



WARRIOR NEWS



MARDI GRAS EDITION

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FAMILY READINESS TEAM

Company Representative
2nd Lt. E. Leckie

1st Platoon
2nd Lt. O. M. Chaparro
2nd Lt. T. B. King

2nd Platoon
2nd Lt. J. M. Thornburg
2nd Lt. S. D. Cooper

3rd Platoon
2nd Lt. S. C. Newsome II
2nd Lt. G. K. Broussard

4th Platoon
2nd Lt. C. W. Clark
2nd Lt. S. R. Broussard

5th Platoon
2nd Lt. J. J. Hubbard
2nd Lt. B. D. Bowlin

6th Platoon
2nd Lt. D. E. Coleman
2nd Lt. J. J. Patterson



Alpha Company closes in on half-way mark

Maj. Curtis V. Ebitz
Commanding Officer

Dear spouses, families and friends of Alpha Company,

Almost halfway home! In two short weeks Company A will cross the mythical "hump" starting our downward track towards graduation on June 10th, 2004. Although it may seem to be a short time away, there's still allot of events and obstacles yet to tackle. Please remain patient and continue the outstanding support for your spouse as we approach the heart of our training schedule.

Since our last company newsletter, the operational tempo and training has varied remarkably. Company A began the month in garrison with land navigation classes, land navigation (day and night) and lawn darts. Lawn darts is an exercise in which the

students actually call for fire, but instead of actual mortars being fired, compressed air shoots a dart at a simulated target, keeping the environment safe.

The Individual Weapons Field Firing Exercise (FFEX) and Engineer Skills FFEX was next and was executed very safely and successfully. The Marines were introduced to the M203 grenade launcher and the M249 Squad Automatic Weapon. Each student was also mentally challenged on Murphy's Demolitions Range. The Marines did a great job learning about and manipulating live explosives, exercising caution and safety throughout the event. This was probably the one and only opportunity for most of them to experience live demolitions training.

Finally, during the last week of February, the company conducted the Warfighting

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Field Exercise (FEX) I, a 5-mile hike and two very successful ranges negotiating the Weapons FFEI I (squad live-fire range) and Call For Fire FFEI. FEX I was two days of constant attacks and digging fortified positions testing the lieutenants mental toughness. This was followed by a day of live-fire and movement in full gear conducted during the hours of daylight and darkness.

The last day closed with each student calling in live artillery. A few students were able to participate in vectoring real attack jets dropping live bombs on the same range. Over all, this week was a real confidence builder for the students! This was also the company's first real exposure to the field for more than one night. Much was accomplished with the company and they performed superbly setting the bar for future companies to emulate!

I believe that an important part of The Basic School is the socialization of officers and their spouses. We have several company social events coming up that are great opportunities to learn about the Marine Corps customs and traditions, as well as building lasting friendships. However, the informal social events (interest groups, play groups, craft classes, etc.) are just as important. I encourage you to meet with each while the students are in the field or at class. The time with friends helps the separation pass that much faster.

The month of March won't be any easier though. We step off on a 10-mile conditioning hike March 5th with full gear and have significant field events as well: two patrolling exercises, more night navigation exercises, Warfighting Field Exercise II, and finishing out the month with a 12-mile hike.

We have scheduled our Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) Mixer for 19 March. The purpose of our MOS Mixer is to give students and spouses an

opportunity to talk to all the Sponsors about each MOS prior to your spouse being required to submit his/her preferences. Each MOS will be represented by one or more senior officers from that field that can answer questions about duty assignment, leadership opportunities, life style, career path, promotion opportunity, and general advantages and disadvantages to each of the MOSs. Hope to see you there!

In case you haven't visited our Web Site yet, I highly encourage you to check it out. We will continue to post pertinent information on the Web Site as necessary. Once again, to visit our website, go to: <http://www.tbs.usmc.mil>. To find our company web site, press the "FOLLOW ME" button, and then the "Officer Courses" link, and finally, the "Alpha" link.

In order to keep you up to date with your spouses' schedule, I wanted to provide a list of our training highlights for the next month. The goal is to let you know when there's a possibility of your spouse being really late so you plan accordingly. I appreciate the hard work and dedication that the Alpha Company Team has displayed so far. Please contact me if you have questions or there is anything I can do for you.

