

SITREP

VOLUME 19 ISSUE 1 JANUARY 2008

Link Forever Those Who Served Together

NEWSLETTER OF THE



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REMINDER!

- Dues are due in January each year
- Have you moved? Please send us your new info.
- Have you changed your email address? If you don't tell us we can't contact you.

RECON 2008 SAN DIEGO !



Happy Holidays everyone! It has been a great year and your FRA elected leadership is looking forward to another great convention in 2008. Your new Executive Director, Jim "Mac" McKee, has been working diligently to ensure that we all have a great time in San Diego. Mac has been negotiating with the Holiday Inn on the Bay in San Diego and he has secured a good room rate for all our FRA members. I would encourage our FRA members to come forward with suggestions concerning potential activities for the 2008 convention.

Mac and I have several ideas including scheduling a MARSOC/FRA live fire range at Camp Pendleton and a dinner cruise on the San Diego Bay. San Diego has several activities to choose from and we hope that our FRA members take advantage of all the options San Diego has to offer. The San Diego Holiday Inn on the Bay room rate is \$160.00 per night. We encourage members to book rooms early to take advantage of the room rate and early availability. We recommend that members refrain from booking rental cars. The San Diego Holiday Inn is located less than a mile from the airport. The hotel offers a shuttle service to and from the airport and will assist FRA members

with shuttle rides to many of the local San Diego attractions. Parking in the downtown San Diego area is expensive. The average cost is twenty dollars to park a car overnight in San Diego. The San Diego trolley is located next to the hotel and is another transportation option for members wishing to explore the city.

We are expecting a large turn out for the convention so plan early for accommodations. In the past San Diego has attracted large numbers of FRA members and we expect 2008 to be another great convention.

We continue to have great success in attracting corporate sponsors that are willing to support our FRA scholarship fund. The Oakley corporation and Tier 1 Group have made donations that will allow us to give out more scholarships in 2008! Our members continue to amaze me with their generosity and willingness to get involved in support of the scholarship fund and our wounded warriors coming back from combat operations overseas.

2008 will be another great year for our members. The Force Recon Association will remain a organization that will "link forever those who serve together."



Letter from your “PRESIDENT”

Hello everyone,

We have been really busy since the Charleston convention. The FRA elected leaders have been focusing on Recon 2008 in San Diego! I think we have a good preliminary plan to ensure that all FRA members have a great convention. The San Diego area offers an abundance of activities and we need your help and suggestions to make 2008 a memorable convention for all FRA members.

Our scholarship fund continues to grow. Our FRA members have done a great job bringing in corporate sponsors willing to support the FRA scholarship fund and our wounded warriors in need of financial assistance. I would like to publicly recognize Oakley, Glock, Remington, Surefire, Tier 1 Group, Objective Resources International, Strider Knives, Smith & Wesson, and Blackwater for their continued support of our organization. We remain committed to supporting several great causes that are making a real impact in the lives of former and current Marines and their families.

Our FRA Communication Chief Steve Luebbert and Executive Director Jim “Mac” Mckee have spent countless hours working on FRA related issues and continue to amaze me with their dedication and support to our organization. We receive an enormous amount of daily e-mail traffic and requests. These two Marines and the rest of your Board of Directors are doing a great job keeping the FRA headed in the right direction. Remember that the FRA is an all volunteer organization and we couldn’t accomplish the mission without members giving up their time to support the FRA.

We recently changed our By laws to include the new 0321 MARSOC Marines. We look forward to growing our association and welcome the addition of the MARSOC Marines. We expect the 2008 San Diego convention to attract several of our active duty Marines. Please join me in welcoming the MARSOC Marines as they become FRA members. Our Marines continue to deploy overseas for combat operations. The active duty Marines are carrying on the Force Recon tradition and bringing the fight to the enemy. We must remember that our warriors in the fight need our support as they enter their seventh year of sustained combat in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Please feel free to communicate with me if you have any issues or concerns. The leadership of this association is here for you. I look forward to working with all FRA members on the important issues that will confront our organization. Let’s work together to make 2008 a great and memorable year for all Marines!

