMAP is an essential part of training and preparing aspiring Marines; it combines hand-to-hand and close quarter combat techniques with morale and team building functions.

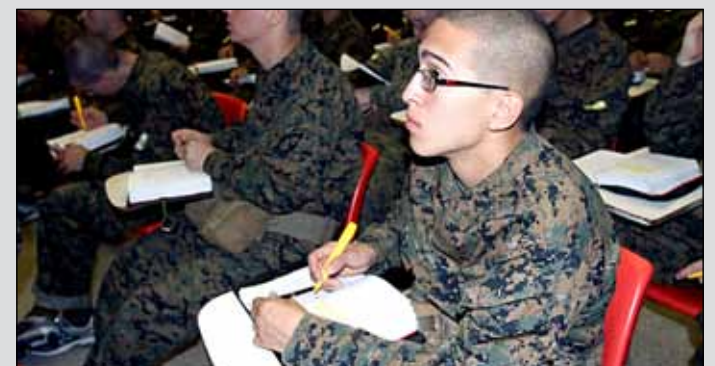
“MCMAP teaches recruits the fundamentals,” said Sgt. Robert Surozenski, Platoon 1075, Com-

pany D, 1st Recruit Training Battalion. “They learn proper techniques and combat mindset. It's an important skill to have; you never know what is going to happen.”

The Marine Corps is known as the nation's 911 force which makes it important for Marines to be prepared for anything by being able to adapt and overcome, according to Surozenski.

Recruits are introduced to MCMAP during phase one of recruit training. They learn the tan belt syllabus, which lays the foundation needed

see MCMAP ▶ 2



Cpl. Liz Gleason

A recruit of Company G, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion pays close attention during the history class aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, Dec. 10. The class is the third of a six-part series in which recruits learn everything from the birth of the Marine Corps up to the recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

## Recruits learn about Marine Corps history

BY CPL. LIZ GLEASON  
Chevron staff

Amidst their busy schedule, the recruits of Company G, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, stacked their weapons and neatly filed into a classroom aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, Dec. 10.

Once in the classroom, they quickly settled in and the academic instructor introduced himself before starting the hour-long class with a clip of the movie “Pearl Harbor.”

“Today in class we were

taught about World War II,” said Recruit Spencer Goodrun, Platoon 2155, Company G, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion. “We learned about the role of the Marine Corps, the different battles and Marines that received awards for heroic actions.”

During the Marine Corps History III class, the instructor spoke about Pearl Harbor, the Battle of Guam, Tarawa and Iwo Jima.

Learning about the struggles and triumphs Marines

see HISTORY ▶ 2



Cpl. Liz Gleason

Company D recruits execute a warrior stance during their final Marine Corps Martial Arts Program test Dec. 12. Recruits are tested on the tan belt syllabus which is the first level of MCMAP. There are five belts Marines can earn through the program as they become more proficient.



Lance Cpl. Bridget M. Keane

**Recruits of Company I, 3rd Recruit Training Battalion, evacuate their casualties after a simulated improvise explosive device was detonated on IED lane during the Crucible at Edson Range aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., Dec. 11. The IED lane teaches recruits to be aware and alert during patrols.**

#### IED ◀ 1

They learned about the explosives through a walk down a trail known as IED lane. This event at the Crucible takes recruits down a path and through a small market place. Along the way, there are simulated IEDs filled with talcum powder that can be triggered by remote and trip wires, explained Thompson.

Recruits are required to stay alert and be on the lookout for anything they would consider suspicious. If they set off an IED, they must evacuate their casualties and post security.

"They learn how to spot (IEDs) using the same tactics that Marines use overseas," said Thompson. "They also learn how to react when one is set off and how to rescue their fellow recruit when they're down."

After recruits have either spotted or set off an IED, an instructor will assemble them in a school circle and go over what

they just learned.

"Usually in the beginning of the lane, recruits won't have any questions," said Thompson. "But once they move down the lane and experience the different scenarios, they all start asking questions, which is good because those questions might be the one thing that could save their lives in the future."

