



New Marine loses weight to gain Corps

STORY & PHOTO BY
CPL. JERICO CRUTCHER
Chevron staff

“The difference between try and triumph is just a little umph!” is a quote from Marvin Phillips, a motivational writer.

Pfc. William R. Potter, lived that quote and pushed through the difficult training to achieve his goals of becoming a United States Marine.

Potter, Platoon 2166, Hotel Company, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, wanted to join the Marines, but did not meet the weight standards. He weighed 235 pounds when he first spoke to a recruiter, but left for recruit training 125 pounds lighter after originally weighing 315 pounds.

On the outskirts of a little town in Emhouse, Texas, is a farm built on several acres of a cattle ranch that 20-year-old Potter calls home.

There he attended and graduated from Corsicana High School where he was a successful student with good grades, but while the grades came easily, the introverted student mostly kept to himself.

“Growing up on a cattle ranch farm my nearest neighbors were like 30 miles away, and the only person I had to hang out with was my brother,” said Potter. “It was hard for me to socialize with other students at school because I had no experience with it, and I wasn’t very

confident with myself.”

After graduating from high school, Potter worked a few jobs but wanted something more.

“I was working at Walmart unloading trucks and I started realizing I was losing a little weight,” said Potter. “It was demanding work unloading the trucks, especially a guy as big as I was. I wanted to lose more, so I started working out and eating healthily.”

With a healthy, balanced diet and new regular workout schedule, Potter began to notice he was five pounds lighter every time he stepped on the scale.

“During high school I remember seeing a Marine Corps recruiter talking to the students, but I never went over to talk to him because I knew I was too heavy to make the Marine Corps’ weight standards, so I never even tried to talk to him,” said Potter. “Seeing the recruiter put something in me though. It fired me up and put a burning sensation inside of me to be a Marine.”

Two years and 80 pounds later, Potter finally decided to seek out a Marine recruiter and set out on a journey to become a United States Marine and serve his country.

“I came home and told my brother I was going to join the Marine Corps, and I think that motivated him to start thinking about doing something with his life as well,” said Potter. “He lost 50 pounds and



Pfc. William R. Potter, Platoon 2166, Company H, is instructed on the challenges he and his team will face in the 12 Stalls event at Edson Range, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., March 31, during the Crucible. Company H graduates recruit training today.

joined the Army soon after.”

Potter quickly turned to his recruiter, Staff Sgt. Rigoberto Ramirez, and under his guidance and direction began making positive life changes.

“I was weak and still overweight, but when I asked him if it was possible for me to join, he said ‘yes you can join,’” said Potter. “He helped me through motivation, physical training and mentorship. Growing up, Potter recalls hearing several military-related stories from his grandfa-

ther, WWII Marine veteran.

“He was the one who initially motivated me to join the service, and after my grandfather passed away in 2010, I knew I needed to start setting my path to become a Marine and serve in his remembrance,” said Potter.

After being in the Delayed Entry Program for six months, Potter arrived at the depot, January 12, ready to take on recruit training.

Once Potter started recruit training, he realized personal changes right away.

“Immediately I realized a newfound confidence in myself after arriving here at recruit training,” said Potter. “I went from not being able to lead people to being able to successfully lead a fire team.”

Now a private first class in the United States Marine Corps, Potter will continue his path by attending Marine Combat Training at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., and then onto his military occupational specialty to learn the ropes of being a data communication Marine.

Marine Corps Athlete of the Year



Cpl. Jericho W. Crutcher

Major Jackson Doan, operation officer, Edson Range, Weapons Field Training Battalion, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, demonstrates his leg kicks at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Nov. 19, 2014. Doan, who is an Oceanside, Calif., native and the current Pankration World Champion in the 145 pound weight class, has been named the 2014 Marine Corps Athlete of the Year. (see story page 4)

BRIEFS

Volunteer Tax Assistance

Tax season ends April 15, but the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance/ MCRD Tax Center is still offering its services.

The center offers walk-in service from 8 to 11 a.m., and scheduled appointments from 1 to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Appointments outside of normal business hours are possible and will be considered on a case by case basis.

The center is located at Legal Assistance (Building 12). The volunteers provide active duty service members, dependents and retirees with free federal and state income tax preparation with fast electronic filing.

Those who wish to use the service must have a photo ID, social security cards for self and dependents, a copy of 2013 tax return, and all applicable 2014 source documents (W-2s, 1099s, etc).

For appointments call (619) 524-8643. For faster service, fill out the form at <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f13614c.pdf> and bring it to the center.