Semper FI,
Andy Christian



Letter from your “EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR”

By way of introduction, my name is Jim McKee; I have been selected by our new President, MAJOR ANDY CHRISTIAN, to be the new Executive Director of our ASSOCIATION. Many of you have done business with me via the HOOCH. I have been a member since 1987 and have been on the Board of Directors since 2003. I look upon this new task as a personal challenge, not only for myself, but also for the other members of the Association's Board of Directors.

We have come to a junction regarding our existing membership and those who will succeed us in the future. Though 3rd and 4th Force Reconnaissance Companies will continue to carry the Force Recon name and mission into the foreseeable future, the active duty FORCE RECON COMPANIES, as most of us knew them, no longer exist within the MARINE CORPS. Those units have transitioned into the Deep Recon Platoons within the Delta Companies of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Recon Battalions and also into the Marine Special Operations Battalions within MARSOC. The MARINES who make up the MARSOC units are spread out across the globe, some of them, participating in many special operations. They are fine people with a mission that requires them to be ready to go at anytime, anywhere, by any means, to accomplish whatever special mission they have been tasked with. Their training is specific, difficult, and intense. Sound familiar? These people, are ‘OUR’ legacy. They deserve the best ASSOCIATION that we can provide them. And aside from all of the other duties that are expected of me, THAT IS MY PRIMARY MISSION as Executive Director, to prepare the way for our new members to continue all the traditions of this ASSOCIATION.

In the past, we have had some differences between members within the ASSOCIATION. Some of those differences have had merit, while others have consisted of personal matters that aren't worth lingering upon. I learned long ago, that if one keeps looking into their rearview mirror, they usually won't go very far without running into something! It is time for us to stop looking into that ‘rearview mirror’, and start looking ahead. We need to move ahead. We owe that to the new members and those who will be joining the ranks of the Association in the future.

Something I think worth mentioning presently, is the vetting of new members before they become a part of our Association. After looking through our roster of members and listening to complaints from many of the regular members, I have decided to establish a permanent committee, who's primary job will consist of checking out people before they become members. This new committee will be headed up by Ed McCourt and some yet to be selected members. Ed has already volunteered to take up this task. I know he will do a great job. THANKS ED!!!!

The HOOCH is also going to be going through some changes. Many of us already know that some of the items within the HOOCH, can be purchased on the internet, or through other sources other than the HOOCH. For many years, the Association leadership has wanted to decrease the amount of items that the HOOCH carries. In the future, the HOOCH will carry only the items that have sold well. These items will be presented in the 'new' HOOCH form, which will be available shortly to our members. What remains of the 'old' items in the HOOCH, will be sold at our reunion, or auctioned off for the Scholarship fund.

Finally, I would like to express to all of you, that I consider being selected to this position, an honor. I am humbled by all of the confidence placed in me. Many of you are close friends, whom I have known for the greater part of my life. I have served with some of you during training and in combat; during some very good times and some really bad times. As RECON MARINES, both past and present, it makes me proud just to say that I know 'ALL' of you. You are and have been, on that 'CUTTING EDGE'. You have worked and now, still exist in that realm that others can only imagine. You are and always will be MARINES.....
FIRST AND FOREMOST, MARINES!

TOGETHER people, we will make this an Association that all of us can be proud of. I am not going to be able to do this alone. It is a task that will require great amounts of teamwork, selflessness and imagination. I know that 'you', the membership, possess all of these attributes in great proportions. Lets 'saddle up' and move on **MARINES!**

HAPPY NEW YEAR to all.

And.....SEMPER FI!

Recon 2007 – Donated Replica Vietnam-era M40...
made a killing at the scholarship auction





Letter from your “Treasurer”

To the Board of Directors and the members of the Force Recon Association:

Below are the Balance Sheet and Profit & Loss statements for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007. They reflect our financial position as of 9/20/2007 and what transpired during the fiscal year. These financials were prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and are a compilation of information provided to me by the respective persons who have fiduciary responsibility for their cost center.

Here is a breakdown of each cost center performance:

Gain from operation	\$3,970
Gain from scholarship activity	\$13,517
Gain from Hooch sales	\$906
Loss from reunion	(\$13,859)

In order to best understand the net gains or losses, please refer to the Profit & Loss statement and look at the Income section for respective receipts.

Any questions, feel free to contact me.