At the end of the lane, there is a table with multiple examples of IEDs. The recruits gather around and become familiar with the different types of IEDs and how to recognize them.

"We want them to grasp the whole concept of an IED. We show them examples of current as well as past techniques in case they ever encounter them," said Thompson. "They need to be educated on it because IEDs don't discriminate."

Educating recruits on IEDs is an important part of training because there is a chance they could see combat in the future. The baseline is always changing and train-

ing must keep up with it, explained Thompson.

"I think the most important thing we learned was to think outside the box," said Pfc. Eric Burke, Platoon 3210, Co. I, 3rd RTBn. "Being observant is a key aspect but you must learn to think like (the enemy) thinks."

Burke, a 19-year-old Aurora, Colo., native, explained that he'll be a military policeman and what he learned during IED lane could apply to his every day job.

"It can help us during deployments, but it can also help us stay aware and be alert in any situation," said Burke.

With the knowledge and awareness Co. I gained from IED lane, they continued to push through the Crucible. Early in the morning on Dec. 13, recruits of Co. I received their Eagle, Globe and Anchor and now hold the title Marine.

#### MCMAP ◀ 1

in order to advance in MCMAP. They learn basic strikes, kicks, falls and bayonet techniques.

They practice and reinforce their techniques throughout their time aboard the depot and are evaluated individually on Training Day 50 by instructors of Instructional Training Company, Support Battalion.

"Today we were tested on everything we've learned about MCMAP so far," said Recruit David Grady, Plt. 1073, Co. D, 1st RTBn. "I did well today, I passed which means I've earned my tan belt and I can continue training. It's a relief and it feels good."

There is more to MCMAP than just

learning close quarter combat techniques. It also stresses and incorporates mental and character development.

"It helps you gain confidence," said Grady. "It gives you something to strive for and accomplish. As you earn higher belts, it instills a sense of pride in yourself. It also teaches you discipline. You have to listen to commands and be able to execute immediately, and in order to become good you have to practice."

There are five belts in MCMAP; tan, grey, green, brown, and black. With every belt come new advanced techniques and greater challenges. Along with the techniques, instructors incorporate warrior ethos.

"Warrior studies are like guided discussions," said Surozenski. "They teach about

important instances in Marine Corps history, help further instill the 14 leadership traits and give a greater perspective and purpose. They help recruits relate and understand why it's important to learn and practice MCMAP."

MCMAP is a significant and continual part of being a Marine. There is always a new goal to accomplish, whether it's becoming proficient through sustainment, attaining the next belt or becoming an instructor.

Overall, it not only helps recruits and Marines prepare for possible deployments, it also enriches their lives through history, discipline and accomplishment, according to Surozenski.

The pride also brings motivation to recruits and helps them gain new perspective to face difficult challenges, according to Montaño.

Recruits learn about many different subjects throughout recruit training.

"We cover a wide spectrum of classes," said Montaño. "We teach everything from general military studies and history to combat first aid and financial classes. These classes not only help set them up for a good Marine Corps career, they also help set them up in life."

All of the knowledge gained in recruit training will stay with the recruits long after they graduate and become Marines.

"It makes me feel really good to know that I can leave an imprint on the recruits," said Montaño. "I sat in these same seats six years ago and now I've come full circle. I'm standing at the podium teaching the recruits through my experiences, it's amazing."

#### BRIEFS

##### Christmas gate hours

Gate 2

- Closed Dec. 21 at 6 p.m.
- Reopens Dec. 23 at 6 a.m.
- Closed Dec. 23 at 4 p.m.
- Reopens Dec. 25 at 6 a.m.

Gate 4

- Open 24/7

Gate 5

- Closed Dec. 21 at 6 p.m.
- Reopens Dec. 25 at 6 a.m.

(subject to being open upon request over holiday period for deliveries/large vehicles by calling Desk Sergeant at (619) 524-4202).