Sincerely,

Curtis V. Ebitz

Major, U. S. Marine Corps
Commanding Officer

Email: ebitzcv@tecom.usmc.mil
Work: 703-784-5997

Upcoming Training Highlights

5 March	10-Mile Conditioning Hike
8 March	Night Land Navigation
10 March	Day/Night Security Patrol FEX (Platoons 1, 2 & 3 will be in the field late)
11 March	Day/Night Security Patrol FEX (Platoons 4, 5 & 6 will be in the field late)
12 March	SPC Day
19 March	MOS Mixer
23 March	Warfighting Field Exercise II (Company will bivouac in the field)
24 March	Warfighting Field Exercise II (Spouses will be late)
26 March	12-Mile Conditioning Hike
29 March	Night Orienteering

'Jackass' of the Week



2nd Lt. Eric Leckie
Second Platoon

For the following display of extreme cowardice and subsequent lack of professional judgment, Alpha Company elects **Fourth Platoon** Jackass of the Week. On the morning of February 18, 2004, 2, 4, and 6 Platoon gathered on Range 3A to receive some simple instruction on the use of smoke, incendiary, and CS gas grenades. The instruction ended with a strong throw of a CS gas grenade by **Lt. Koval** of 6th Platoon to demonstrate the "crowd clearing" effect of the mild irritant. Upon its detonation, the grenade unleashed a billowing white cloud that, due to a change in wind, headed straight for the bleachers full with unsuspecting lieutenants.

Although all 3 Platoons seated in the bleachers were subject to equal amounts of the gas cloud, only one platoon would disobey a direct order from a senior officer and retreat like Frenchmen. Upon detonation, several shrieks of fear and a soft whimper could be heard from 4th Platoon's section of the bleachers. Furthermore, while 2nd and 6th Platoon bravely weathered the debilitating effects of the billowing plume and held their ground until the danger had passed, 4th Platoon ran off in a panic without any shame or regard for military discipline.

It was clear that 4th Platoon was immediately aware of their blatant cowardice. Upon reassembling after the danger had passed, many members of 4th Platoon were clearly distressed and visibly weeping in shame of their disgraceful retreat and their apparent inability to live up to Capt. Allen's high expectations.

Therefore, for displaying extreme cowardice and subsequent lack of professional judgment, Alpha Company nominates Fourth Platoon for Jackass of the Week.

Two weeks ago Second Platoon's **Lt. Riordan** was the proud bearer of the Jackass Beads for the following acts of tomfoolery. The story goes like this ... While **Lt. Booth**, was getting fitted for his Alpha's at the Marine Shop the young, Asian woman who works at the tailor desk struck up a conversation with him. Upon finding out that he was in Alpha Company, and as a toothy smile brightened her face, she asked me if he knew a young lieutenant "Riordan." Another tailor started laughing at this point. It seems as though they remember a not so graceful and potentially embarrassing moment that Riordan made possible earlier that day upon emerging out of the fitting room.

As Riordan stepped out of the dressing room with the confidence of **Lt. Uyeda** in a slam dunk contest, everyone that was nearby in the establishment stopped and gawked at this Alpha company specimen. He was wearing his green silky PT shorts as boxers. A wrinkly, new bravo shirt covered most of that up, though. It's reported that he was all hunched over, hunched like a dog trying to pass last night's Kibbles-N-Bits. Something was tugging his shirt down and his dingy athletic socks skyward.

"Ummm. Excuse me," Riordan called to the tailor as she tried to contain her professionalism. "Something doesn't seem to be working correctly – I think I have a problem."

She quickly retorted – "You DO have a problem. You can not wear your white, dress blue suspenders as shirt stays. You need to buy some SHIRT STAYS." Not to cool Riordan.

And before Riordan, there was **Lt. Mackewich**. A little background on Mackewich: he's as old as Yoda, and he's been in the Marine Corps since Christ was a corporal. And when he sleeps in the field, deer use his cammies as a saltlick. Needless to say, we were all excited to witness, and perhaps learn from, his pugilistic warrior skills. Then the day finally came for pugil stick fighting, and Mackewich, like a true Marine, was first to fight. Which fighting style would he adopt, we all wondered? Would he use the "drunken monkey humping a football" style that he exhibited earlier during forward rolls?



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Or maybe he would be more versatile and adopt **Lt. Sharber's** intense "Tupachsha Cur" style—used for street credibility—requiring one to scream "YOUR MOTHER'S A B&%CH" with each blow to the punching bag. No! Nobody that day was prepared for what Mackewich had in store for either us or his opponent.

With refined concentration, Mackewich decided that he would fight with all the vigor and ferocity of Mr. Burns. "Smithers, Fetch me my whipping stick. Post-Haste!!" he ordered. **Lt. Frerichs** came running. "Excellent." He and his opponent squared up, and the moment was tense as each warrior waited for the whistle of war.