Respectfully Submitted,
Elliot “JJ” Rubenfeld
Treasurer
Force Recon Association

Balance Sheet - Sep 30, 2007

ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
BANK OF STOCKTON	
OPERATING	1,566.91
BANK OF STOCKTON	
RESTRICTED	1,888.73
CASH A/C	40.00
CD-BANK OF STOCKTON	9,365.34
CHECKING UNION BANK	24,306.01
FRA HOOCH A/C	4,401.31
SCHOLARSHIP 0875	10,767.22
SCHOLARSHIP 4428	29,334.57
SCHOLARSHIP 6153	<u>5,626.48</u>
Total Checking/Savings	87,296.57
Other Current Assets	
INVENTORY	<u>6,555.00</u>
Total Other Current Assets	<u>6,555.00</u>
Total Current Assets	93,851.57
Fixed Assets	
FURNITURE & FIXTURES	
Depreciation	-7,711.00
Original Cost	<u>7,711.00</u>
Total FURNITURE & FIXTURES	<u>0.00</u>
Total Fixed Assets	<u>0.00</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u><u>93,851.57</u></u>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Other Current Liabilities	
ACCRUED LIAB	<u>14,905.31</u>
Total Other Current Liabilities	<u>14,905.31</u>
Total Current Liabilities	14,905.31
Long Term Liabilities	
DEFERRED GAINS(LOSS)	<u>11,765.27</u>
Total Long Term Liabilities	<u>11,765.27</u>
Total Liabilities	26,670.58
Equity	
Opening Bal Equity	48,901.00
Retained Earnings	13,746.49
Net Income	<u>4,533.50</u>
Total Equity	<u>67,180.99</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u><u>93,851.57</u></u>

Profit & Loss - Oct 2006 - Sep 2007

Ordinary Income/Expense	
Income	
Membership Dues	31,711.81
MEMORABILIA SALES	15,979.65
RECON-2007	25,922.00
SCHOLARSHIP INCOME	<u>23,517.00</u>
Total Income	97,130.46
Expense	
Bank Service Charges	669.40
Contributions	2,700.00
Insurance	
Liability Insurance	<u>2,673.00</u>
Total Insurance	2,673.00
Licenses and Permits	30.00
MEM. OFFICE EXPENSE	3,739.27
Mem. purchases	9,144.57
memorabilia shipping	2,190.23
Miscellaneous	3,989.81
Office Supplies	2,268.33
Postage and Delivery	1,570.52
Printing and Reproduction	514.35
Professional Fees	
Accounting	3,917.35
Consulting	<u>448.13</u>
Total Professional Fees	4,365.48
RECON 2006	106.55
RECON 2007	39,781.45
SATELLITE	659.76
SCHOLARSHIP	10,000.00
Telephone	2,154.31
Travel & Ent	
Meals	179.63
Travel	<u>4,549.91</u>
Total Travel & Ent	4,729.54
Uncategorized Expenses	-9.73
Utilities	
Gas and Electric	<u>1,956.69</u>
Total Utilities	<u>1,956.69</u>
Total Expense	<u>93,233.53</u>
Net Ordinary Income	3,896.93
Other Income/Expense	
Other Income	
Interest Income	<u>636.57</u>
Total Other Income	<u>636.57</u>
Net Other Income	<u>636.57</u>
Net Income	<u><u>4,533.50</u></u>

Letter from your “Secretary”

Force Reconnaissance Association General Membership Meeting September 15, 2007 Sheraton Hotel, Charleston, South Carolina

The General Membership Meeting was called to order at 1150 hours. FRA Executive Committee members present included President Joe Settelen #1576, Exec. Dir. Dick Sasser #1795, Vice Pres. Joe Tablada #1745, Secretary Bob Rowen #2722, Treasurer J.J. Rubenfeld #1161, and Pres. Elect Andy Christian #2559. FRA Executive Committee members absent: Past Pres. Pat Teague #0038. Board of Directors Present: Alan Bierline #2025, Charles Buchholz #0127, Wayne Lingenfelter #0042, and James “Mac” McKee #0965. Board Members Absent: Bob Zwiener #0365, James Doner #0294, Wes Fox #0068, and Jess Wise #1700.