Blood drive

The Navy Bloodmobile will conduct a blood drive behind Recruiters School on the basketball court, April 13, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. All collections benefit the military.

The blood drive depends on your support to ensure the shelves at the Navy-Marine Corps San Diego Blood Donor Center are stocked with an ample supply of blood. It is important to have enough units on the shelves to help with patient

needs at the Naval Medical Center San Diego as well as sending blood products to troops overseas.

If enough is not collected to support military needs, blood products must be purchased from civilian collection agencies to ensure patients at NMCS and Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton receive treatment.

All blood types are in demand, but especially needed are O positive, O negative and type AB.

To donate bring your CAC or picture ID, eat prior to donation and drink plenty of fluids.

T-shirts will be given to all donors.

For more information contact Doreen Rekoski at (619) 921-0406.

Brown Bag Lunch Seminar

Personal and Professional development holds another Brown Bag Lunch Financial Seminar April 17 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Personal and Professional Development classroom, Building 14.

Subject of the seminar is “Raising a Money Smart Child: a Parent’s Guide.”

Refreshments will be served and those attending are welcome to bring their lunch.

For information and to register, call Mike McIsaac at (619) 524-5728 or 1204.

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 Corps Cpl. Gary Johnston provides security during a beach landing exercise with Republic of Korea Marines in the vicinity of Pohang, South Korea, March 29. The 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit participated in Korean Marine Exchange Program 15. The overall objective of KMEP15 is to enhance amphibious operations between ROK and U.S. forces that contributes to security and stability on the Korean Peninsula as well as the entire Asia-Pacific region. Johnston is with Company G, Battalion Landing Team, 2nd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, 31st MEU.

U.S., ROK Marines strengthen alliance through annual exercise

STORY BY STAFF SGT. JOSEPH DIGIROLAMO,
Defense Media Activity
PHOTOS BY LANCE CPL. BRIAN BEKKALA,
31st Marine Expeditionary Unit

POHANG, South Korea – Republic of Korea and U.S. Marines completed a large-scale bilateral exercise here April 1.

Approximately 4,500 ROK Marines and sailors worked alongside 2,200 U.S. Marine and 2,000 Navy personnel during Korean Marine Exchange Program 15 to improve their combined amphibious capabilities.

"It is not always easy to integrate with the language barriers or different equipment sets, but we overcame all of that with exceptional teamwork," said Col. Romin Dasmalchi, commanding officer, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit. "We do everything we can and take every opportunity we can to train with (the ROKs) to better ourselves as a bilateral team."

The exercise included the first-ever landing of a U.S. MV-22B Osprey aircraft on a Korean amphibious assault ship, the Dokdo (LPH 6111). The Osprey was from Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 262 (Reinforced), 31st MEU.

"Anytime we do something new, there is a lot of attention and focus," said Dasmalchi. "The truth is a well-proven U.S. Marine aircraft made a routine landing on a ROK Navy ship. It was the first time for the ROK armed forces but they are very proficient in aviation operations. They took a look at this new

aircraft, they did their homework and they were ready to catch it, receive passengers and launch it. The introduction of the Osprey was a very well-run evolution."

The KMEP participants also capitalized on the ROK-U.S. partnership by completing a combined amphibious landing, which was viewed by hundreds of high-ranking ROK and U.S. military and civilian officials from a prominent vantage point above the beaches.

"What (KMEP) provides and validates at a strategic level is that our two Marine Corps can partner together," said U.S. Marine Corps Lt. Col. Mike Wilonsky, commanding officer, Battalion Landing Team 2nd Battalion, 4th Marines, 31st MEU. "Additionally, KMEP at a tactical level enables our young Marines to share ideas with their fellow Korean Marines at a very grassroots level."

ROK Marine Corps Staff Sgt. Cho Woo Chan appreciated the opportunity to work side-by-side with his U.S. Marine counterparts.

"This was my first time working with U.S. Marines," said Chan, a mortarman and squad leader with 33rd Battalion, 1st ROK Marine Division. "My favorite things we have done with the U.S. Marines (are) learning about their weapon systems, learning their shooting postures and taking photos with them. I learned a lot from the U.S. Marines, and I plan to go back and teach my unit the different things the Marines have taught me."

During the five-day exercise,

Marines trained in various ROK Marine Corps training areas around Pohang, to include the Mountain Warfare Training Center, Military Operations in Urban Terrain town and various live-fire ranges.

