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CHEVRON

AND THE WESTERN RECRUITING REGION



Vol. 74 – Issue 31

“WHERE MARINES ARE MADE”

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2014



Private Axel L. Franco, Platoon 1034, Company B, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, learns the roots of Marine Corps history during his visit to the depot's Marine Corps Command Museum Oct. 8. The museum houses more than 2,000 artifacts dating from the beginning of the Corps to items in use today.

Guatemalan native joins Marine brotherhood

Story & Photo by
Cpl. Jericho W. Crutcher
Chevron staff

The death of a father, a constant move from state to state and school to school would be enough to make any child question a sense of belonging or family security.

Fortunately, one recruit was able to find a sense of himself, belonging and security in the type of brotherhood the Marine Corps offers.

Private Axel L. Franco, Platoon 1034, Bravo Company, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, moved from Guatemala to California with his mother at the age of one after the death of his father.

Once Franco was old enough to attend

elementary school, he and his mother began a tumultuous journey of moving from city to city until eventually ending up in Florida.

“My mother started traveling a lot to help her deal with the loss of my father,” said Franco, an 18-year-old Guatemalan native.

Upon arrival to Florida, the fourth grader and his mother stayed with a friend, who was a Marine veteran, who lived on a boat. For three years, Franco was a successful student who flourished in the American school. Once he finished seventh grade, his mother moved him back to Guatemala to live with his grandmother. However, due to his inability to speak Spanish, he failed eighth and ninth grade.

“I wanted to excel with school,” said

Franco. “I did not want to be left behind with my education.”

Franco returned to Florida to live with his mother at the beginning of summer before his sophomore year. He spent the summer enrolled in classes catching up to his peers by the beginning of his sophomore year. With his sophomore year complete, he and his mother returned to California so he could finish his junior and senior year.

Franco began attending church with a friend and his family, who slowly showed him what being part of a family is all about. Eventually, they made his place in the family official by adopting him during his junior year.

see BROTHERHOOD ▶4

Combined Federal Campaign 2014 under way

STORY BY
ROGER EDWARDS
Chevron staff

The 2014 Combined Federal Campaign started Sept. 15 and will run through Dec. 15.

Captain Joseph Miesel is the deputy inspector general for Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego and Western Recruiting Region. He is also the depot coordinator for the 2014 CFC. “Our goal this year is 100 percent notification and 100 percent participation,” said Miesel.

“We want to notify each of the 4,000 plus of the depot’s uniformed and civilian federal employees that he or she has the opportunity to give a little to one or more of the more than 24,000 participating local, national and international

charities. We can help a lot,” he added.

Charities participating in the CFC range from The Pearl Buck Foundation, an organization that uses donations to care for mixed race orphans in Asia to the Wounded Warrior Foundation, which uses donations to assist military members who have been wounded in uniform and their families.

Donations can be directed to local food banks, to educational organizations or to organizations that provide medical care to those who need assistance.

Donations may be made in any of three ways. Donors may give online at www.socalcfc.org by choosing a one-time or recurring monthly gift via credit card, online as a payroll allotment at MyPay or via a Paper Pledge card payroll allotment with the CFC unit coordinator.



BRIEFS

Fashion Show & Ballgown Giveaway

The annual depot Fashion Show and Ballgown Giveaway will be held tomorrow from 1 to 5 p.m. in Building 6E.

At the end of the show, spouses of active duty military are invited to choose one free gown and an accessory. Those wishing to participate must register at <http://mcrdfashionshow2014.eventbrite.com>.

For those wishing to contribute, gently used ballgown donations are now being accepted at Building 6E.

Foundation hosts breakfast

Maj. Gen. Michael A. Rocco, the commanding general, 3rd Marine Air Wing, will be the guest speaker at the MCRD Museum Foundation quarterly breakfast at the depot's Duncan Hall Dinning Facility Oct. 28.

The event begins at 7 a.m.

The event is a forum that invites senior military and civilian guest speakers to address relevant and current issues affecting the United States Marine Corps. Foundation members and depot staff and officers are invited to attend. Breakfast is compliments of the Foundation.

Preparing for marriage seminar

Research shows that couples who receive pre-marriage training or counseling are less likely to divorce and more likely to have a satisfying relationship.

“Before Saying ‘I Do’” is a one-day seminar to help couples prepare for a successful marriage. The seminar will take place Oct. 29, 9 a.m. until 4 p.m., at the Lincoln Military Housing club house. Any Marine, sailor or civilian employee is invited to attend. Finacees or significant others are also invited but not required to attend.