Opening Remarks. President Joe Settelen opened the meeting by welcoming everyone, recognizing all new members in attendance, and by acknowledging the fine efforts of Dick Sasser for all his hard work setting up Recon 2007. President Settelen pointed out the FRA is run by volunteers on behalf of the Association.

A quorum was determined and Association business followed.

Minutes of the last General Membership Meeting. The minutes of the general membership meeting held on August 16, 2006, in Las Vegas, Nevada, were approved.

Executive Director's Report. Executive Director Dick Sasser reported on the status of FRA membership: Life Members 161, Honorary Members 23, Total Active 830, Members in Memoriam 297, and Inactive Members 1879. The total number of records in current the FRA database is 3047. Wayne Lingenfelter will check old database for status of 41 unassigned FRA numbers that were reported. It was reported that 503 members had paid through 2007, 83 through 2008, 31 through 2009, 18 through 2010, 4 through 2011, 1 through 2012, 3 through 2013, and 1 through each of the next three years to 2018.

Scholarship Report. Wayne Lingenfelter presented a report on our scholarship program. The scholarship fund has \$56,000 in the bank and \$10,000 more was raised in the auction today. The eight scholarships given this year did not touch the principal in the fund. The Executive Board approved the scholarship committee's recommendation, which was unanimously approved by the membership. Joe Settelen stated he expects more support from Blackwater and others later this year.

Treasurer's Report. J.J. Rubenfeld presented an overview of our financial status by first providing a summary report of fiscal year October 2006 through June 2007; which was then followed by a summary of financial activities to the present. A complete Profit and Loss statement will be published in the SitRep in early 2008. President Joe Settelen ascertained membership acceptance of the Treasurer's Report.

Hootch Report. James McKee reported a profit of \$1,230 for 2007.

Recon 2008 and Future Reunions. President Joe Settelen reaffirmed the Board of Directors has determined our reunions will alternate yearly between locations near Camp Pendleton/San Diego and Camp Lejeune. Next year FRA 2008 will be somewhere in the Camp Pendleton/San Diego area (exact location to be determined later), and in 2009 the reunion will be somewhere near Camp Lejeune.

Elections of FRA Officers. An election was held for four position on the FRA Executive Board and five positions on the FRA Board of Directors. President Settelen accepted nominations from the floor; after the ballot was finalized, Bruce Meyers moved that the ballot be accepted as presented. Motion carried.

Election results:

Executive Board: President Elect: Alan Beirlie #2025
 Vice President: Jose Tablada #1745
 Treasurer: J.J. Rubenfeld #1161
 Secretary: Bob Rowen #2722

Board of Directors: Lou Kern #1930
 John Baker #0394
 Johnny Johnson #3016
 Dick Sasser #1795
 Jim Hill #1735

Two FRA members were appointed by President Elect Andy Christian to serve one-year terms (filling vacancies): Bob Boland #59 and Todd Smalenburg #1919

Executive Director Position. The Executive Committee approved the appointment of James "Mac" McKee to be the new Executive Director. Mac will continue to handle the Hootch.

A Need for a Change in the FRA By-Laws. *Background: At FRA 2006 President Joe Settelen explained the need for a change in our by-laws in order to incorporate the new MARSOC Marines into our history for FRA membership and participation. Joe appointed Lou Kern, Wayne Lingenfelter, and Charles Buchholz to work with him on developing a draft of the change in the FRA By-Laws that would establish the necessary criteria for regular and associate membership, which would then be presented to the general membership at FRA 2007.*

The following proposed motion to change the Force Recon Association Bylaws was submitted to the membership:

We the undersigned Regular Members of FRA, not presently serving as an FRA officer or a member of the FRA Board of Directors, recommend the following change in the current Bylaws under the authority set forth in ARTICLE XI AMMENDMENTS.

Under ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP, an addition of those Marines and Corpsmen serving in MARSOC in SOCOM (established in 2005):

(1) REGULAR MEMBERS, add at the end of current eligible:

" . . . those reconnaissance-trained Marines and Corpsmen serving from the establishment of MARSOC in 2005, that carry the MOS 0321 . . . "

(2) ASSOCIATE MEMBERS, add at after "Marine SOCOM Detachment 1:

" . . . MARSOC"

". . . Associate membership may include Recon Battalion, ANGLICO Marines, Non-reconnaissance trained personnel of Marine SOCOM Detachment 1 or MARSOC and Corpsmen of these unit. Associate Members may not serve as officers or on the Board of Directors of the Association."