"By sharing tactics, techniques and procedures with our partners, we can make better Marines, and given the time we spend together, we'll have a common understanding of one another," Wilonsky said.

The ROK Armed Forces were established August 15, 1948, and they have maintained a working U.S. partnership since the ROK-U.S. Mutual Defense

Treaty was signed in 1953. The ROK-U.S. alliance is one of the longest in modern history and its strength is evident in the several exercises - like KMEP15 - that occur annually.

"The (ROKs) believe that what they are doing is not just for their country, but for their Marine to the left and to their right," said Wilonsky. "They believe in the same ethos we do. You see a fighting spirit in them that you only see in Marines."

The U.S. forces were comprised of the USS Bonhomme Richard Amphibious Ready Group and the 31st MEU. The 31st MEU, based out of Okina-

wa, Japan, in the U. S. Marine Corps and annually conducts two scheduled patrols in the Asia-Pacific region.

The overall objective of KMEP15 is to enhance amphibious operations between South Korean and American forces that contribute to security and stability on the Korean Peninsula as well as the entire Asia-Pacific region.

After retrograding personnel and equipment, the Marines of the 31st MEU are scheduled to conclude spring patrol within the following weeks before starting preparations for Fall Patrol 15.



U.S. Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Thomas Harding shows a Republic of Korea Marine his M27 infantry automatic rifle during Korean Marine Exchange Program 15 in the vicinity of Pohang, South Korea, March 29.

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* Indicates Meritorious Promotion

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 Pvt. E. Guzman
 Pvt. G. Guzman
 Pfc. I. P. Hales
 *Pfc. T. L. Hensley
 Pvt. S. A. Jackson
 Pfc. A. A. Jimenez

Pfc. O. H. Jimenez
 *Pfc. J. R. Koenig
 Pfc. M. R. Kopplin
 Pfc. F. Lagunas
 Pvt. E. J. Madl
 Pvt. W. A. Malbone
 Pfc. M. D. McDonald
 Pvt. K. H. McKee
 Pvt. N. G. Miller
 Pvt. M. C. Nelson Jr.
 Pvt. M. J. Odom
 Pvt. C. A. Quall
 Pfc. R. D. Quisenberry
 Pvt. J. A. Rojas
 *Pfc. L. K. Rose
 Pvt. T. A. Runyon
 Pfc. R. I. Russell
 Pvt. S. M. Saldana
 Pvt. D. L. Scott
 Pvt. J. T. Sharp
 Pfc. C. A. Shelton
 Pvt. C. C. Sherman
 Pvt. E. J. Siefkes
 Pvt. H. D. Sikes
 Pfc. L. J. Silver-Thorne
 Pvt. C. S. Solorzano
 Pvt. A. M. Stephen
 Pvt. D. A. Struble
 Pfc. R. P. Stueber
 Pvt. T. Terwey
 *Pfc. J. W. Tichenor
 Pvt. J. D. Tidwell
 Pvt. A. A. Torres
 Pvt. J. Torres
 Pvt. A. R. Torres III
 Pvt. K. T. Tran
 Pfc. T. V. Tran
 *Pfc. T. N. Tunstall
 Pvt. C. S. Turzinski
 Pfc. H. M. VanFleet
 Pvt. P. J. Vasquez
 Pvt. R. G. Vaughn
 Pfc. M. J. Vlasak
 Pvt. Q. T. Vogel
 Pfc. R. J. Waddell
 Pvt. B. A. Walters
 Pvt. A. G. West
 Pvt. M. S. Whitman
 Pvt. R. J. Willett
 Pvt. T. J. Williams
 Pvt. J. T. Winters
 Pfc. T. A. Wolkey
 Pfc. A. A. Yand
 Pvt. B. A. Yates

Recruits navigate the old fashion way

STORY & PHOTO BY
CPL. TYLER VIGLIONE
Chevron staff

As technology advances and smart phones and Global Positioning Systems become the norm, the art of navigation by using only a compass or map has become virtually antiquated. However, for a Marine, this knowledge must be second nature.

Armed with compasses and maps, recruits of Golf Company, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, maneuvered through the hilly terrain of the Land Navigation Course at Edson Range aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, March 31.

During Field Week, or week seven of recruit training, recruits learned the basic fundamentals of combat, with topics ranging from combat formations to land navigation. The course is buried deep in the midst Camp Pendleton, covered with cacti, bushes and various wildlife.

Prior to setting out to find their way through the course, recruits underwent a series of classes and learned how to shoot an azimuth, establish pace counts and map different points.