Lt. Mackewich
Jackass

When the instructor abruptly blew his whistle, Mackewich's opponent executed a horizontal smash from the basic warrior position, and Mackewich executed a horizontal squat from basic fetal position. Blow by blow, and for about 5 minutes, Mackewich proceeded to take it like Pulp Fiction's Marcelle Wallace in the basement of a pawn-shop.

Unable to strike a single blow, Mackewich then decided that the key to a good offence is a strong defense, so he next employed his "crouching tiger hidden in the corner of the octagon" style (demonstrate).

"KILL, KILL, KILL," his opponent yelled while hammering the liver spots off of Mackewich. When the bludgeoning finally ceased, we all learned a valuable lesson: even someone with the coordination of Michael J. Fox can become the student leader of Alpha Company. So, for serving as nothing more than a complete meat-puppet in the octagon, Alpha Company nominated Mackewich as its jackass of the week.

"If you make a mistake once I will politely correct you. If you make a mistake twice, I will crush you."

Capt. Allen
4th Platoon Staff Platoon Commander
On Making Mistakes

Future Leaders Hone Warrior Spirit**2nd Lt. Newsome**

Third Platoon

Eleven weeks into the period of instruction and the lieutenants of Alpha Company are ready to face their biggest challenge yet: their first field exercise.

Field Exercise One, also known as FEX I, will take place from Monday, February 23rd until late on Thursday, February 25th. FEX I will be the culmination of all of the training that Alpha Company has undergone up until this point. The lieutenants of Alpha Company have for the past thirteen weeks have been undergoing training session after training session, followed by scores of various tests. During FEX I, the members of Alpha Company will have the opportunity to put the things they have learned into practical application.

Starting from the first day of zero week, Alpha has been working hard to acquire all of the knowledge it takes to be leaders of Marines, specifically, a leader of a basic Marine Rifle Platoon. FEX I will lay the foundation for what the members of Alpha Company will learn during the rest of their training schedule at The Basic School. FEX I, also known as "Squad Week", will make sure that the lieutenants have the basic knowledge it takes to lead a squad of Marine riflemen. Each Marine rifle company is built upon three platoons, of about 42 men each, and each platoon is built upon three squads which contain about 13 marines each. By becoming proficient in the care and employment of a Marine rifle squad, the Alpha Company Marines are taking that first step in learning what it takes to lead an entire Marine Rifle Platoon.

In the classroom, the Marines have been learning about things like land navigation, calling for artillery fire and close air support on enemy positions, proper usage of the field radio, proper maintenance, handling, and employment of various weapons systems and platforms, how to set up defensive positions, how to set up fire support plans, and how to write combat orders. FEX I will incorporate all these things and more into the field exercises in order to simulate the real-life situations that the lieutenants of Alpha Company may find themselves within weeks after they graduate from The Basic School on June 11. Each squad will have a day where they will practice the offense and another day where they will practice the defense. They will have the opportunity to call in artillery fire with live artillery rounds firing overhead and the opportunity to call in close air support with Marine rotary-wing and fix-wing aircraft. In addition to that, the squads will have a daytime live fire exercise where they will practice maneuvering their units while firing live rounds, and nighttime live fire exercise where they will do the same thing after the sun goes down. This will also be the first time that the Alpha Company lieutenants take M249 Squad Automatic Weapons and M203 Grenade Launchers to the field.

FEX I promises to be a good training evolution in addition to being another opportunity to build esprit de corps, and the warrior mindset that is so very essential to being a Marine Officer. And while it also promises to bring long days, long nights, and not to mention 96 hours of the cold weather Alpha Company has come to know and love, it is nothing new. Alpha Company will take it all in stride and chalk it up on Friday, the 26th, as another week finished, one step closer to graduation, and one step closer to being that leader of Marines we all aspire to be upon leaving The Basic School.

Spouses' Corner

Coffee Notes

On Saturday, the spouses of Alpha Company got together for their monthly informational coffee and to celebrate all the pregnant moms. **Amanda Barker** began the coffee with some information for the wives about programs offered on the base and the calendar of events for February and March. The Mardi Gras Social on February 27 was also discussed and many wives volunteered their time and effort to add to the event by bringing additional refreshments and activities for the children. A special thanks to all the volunteers!