##### New Year Gate Hours

Gate 2

- Closed Dec. 28 at 6 p.m.
- Reopens Dec. 30 at 6 a.m.
- Closed Dec. 30 at 4 p.m.
- Reopens Jan. 1 at 6 a.m.

Gate 4

- Open 24/7

Gate 5

- Close Dec. 28 at 6 p.m.
- Reopens Jan. 1 at 6 a.m.

(subject to being open upon request over holiday period for deliveries/large vehicles, by calling the Desk Sergeant at (619) 524-4202).

##### Barracks Christmas Barbecue

The Single Marine Program will hold a Potluck Barbecue in the barracks on Christmas Day.

Marines spending Christmas in San Diego are welcome to join the fun.

The time is to be determined.

Contact Cpl. Marissa Galindo at (619) 524-8737, or via e-mail at Marissa.lees@usmc.mil, and let her know what you'll be bringing to the feast. They're looking for hot dogs, hamburgers, beverages, chips and desserts.

##### Free tickets

Free tickets are available now for the Jan. 4, 2013 Semper Fidelis All-American Bowl.

This bowl game is designed to be different than other bowls. The players selected to represent the eastern and western halves of the country will be chosen not only because they are among the most talented players in the nation, but also because they bring something more to the game.

The Game starts at 6 p.m., at the Home Depot Center in Carson Calif.

For information call (619) 725.6364 via phone, or go to <http://www.mccsmcrd.com/SemperFit/InformationTicketsAndTours/index.html>

##### Parking lot closure

The parking lot behind building 571 (Martial Arts Training Facility) will be closed Jan. 2 for stripping. It is imperative that all vehicles be removed.

The following parking lots will be closed for stripping as well:

- Barber Shop/Post Office - Jan. 7 (Building 16 Exchange Storehouse Retail Sales)
- Behind building 10 - Jan. 8 (MCX Package Store/Tactical clothing)
- Between buildings 13 and 14 - Jan. 9 (Family Service Center/Phillips Hall Fitness Center)
- Bowling Alley - Jan. 14 (Building 590 Recreation Center/ Bowling/ Locker Room)
- Samoa street side of building 12 - Jan. 16 (Legal Services)

For information, call Robert Halvorson at 524-5653.

##### Send briefs to:

[rdsd\\_pao@usmc.mil](mailto: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.

#### HISTORY ◀ 1

faced through history is important because it helps recruits gain a different perspective, according to Goodrun.

There are six phases of Marine Corps history classes. They encompass everything from the birth of the Marine Corps to the recent war in Iraq and current operations in Afghanistan.

The knowledge isn't only taught in the classroom though. Through-out training, drill instructors help recruits review, understand and reinforce the information learned, helping prepare them for the comprehensive test on Training Day 55.

"It's important for not only recruits to know this information but for Marines too," said Sgt. Pablo Montaño, academic instructor, Instructional Training Company, Support Bn. "It keeps us up to date and fresh with how the Marine Corps came about, our traditions and history. It helps pass on our culture and instills pride in recruits and Marines alike."

# Around the depot

**This week the Chevron asks: "What safety advice would you give your Marines for the holiday season?"**



**"If you're doing any driving, drive safe. Call your chain of command if you need to and keep in touch with fellow Marines."** Lance Cpl. Daniel Delgado, administrative clerk, Headquarters Company, Headquarters and Service Battalion



**"Always have a backup plan and be prepared in case of any emergency."** Sgt. Lance Lankford, assistant warehouse chief, Service Company, Headquarters and Service Battalion



**"Have a safe and productive holiday. If you're going to drink, drink in moderation and be responsible."** Staff Sgt. Dail Salmon, logistics chief, Service Company, Headquarters and Service Battalion



Lance Cpl. Bridget M. Keane

Instructors with Weapons and Field Training Battalion demonstrate Marine Corps Martial Arts Program techniques to Marines and leaders with the United Arab Emirates Presidential Guard Institute aboard Edson Range, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., Dec. 5. The demonstration gave the group a better understanding of MCMAP and the purpose of the skills recruits learn during recruit training.