For information or to register contact RPSN Sabina at (619) 524-6928 or via e-mail to gilberto.sabina@usmc.mil.

Preparing for Everyone's Needs

When planning for emergencies, it is vital to account for the needs of everyone who may be impacted.

There are steps that individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs can take to stay safe and independent during a disaster.

They include, but are not limited to:

- Making a plan on how to contact family members or friends
 - Making copies of medical prescriptions and medical history
 - Stocking a basic disaster supply kit
- These individuals should also include items in their disaster kits essential for their needs, such as:
- A TTY text telephone
 - Hearing aids and batteries
 - Written descriptions of service needs
 - Supplies for a service animal

For more ideas on how to plan for disasters, watch the emergency preparedness instructional video at <http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/videos/78827>.

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.



U.S. Marine Lance Cpl. Matthew A. Dailey provides security during a helicopter-raid exercise aboard Camp Pendleton, Calif., Oct. 16, 2014. Dailey is a team leader with Company K, Battalion Landing Team, 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit. BLT 3/1 is scheduled to deploy as the 15th MEU's ground combat element next spring.

Marines train for helicopter raids

STORY & PHOTOS BY
SGT. EMMANUEL RAMOS
15th Marine Expeditionary Unit

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. – U.S. Marines with Battalion Landing Team, 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit, participated in a helicopter raid exercise here Oct. 16.

Marines with BLT 3/1 are the 15th MEU's ground combat element and will deploy aboard the Essex Amphibious Ready Group next spring.

The exercise was part of a two-week-long raid leaders' course that focuses on teaching small unit leaders tactics and fundamentals to take back to their units. The course teaches basic shooting, breaching, raids, medical classes, and military operations in urban terrain.

"This type of training is extremely important," said Sgt. Nathan Sleeman, a raids instructor with Special Operations Training Group, I Marine Expeditionary Force. "Line companies can't provide the type of training we offer here, so it's important that these [Marines] take this knowledge back and teach their Marines."

After nearly two weeks of improving skills in marksmanship, close-quarters tactics, and MOUT planning, Marines would test the knowledge they learned in a simulated helicopter raid.

"They were given orders last night at around 7 p.m.," said Sleeman, 24, who is from Adams-Friendship, Wis. "They planned through the night and briefed their orders to their squads at 7 a.m. this morning."

During their planning, students were able to meet and receive input from the pilots that would be inserting them during

the mock raid.

"It's great to have full control of how you want to execute your mission," said Sgt. James E. Brooks, a section leader with Weapons Company, 3/1. "It's rare to be able to work with the pilots to complete a solid plan. We all felt good about the plan going into this raid after meeting with them."

Eager to test themselves, Marines loaded onto MV-22 Ospreys and made their way to their objective point.

Within a few moments of being on the ground, Marines began clearing buildings and reached their first objective.

"Going in, there's so much on your mind," said Brooks, 24, from Cincinnati. "360 security and worrying about your team going into a close-quarters environment. Here they bring to light a lot of things that Marines tend to overlook. In this type of environment, it's always eyes up."

Not long after the first boots hit the deck, Marines had cleared through buildings, accomplished their mission and were loading onto the Ospreys.

"Realistically helo raids are fast paced, so you don't want to be there longer than you have to," Sleeman said. "Overall they did a good job, but there's still a lot they can improve on."

A training exercise like this gives small unit leaders with the MEU's GCE an opportunity to experience a new perspective on the battlefield.

"Having a full understanding of all positions will allow squad leaders and team leaders to concentrate on the bigger picture," Sleeman said. "This gives them a better understanding of what's going on in the fight and make decisions versus being given tasks."



Battalion Landing Team Marines prepare to breach a door during a helicopter-raid exercise.



Marines with Battalion Landing Team, 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit, use a terrain model to go over a scheme of maneuver during a helicopter-raid exercise.