A pace count is the number steps it takes a person to walk a known distance. Since each recruit's step is different, it's likely they may have different counts. A consistent pace count was important because it allowed them to track of how far they had traveled from their starting points.

"We had one partner to figure out where we were supposed to be going," said Recruit Aaron M. Whitney, Golf Company. "One of us is shooting the azimuth while the other is using pace counts to find our next point."

Each navigation point is marked with a numbered ammunition can, and each pair of recruits was given a different route to follow. Recruits were given five points to find along the course, and while they had already plotted where each point was,

they had to use what they learned to identify the correct direction. They were encouraged to use different terrain features along with the navigation tools they were given to find their points.

"Once we (recruits) find all of our points, we get them checked by a drill instructor," said Whitney, a native of Tulsa, Okla. "If we got any wrong, we would need to retrace our steps and find where we made any mistakes."

The recruits were allotted about

four hours to complete the course.

"When I first got to the course, I drew a blank about everything we had just learned," said 17-year-old Whitney. "Once we reached different obstacles, it came back to me and my partner more and more."

For Whitney, this was more than just a land navigation exercise.

"We got to get away from the drill instructors for a couple hours and make our own decisions," said Whitney. "I feel like we got a chance to

work on our team building and unit cohesion as recruits."

During recruit training, recruits learn how to take initiative and to lead each other. Events like land navigation allow recruits to build those skills.

They will further develop their land navigation skills at the School of Infantry following recruit training.

"I feel like this is very important to recruit training," said Whitney. "This knowledge could potentially save one of our lives someday."



Recruit Jerry G. Borunda, Golf Company, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, shoots an azimuth to find his next point during the land navigation course at Edson Range, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., March 31. An azimuth is the direction used to find the next point on a map. Land navigation is designed to give recruits an introduction to map reading, pace counts, shooting an azimuth and to get them comfortable with using a map and compass. Borunda is a native of Los Angeles and was recruited through Recruiting Station Los Angeles.

Edson Range operations officer named Marine Corps Athlete of the Year

STORY & PHOTO BY
CPL. JERICHO W. CRUTCHER
Chevron staff

The Marine Corps' Athlete of the Year is awarded annually to a male and female active duty Marine. Marines who have excelled in varsity, All-Marine, national and international completions are eligible to be nominated for the award. Rank is not a determining factor, only that the Marine embodies the Corps values and excels in a sport.

Major Jackson T. Doan, operations officer, Edson Range, Weapons Field Training Battalion, overcame extraordinary challenges to earn the title Athlete of the Year for 2014 by putting forward the extra effort to embody the Marine Corps' values and achieve greatness through physically demanding sports.

Doan began practicing Filipino Martial Arts when he was five, and by the 6th grade, he received his black belt in Karate. From there he focused his efforts on his wrestling and was successful throughout high school. It wasn't until college that he started training in martial arts again.

Doan began honing his skills in college, but when he joined the Marine Corps his competi-

tions jumped to a national and global level.

He trains for three two-hour sessions a day to continuously improve his abilities on the mat with Jujitsu and Pankration. During the morning hours, Doan works on his cardio and concentrates on his strength and conditioning in the afternoon. At the end of his work day, he focuses his training on improving his martial art techniques.

"I hope to inspire the younger generation of Marines to push themselves to new limits and reach well-earned goals," said 42-year-old Doan.

Inspiring Marines is just what he did after competing and winning the 2014 U.S. Nationals, the U.S. world team trials and represented the U.S. for the Fila Pankration World Championship in the 145-pound weight class.

"I was nervous competing for the U.S. team, but as Marines, we adopt and overcome," said Doan. "I was fortunate to come out on top with the tough competition from other countries. I was honored to represent my country by competing in a sport I enjoy."

Doan earned two medals, gold and bronze, competing in Jujitsu at the U.S. world team trials. He then received two

medals, gold and silver, for competing in Pankration, an ancient form of martial arts. He's also won several local tournaments competing in Jujitsu.

Through all of his great accomplishments, Doan was still

surprised to be awarded Athlete of the Year.

"I didn't really expect to be the Marine awarded Athlete of the Year, but I'm deeply humbled to have received it," said Doan. "There are several

Marines who compete in various sports who achieve tremendous goals in what they do. I'm honored and again humbled to be Athlete of the Year because I know the Marine Corps is full of top competitors."



Major Jackson Doan, operations officer, Edson Range, Weapons Field Training Battalion, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, practices a take-down using his expertise in the martial arts. Doan has been named 2014 Marine Corps Athlete of the Year.