## UAE PGI leaders gain insight to making Marines

BY CPL. MATHEUS J. HERNANDEZ  
Chevron staff

**M**ilitary personnel with the United Arab Emirates were provided an overview of Marine Corps recruit training during their visit aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego Dec. 2-8.

The purpose of their visit was to learn the methods used in making Marines for the development of a similar curriculum for the Presidential Guard Institute, UAE's elite military force that only select few have the opportunity to join.

To provide the UAE with information regarding recruit training, they were given a tour of the depot which gave an overview of the 12-week training schedule. They were able to witness the process from first phase to third phase and how recruits are molded into Marines.

"They were able to witness recruits in a classroom setting to them learning drill," said Master Sgt. James R. Biggs, officer-in-charge, MCTM, UAE-PGI. "It gave them a better understanding of the discipline we instill in recruits as Marines and the leadership that is here guiding them."

The group also visited Weapons and Field Training Battalion, Edson Range aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., where they were able to see recruits in various assault courses, live-fire exercises, Crucible events and the culminating event of recruit training, the emblem ceremony.

The professionalism displayed throughout recruit training, whether aboard the depot or WFTBn, impressed the UAE from the moment they arrived, according to United Arab Emirate Col. Abdullah Mohammed Saeed Al Dhaheri, commander, PGI.

"We have a very good team that helped prepare this visit and we've been impressed from the first day we arrived here," said Al Dhaheri. "We are very



Lance Cpl. Bridget M. Keane

Maj. Terrance D. Wardinsky, company commander, Field Company, Weapons and Field Training Battalion, walks alongside United Arab Emirate Col. Abdullah Mohammed Saeed Al Dhaheri, commander, Presidential Guard Institute, down a simulated improvised explosive device training event aboard Edson Range, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., Dec. 5. Senior leaders with the UAE Presidential Guard Institute visited WFTBn during their overview of Marine Corps recruit training to better understand the curriculum. Their plans are to create a similar training cycle for the PGI to create a stronger military.

happy with the training that we've been seeing here. We got more than what we expected to get."

The UAE plans to apply the same curriculum they observed aboard the depot to the training with a slight difference to fit their needs as well as send their own instructors through Recruit Training Regiment's Drill Instructor School to better support the mission in training the PGI.

"We need to follow exactly what they are doing here with some change to fit in our country," said Al Dhaheri. "We will prepare our instructors before they come

here. There will be a little (language barrier) but I don't think it will be a problem."

The end state overall left leaders with enough gathered information to help support their training, and to leave with a positive impression of the Marine Corps.

"Thanks to the (Marine) instructors that are there with us, I believe we will have a different soldier in the future," said Al Dhaheri. "We are very happy to be here. Thank you is not enough to say for all that the Marines have done for us."



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# Log drills build unit cohesion, leadership

BY LANCE CPL. BRIDGET M. KEANE  
*Chevron staff*

Working together to complete a common goal is a lesson learned throughout recruit training. The recruits of Company G, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, learned exactly that through log drills aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego Dec. 18.

Log drills is an event during recruit training that forces recruits to work together while carrying a log weighing more than 250 pounds.

"It teaches recruits unit cohesion, small unit leadership and how to work together," said Sgt. Bradley Havenar, drill instructor, Platoon 2153, Co. G, 2nd RTBn. "They push through a painful experience together which helps build camaraderie."

Co. G is in their third week of training, where recruits still struggle with individualism while the platoon slowly forms, explained Havenar, a 29-year-old Midwest City, Okla., native.

"The main thing I try to talk to them about is the whole team aspect and not leaving each other behind," said Havenar. "If one recruit does his own thing, that only makes him comfortable, the rest will all suffer."

Recruits are split into groups of eight and are expected to carry a log. Together, the recruits carry the log for a half mile and

perform various exercises with it along the way.