CHEVRON

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* Indicates Meritorious Promotion

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 Pfc. A. G. Vandevord
 Pvt. A. B. Vang
 Pvt. E. R. Varada
 *Pfc. E. G. Varon
 Pvt. J. D. Velasquez
 Pvt. R. S. Vera
 Pvt. J. J. Viray
 Pvt. F. R. Weber
 Pvt. S. A. Weber
 Pfc. S. J. Welch
 *Pfc. A. W. Wilkinson
 Pvt. T. K. Williams
 *Pfc. M. D. Wilson
 Pfc. C. S. Winowiecki
 Pvt. J. E. Wiseman
 Pvt. E. D. Wood
 Pvt. J. P. Wood
 Pvt. M. K. Xiong
 Pfc. M. A. Yahuaca
 Pvt. T. K. Yoder
 Pvt. S. G. Youman
 Pvt. M. S. Yukus
 Pvt. J. A. Zamora-Perez
 Pvt. J. T. Zavacky
 Pvt. B. M. Zimmerman
 Pvt. D. L. Zimmerman



A recruit of Company M, 3rd Recruit Training Battalion, practices his marksmanship fundamentals from the prone shooting position during Grass Week at Edson Range, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., Oct. 15.

Recruits learn rifle fundamentals during Grass Week

STORY & PHOTOS BY
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Recruits of Mike Company, 3rd Recruit Training Battalion, learned rifle fundamentals during Grass Week at Edson Range, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., Oct. 15.

The purpose of Grass Week is to teach recruits the basic fundamentals of marksmanship and learn the functions of the rifle such as how to load, unload and fire the M16-A4 service rifle.

“Every Marine is trained as a basic rifleman. Knowing the proper rifle fundamentals is essential to be combat efficient,” said Cpl. Emanuel Roque, primary marksman instructor, Weapons and Field Training Battalion. “Our mission is to continue sending the Marine

Corps a better product of qualified rifleman.”

Each platoon within the company was assigned a PMI during the fifth week of training, who gives classes on proper usage and operation of the weapon before recruits qualify at Edson Range.

Throughout Grass Week, PMIs teach recruits trigger control, sight picture, breathing control, sight alignment and natural point of aim. These were the basic fundamentals that PMIs taught to turn Company M recruits into qualified shooters.

Each platoon had an outdoor classroom and area to practice what they learned. There were four primary positions recruits learned: standing, kneeling, sitting and prone. The instructors gave recruits “snap-in-time” so they could practice the different position and fundamentals they were taught. During “snap-

in-time,” recruits aimed in at barrels with targets painted on them simulating the targets at different yard lines.

“There is a lot to learn to be a well-rounded shooter, such as breathing and trigger control,” said Recruit Dane O. Melder, Platoon 3271. “The PMIs properly train us and make us ready

for firing week. I feel confident.”

Like any machine, there is the possibility that a weapon could malfunction while at the range. To correct those issues, PMIs taught recruits remedial action, which is the method used to get the rifle firing properly.

“It’s critical we learn these skills thoroughly now so we

can apply them on the range,” said Melder, an 18-year-old Fort Worth, Texas, native.

With the basic marksmanship fundamentals in hand, recruits of Company M will move on to Firing Week where they will put what they learned to use and qualify with the M16-A4 service rifle.



Company M recruits practice marksmanship fundamentals during Grass Week. During “snap-in-time,” recruits aim at barrels with targets painted on them simulating the targets at different distances.

BROTHERHOOD ◀ 1

“When everything was settled and I was placed into another family, I experienced for the first time what it was like to have brothers and sisters,” said Franco. “Although I’m thankful for them supporting me, still felt like something was missing.”

Once graduating high school, he realized he needed to make a career choice, but had little certainty regarding where to go or what to do.

“I thought about the Marine we lived with on the boat and the values he stood for,” said Franco. “You could tell he loved being a Marine and was always proud to talk about it.”

Franco began as an only child and was still seeking a brotherhood. When the veteran talked about the brotherhood in the Marine Corps, it gave rise to his interest in joining one of the world’s finest fighting forces.

Franco knew the Marine Corps would give him a pride of belonging and a place to call home, he explained.

“Now that I am at recruit training, I can see it in my platoon and in other platoons. The brotherhood I’ve been looking for is in all of us,” said Franco. “We train together, and we grow strong together. We are a family.”

Following recruit training, Franco will attend Marine Combat Training in Camp

Pendleton, Calif., to pursue his Marine Corps career as a radio operator. Franco

will be serving in the Marine Corps as a reservist with plans to receive his inter-

rupter credentials, and then plans to reenlist and move to active duty.



Private Axel L. Franco, Platoon 1034, Company B, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, examines the display commemorating Marines raising the flag atop Mt. Sarabuchi on Iwo Jima during World War II in the depot’s Marine Corps Command Museum. Franco was born in Guatemala, but moved to the U.S., with his mother when he was a year old.