After the business aspect of the coffee was addressed, we were able to celebrate our new little devil dogs. There are ten pregnant moms who were honored on Saturday, and everyone contributed to baskets for each of the moms. They were filled with all the necessities any new mom needs. Everyone was so generous and it was such a thoughtful idea. We had cake and played some fun baby shower games. As always the spouses had a great time together and were making plans to get together with each other while all their husbands are in the field next week. The next coffee will be held on Saturday, March 20th in the green carpet area of O'Bannon Hall. See you all there!

Congratulations Jacqueline Leckie on the birth of son **Jack Christopher** Jan 28th. Jack weighed in at 9 lb. 4 oz.!!

The Book Club: First meeting will be March 23rd. The book to be discussed is *Portrait of a Killer* by **Patricia Cornwell**. Contact **Jackie Mirinda** at 540-657-2286 or **Jennifer Storie** at 571-435-6622 for more information.

Coffee Update: The next coffee will be March 20th at 10:30 a.m. in the Green Carpet Area of O'Bannon Hall. **Ms. Lin Sharpley** from Information Referral will be the guest speaker.

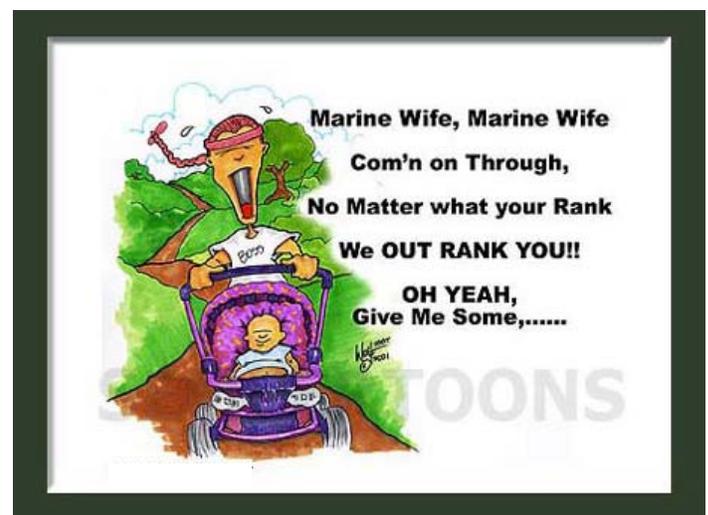
HOT MOS – Logistics Officer

The Logistics Officer is one of the most versatile and challenging occupational specialties in the Corps. Logistics Officers (0402s) are responsible for coordinating the Combat Service Support functions in every major unit in the operating forces and at all levels of command. There never seem to be enough 0402s in the operating forces. As a result, junior officers receive tremendous amounts of responsibility very quickly.

What is this MOS like? The field of logistics can be a very rewarding experience if you enjoy being the "go-to guy." You are generally performing a unique function as a platoon commander or staff officer with a unit in the operating forces. You have a high degree of visibility with commanders. You will plan long-range projects, manage multiple tasks, analyze data and performance, and resourcefully lead Marines to achieve your support mission.

As a Logistics Officer you can expect a tremendous amount of responsibility. Your level of involvement in planning operations will be beyond that of your peers. You can expect opportunities for command and deployment with platoons containing more personnel and equipment than an infantry platoon. Finally, you can expect that a commander will turn to you, Second Lieutenant Smith, and say, "Can we do this?"

The Logistics Officer MOS is one of the most challenging and rewarding MOSs in the Marine Corps. You are a key player in your unit and truly facilitate all operations. Leadership opportunities are present at all levels and positions.



Links course dates: March 23-25 6:00- 9:00 p.m. **Key Volunteer dates:** March 16-18 5:00- 7:30 p.m.
April 13-15 9:00-11:30 p.m.

To register for Links and Key Volunteer Training and to set up childcare, call 703-784-1211.

Milestones

ALPHA COMPANY BIRTHDAYS

February

- 03 Lt Anthony Wlotko
- 06 Lt Morris Sharber
- 08 Lt Richard Feistal
- 12 Lt Jonathan Lopez
- 13 Lt Douglas Lee
- 17 Lt. Mark Koval
- 18 Lt Colin Chisholm
- 18 Lt Justin Chotikul
- 18 Lt Juan Manteiga
- 18 Lt William Woodward
- 19 Lt Benjamin Lawless
- 22 Lt David Jackson
- 22 Lt Terry Uyeda
- 24 Lt Earl Speechley
- 26 Lt Matthew Mcgirr