As expected, the recruits struggle to work together when carrying the log. This is where recruits learn about small unit leadership.

"First, they're all butting heads trying to figure it out," said Havenar. "But one recruit will take charge, call a cadence and the rest will follow."

Soon, the recruits realize how much easier it is to work as a team. After they complete the half mile, they return the log back to the ground.

"I really think that log drills stress the importance of teamwork," said Recruit Seth Logston, Plt. 2153, Co. G, 2nd RTBn. "If one recruit doesn't carry his weight, everyone else will definitely feel the impact."

Logston, a 28-year-old Jefferson City, Mo., native, explained that he felt the communication was also a lesson learned during log drills.

"A recruit would take charge and call cadence, which sets the pace for everyone else," said Logston. "If a recruit didn't hear (the cadence) and get in step, it would throw everyone off."

As recruits pushed through the log drills, they soon grasped the concept of teamwork which helped Co. G complete the exercise.

Recruits of Co. G left log drills with a better understanding of how to work as a team, something that they will need to exhibit during the next eight weeks of training.



A recruit with Company G, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, struggles to carry the log during log drills aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego Dec. 18. A group of eight recruits must work together to carry the log and perform exercises. Pushing through the experience helps build camaraderie and teaches recruits the meaning of teamwork.

A recruit performs curls with his group during log drills aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego Dec. 18. Recruits learned the importance of teamwork during this event as they worked to move a log weighing more than 250 pounds.



Sgt. Mark Garcia, senior drill instructor, Platoon 2143, Company G, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, instructs his recruits to perform curls with a log weighing more than 250 pounds during log drills aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego Dec. 18. Log drills is an event that requires recruits to work together carrying a log around for half a mile.



Recruits struggle to lift the front end of the log during log drills aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego Dec. 18. Recruits learned how to work together as a team and that if one recruit didn't carry their weight the rest of the group would suffer.

# Colorado native deemed most improved

BY CPL LIZ GLEASON  
Chevron staff

After graduating high school six months early, Pfc. Isaac Cordova, Platoon 3210, Company I, 3rd Recruit Training Battalion, found himself working as a janitor. He wasn't satisfied with what he was doing and couldn't see himself making a career of the job, so Cordova began to explore his options—the Marine Corps landed on the top of his list.

After growing up in a family with a strong military background, his desire to serve his country came naturally. Cordova found great inspiration through his two older brothers who are both Marines.

"I joined the Marine Corps because they're the best," said Cordova, a Grand Junction, Colo., native. "I also wanted to set a good example for others around me. Both of my brothers live by honor, courage and commitment, and they motivated me to want to strive to exemplify those traits."

While the decision to enlist was simple for Cordova, the same can't be said about his first few weeks of training aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego. During recruit training, some recruits blend in with the crowd while others stand out. Cordova quickly made an impression on his drill instructors during the first hygiene inspection.

"A month before boot camp, my girlfriend painted my toenail pink and black," said Cordova. "I tried to get it off with nail polish remover, but it wouldn't come off, so I still had it on when I got to training."

While it didn't take long for his drill instructors to notice his

painted toe, they also caught on to something else.

"When we first got him, he had an attitude problem and couldn't seem to keep up with learning the basics," said Staff Sgt. Jason Fair, senior drill instructor, Plt. 3210, Co. I, 3rd RTBn.

Cordova's drill instructors noticed him struggling and decided to challenge him more by making him a squad leader; that is when everything changed.

"As a squad leader I learned to change my selfish mindset," said Cordova. "I found a balance between taking care of myself and others. I've learned that in order to achieve mission accomplishment and troop welfare you have to put others before yourself."

Because of his hard work, Cordova was deemed most improved recruit of his platoon by his drill instructors.

"To see how far he's come and how much he's matured is great," said Fair. "When we first got him, he had a lot of problems and now he's one of our better, more dependable recruits. He's always getting tasks done first, helping out and taking care of others."

Through his determination and the help of his drill instructors, Cordova earned the title, "United States Marine."

"It feels great to have made it this far. It definitely took a lot to get here. I had a lot of bad times and good times," said Cordova, "I gave my best effort and the change between day one and now certainly shows. I see it every day when I look at myself in the mirror. I feel proud."



Cpl. Liz Gleason

**Pfc. Isaac Cordova, Platoon 3210, Company I, 3rd Recruit Training Battalion, posts security while awaiting orders during the Crucible at Edson Range aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., Dec. 11. Cordova enlisted in the United States Marine Corps, following in the footsteps of his two older brothers. The Crucible is a 54-hour training exercise recruits must successfully complete before becoming Marines.**

## Sgt. Maj. William F. Fitzgerald III

### Parade Reviewing Officer

Sgt. Maj. William F. Fitzgerald III enlisted in the Marine Corps in October 1984, from Big Rapids, Mich., and received recruit training at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, Calif., with India Company 3rd Recruit Training Battalion.

Fitzgerald was meritoriously promoted to private first class upon graduation, and reported to Infantry Training School, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif.

In April 1985, Fitzgerald graduated from Bravo Company as a rifleman, platoon honorman and was meritoriously promoted to lance corporal. He then served with 2nd Battalion 1st Marines, Headquarters 1st Marine Regiment and 1st Battalion 9th Marines.

Fitzgerald was selected as the Marine of the Quarter for 1st Marine Regiment, and meritoriously promoted to corporal in August 1986. He deployed to the Western Pacific with the 13th Marine Amphibious Unit in 1987.

In November 1988, Fitzgerald joined the Active Marine Corps Reserves serving with 3rd Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company, Naval Station Long Beach Calif.

He completed the U. S. Army Basic Airborne Parachute School at Fort Benning, Ga., and Parachute Riggers School at Fort

Lee, Va., in April 1989.

Fitzgerald returned to active duty with the Inspector Instructor Staff as the parachute section non-commissioned officer in charge. He then completed the U. S. Army Jump Master School at Fort Benning, and the U. S. Air Force, Aircraft Load Planner School. He was promoted to sergeant in January 1990.

Fitzgerald mobilized with the 3rd Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company (ANGLICO) in the activation of the Marine Corps Reserves during Operation Desert Storm, and was assigned to 1st Marine Expeditionary Brigade. In February 1992, Sergeant Fitzgerald reported for duty with Air Delivery Platoon, Beach and Terminal Operations Company, 3rd Landing Support Battalion, 3rd Force Service Support Group (FSSG) in Okinawa, Japan. He was promoted to staff sergeant in August 1992.

In February 1993, Fitzgerald reported to Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego where he served as a drill instructor, senior drill instructor, chief drill instructor, battalion drill master and regimental drill master. He was promoted to gunnery sergeant in June 1994.

Following drill instructor duty, Fitzgerald reported to 5th Battalion 11th Marines in October 1996, for duty as the artillery battalion logistics chief. In May 1998, he received orders to Command Element 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit as the logistics chief, and deployed

to the Persian Gulf supporting Operation Southern Watch and Desert Thunder.

In July 1999, Fitzgerald was promoted to first sergeant and assigned as company first sergeant, Bravo Company, 3rd Assault Amphibian Battalion deploying to Okinawa, Japan in July 2000, with the Combat Assault Battalion, 3rd Marine Division.

In October 2002, Fitzgerald was transferred to the Military Police Company, 1st Marine Division, and deployed for combat operations in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He returned to the U. S. in September 2003.

Following OIF-1, Fitzgerald served with Headquarters 5th Marines and Headquarters & Service Company, 1st Combat Engineer Battalion. He was promoted to sergeant major in April 2004, and assigned to

Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 161, Marine Corps Air Station, Miramar, Calif.