March

- 06 Lt Joseph Markel
- 08 Lt Chad Hailey
- 10 Lt Brian Vukelic
- 12 Lt Nicholas Sills
- 14 Lt Erik Muniz
- 18 Lt Matthew Mackewich
- 18 Lt Brian Riordan
- 19 Lt Charles Arnold
- 19 Lt Margaret Fenlon
- 19 Lt Jonathan Frerichs
- 20 Lt Christopher Sutton
- 20 Lt Attila Krezinger
- 21 Lt Michael Cantu
- 21 Lt Douglas Howard
- 23 Lt Nathan Counts

- 24 Lt Tristan Martinez
- 26 Lt Brian Hensarling
- 28 Lt Richard Dawson
- 29 Lt Paul Barron
- 29 Lt Timothy Gillette
- 29 Lt Jeremy Nelson

ALPHA COMPANY ANNIVERSARIES

March

- 15 James and Jennifer Hiler



Clockwise from top: Live fire assault on R-5, **Lt. Elder, Kopach** and **O'day** in the field, **Lt. Bilby** in the "D."

Fighter Leaders battle night's chill

2nd Lt. Elder
Second Platoon

Alpha Company's Marines are no strangers to sleeping under the stars on cool nights. In fact, it had only hardened veterans to the art of catching some shuteye, having spent one night on Range 2 during Field Fire Week. Besides, many had grown up watching war movies or Westerns and knew what it was all about.

That was then, and many had forgotten, or simply roughed their way through, the finer points of using the MOLLE sleep system (a collapsible bag containing one GoreTex outer sack, one light sleeping bag and one heavy sleeping bag – all of which when placed inside each other may be laid upon a foam pad and zipped together to form a compact, head-to-toe covering). It is called a "bivvie sack."

Some Marines swear that it is very warm inside the bivvie sack. When its 20 degrees outside and the wind chill is below zero, having a warm place to rest is key for morale. Those attesting to it's warmth are the ones who diligently strip down to skivvy shorts and shirt and let the bags do the job of catching the heat and keeping it there. These warm Marines spend most of the night dreaming they are in the Bahamas, due to the warm humid environment they've wedged their bodies into. Then, rudely, they are prodded by an off-going duty, woken and asked, "Are you supposed to replace me ... you are the next duty, right?" Or maybe it's nature's calling

that wakes the Marine. The company staff did, after all, ordered all lieutenants to "hydrate, hydrate, hydrate!" The shock of leaving that Bahamas dream world for Quantico's winter reality is enough to crack the wills of some of the hardest Leathernecks The Basic School has seen.

On the flip side, there are those Marines who have experienced the pain of leaving the bivvie sack in their skivvies, putting on their boots and uniforms and rushing to do whatever it was they had to do. These Marines would rather not experience the climatic extremes anymore, so they sleep in their boots, every pair of socks they own, uniform, warming layers, gloves, gas mask, and whatever else gives them that warm fuzzy feeling. This type of Marine will not warm his bivvie sack up as much, but will have peace of mind. When duty, nature or the next day calls they will be warm initially, but cursed as soon as the wind blows. Scientists say we perspire at night and those clothing layers catch the moisture.

It is important to remember that regardless how Marines choose to clothe themselves, they will share the sack with their weapon, possibly some canteens (to keep from freezing) and whatever clothing they want to keep warm.

At no point will all parties be happy. At some point during the Quantico winter, Alpha Company lieutenants will be bitterly cold, once outside their bivvie sacks. Later on though, in the back of some of their minds, they realize how easy they have it. Great Marines of the past never had such technology.

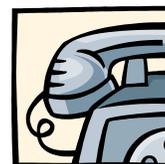
Chesty Puller never had a bivvie sack.



TOP 10 TEN

Top 10 Reasons MREs are Great.

10. They have half the amount of TP that an average person uses in one sitting.
9. Stylish brown packaging.
8. Everyone loves Jalapeno cheese spread in a tube.
7. MREs result in a system of bartering and trading that rivals any fruit market in Bangladesh.
6. MREs are nice and heavy.
5. Complimentary miniature bottles of Tabasco.
4. "Processed Chicken, Chunked and Formed" – Awesome.
3. MRE gum is the world's fastest and most effective laxative.
2. Great replacement for missing hot chow when "you just can't miss that morning bus."
1. Eight MREs equals one bowel movement.



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Military Police
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Main Exchange
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TBS Exchange
703-640-8819

Commissary
703-784-2233

Officer of the Day
703-784-5206/5207

Chaplain
703-784-5200

Warriors in the Field – Field Exercise I



Clockwise from top: 4th Platoon motivators, **Lt. Varga** (Hungarian officer), **Lt. Counts** “cammoing up”, fire and movement live fire, “Punchy” kicks off close air support demo.