Fitzgerald completed the Aerial Gunner Observer syllabus and deployed with the squadron to Iraq in support of the II Marine Aircraft Wing casualty evacuation mission for OIF 04-06.2 from Aug. 2005 to March 2006. While deployed, Fitzgerald earned the combat air crewman designation.

In Sept. 2006, Fitzgerald was assigned to Headquarters and Service Battalion, Camp Foster/Lester, Marine Corps Base, Okinawa until Jan. 2008, where he was assigned as the 12th Marine Regiment sergeant major.

Fitzgerald then deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom as the sergeant major advisor to the Afghan National Army, 201st Corps, Regional Corps Advisory

Command Central, Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix.

Fitzgerald currently serves as the sergeant major for U. S. Marine Corps Forces, South, headquartered in Miami, Fla., with the area of focus in Central and South America and the Caribbean partnering nations.

Fitzgerald's personal awards include the Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, the Air Medal with strike/flight numeral 7, Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with combat valor device and gold star, Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, the Combat Action Ribbon, Navy and Marine Corps Parachutist Insignia and the Combat Aircrew Insignia.

*"Marines, Congratulations on a job well done. Today you take that final step of transformation as a United States Marine. Over the past several weeks and months of training you have learned what it takes to claim the title and what it means to be a Marine. You have earned the right to stand among the ranks of our Corps. The attributes you now possess are no different than those many great men that forged our legacy, men such as Dan Dailey, Smedley Butler, Chesty Puller, John Basilone, and Jason Dunham. Be proud of the legacy you are now a part of. As you serve our nation, be mindful of your brothers, always take care of each other and embody our core values of Honor, Courage and Commitment. During your transition to your next level of training, enjoy a well deserved Christmas leave. Cherish time with family as they too are immensely proud of your accomplishment. Again, congratulations Marines! Semper Fidelis!"*







Lance Cpl. Bridget M. Keane

A drill instructor with Receiving Company, Recruit Training Regiment, reads the new recruits articles from the Uniform Code of Military Justice during the receiving process aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego Dec. 17. The UCMJ is a set of laws that all service members must follow. The recruits are read articles that pertain to them while they are in recruit training.

## Yellow footprints first steps into training

BY LANCE CPL. BRIDGET M. KEANE

*Chevron staff*

The initial step a recruit takes before he begins his journey aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego is taken upon the notorious yellow footprints at Receiving Company.

Before that step, young men arrive from states west of the Mississippi River and are loaded onto buses from the San Diego International Airport and are transported to the depot.

Drill instructors wait as the bus pulls up to the curb outside of Receiving Co. and that is when the receiving process begins. This is only the beginning of a night that will seem endless to the new recruits.

"The overall purpose of receiving is to get them ready for training when they get to their companies," said Sgt. Cory Marcus, senior drill instructor, Receiving Co., Recruit Training Regiment. "This is where they're transformed from civilian to recruit."

The first 24 hours of the process are used to collect recruits' paper work, give them haircuts, their first uniform issue and make sure they're ready for training, said Marcus.

From the bus, recruits rush out to the yellow footprints where they are instructed on how to properly stand at the position of attention.

"We teach them how to stand, walk and respond properly here so their drill instructors can focus on their training," explained Marcus. "Our purpose is to make sure that they realize we'll have complete control of them for the next three months. They're no longer with mom and dad; they are here with us and their lives are about to change."

With fists clenched and thumbs along their trouser seams, the recruits stand at the position of attention. Next, they are instructed to move onto another set of yellow footprints that face a red and yellow illuminated sign.

That sign displays articles

from the Uniform Code of Military Justice; laws that all military members must follow. Articles that pertain to recruits while they are in recruit training are read to them aloud. They are then rushed into the contraband room.

"In the contraband room, they get rid of the items they won't need while in recruit training," said Marcus. "We take away everything from their civilian life and put it in a white mesh bag."

The recruits then move to a wall of phones where they make the one phone call they are allowed during recruit training. They must call a relative and read a script that states they've made it to recruit training safely.

Recruits scream, "I love you and goodbye," in hopes that whoever was on the other end of the line will hear them before hanging up. The next step of the receiving process is haircuts.

"Every recruit's head is shaved bald," said Marcus. "This is to strip away individualism and put them in a mindset to train."

With freshly shaved heads, recruits are rushed to receive

their clothing issue. By this time, reality has hit the recruits and they seem to understand how the next three months of training will be.

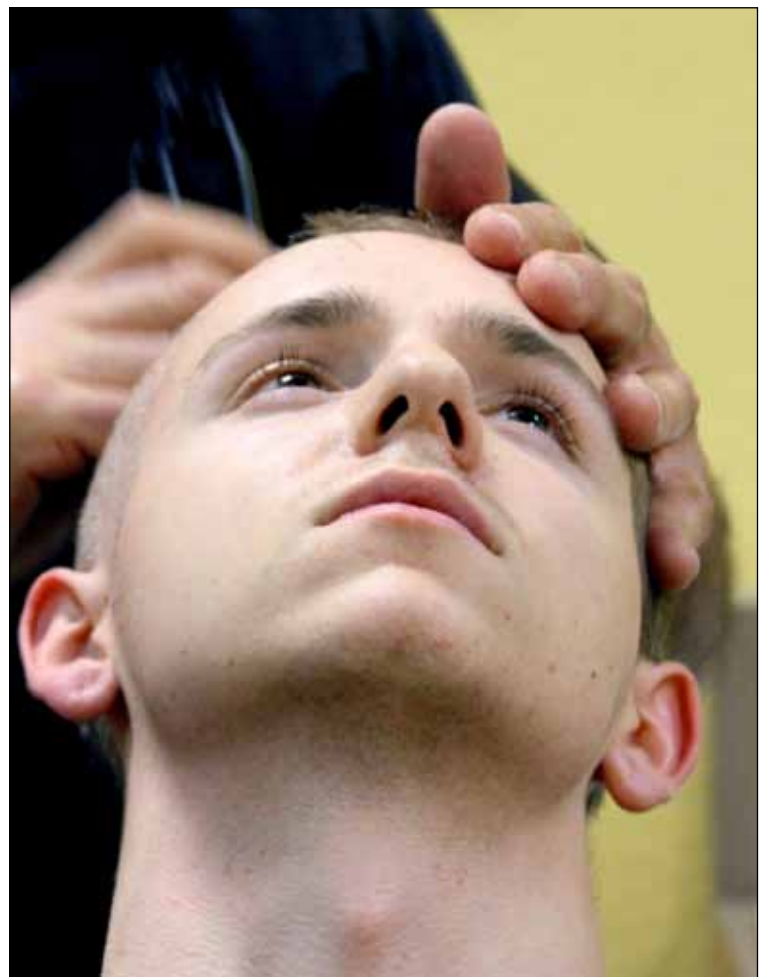
"There is a spectrum of emotions going on throughout the night.

Some are tired and lost, others are excited, but there are definitely all kinds of feelings going on," said Marcus.

As the night slowly turns into day, the recruits go through the "Moment of Truth", which is a last chance for recruits to bring to light about anything that will interfere with their training.

The rest of the week is spent preparing the recruits for "pick up," which is when they get sent to their platoons.

The highly anticipated moment is when recruits finally meet the drill instructors who will spend the next three months training and transforming them into Marines. The recruits are expected to pick up with Co. C on Dec. 21 and are scheduled to begin training Dec. 25.



Lance Cpl. Bridget M. Keane

A new recruit receives his first Marine haircut during the receiving process aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego Dec. 17. Each recruit is shaved bald to establish uniformity and let recruits know they are no longer individuals.



Lance Cpl. Bridget M. Keane

A drill instructor with Receiving Company, Recruit Training Regiment, instructs recruits to empty their pockets of their personal belongings in the contraband room during the receiving process aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego Dec. 17. Each recruit gets rid of the items they won't need during training.