Signed by/

LtCol. Patrick J. Ryan #0001, SgtMaj. Sam Moyer #0066,
Col. Bruce Meyers #0007, Sgt Maj. Troy Mitchell #1819,
John C. Sebern #1148, Capt. Ira LeBlanc #1754, and
SgtMaj. Jess M. Wise #1700

After much discussion on the floor by the general membership, the original motion passed unanimously.

President Elect Andy Christian stated he would contact the leadership of the Battalion Recon Association to offer an invitation to them to attend FRA 2008 in southern California.

Disciplinary Board. Ten members signed up to serve on the Disciplinary Board.

Jim Capers #370, Billy Branch #25, George Saitta #1007, Bill Block #28, Fred Beaston #964, Sam Moyer #66, Robert Russell #1985, Joe Kowalski #2536A, Jerome Paull #1784, Paul Moose #2908 and Tom Griggs #2365 (Deceased 11/17/2007)

Adjournment. The Meeting was adjourned at 1320 hours.

Respectfully submitted
Bob Rowen # 2922

2008 Membership Criteria

Annual Dues - \$40

Regular Members:

All officers and enlisted members of the Armed Forces of the United States of America or her Allies who are now serving, or who have served, with any Force Reconnaissance Company, Regular or Reserve. Deep Recon Platoons of Marine Division Reconnaissance Battalion; or personnel who served in Amphibious Reconnaissance units between 1943 and 1958; and those reconnaissance-trained Marines and Corpsmen having served in Marine SOCOM Detachment 1, or those reconnaissance-trained Marines and Corpsmen serving from the establishment of MARSOC in 2005, that carry the MOS 0321 or have completed the MARSOC selection & assessment and subsequently assigned to a Marine Special Operations Battalion. Only Regular Members may serve as officers or on the Board of Directors of the Association.

Associate Members:

Civilians and veterans of U.S. Armed Forces and Allies who did not serve with a Force Reconnaissance Company, but who did make a significant development in or advancement to operational procedures or techniques inherent in Force Reconnaissance operations or who made a valuable and unique contribution to either operational Force Reconnaissance units or to the Association. Associate membership may include Recon Battalion, ANGLICO Marines, Non-reconnaissance trained personnel of Marine SOCOM Detachment 1 or MARSOC and Corpsmen of these units. Associate Members may not serve as officers or on the Board of Directors of the Association.



Letter from your “Chairman of the Scholarship Committee”

Report of the Scholarship Committee To the Board of Directors 2007

The Scholarship Committee received eight (8) completed applications for cash grants to be awarded during the coming academic year. Three (3) are FRA members, one (1) is the son of a member, one (1) is the daughter of a member, Three (3) are granddaughters of a member. Four (4) previous scholarship award recipients were among the applicants. The committee prioritized the applicants in the following categories: 1) Members; 2) spouses of Members; 3) Children and Stepchildren of Members; 4) Grandchildren of Members.

As in previous years all applicants were well qualified academically, and were members or sponsored by members who are in good standing in the association. The applicants are striving to pursue careers in the fields of Business Management; Chemical Engineering; Medical Science; Nursing; Law; Landscape Architecture; Firefighting; and Ecology. They are attending or will attend well-respected academic institutions in Six (6) states: West Virginia, South Carolina, West Virginia, Louisiana, Michigan, and California.

This year, in addition to our regular annual scholarships, we are honoring GySgt. Javier Obleas (Andy Christian), Cpl. Seamus Davey (Jose and Charity Tablada), and Scott Rubenfeld, (son of JJ and Beth Rubenfeld). They will never be forgotten. We thank the families and friends of these men for thinking of their fellow Force Recon Marines in their time of grief.

The committee using objective criteria, as has previously been established, after careful review of each application, considering Association priorities and personal statements of the applicants, current grade point averages, letters of recommendation, and school/community activities makes the following recommendations:

Ernie DeFazio Scholarship Award - \$3,000.00

Sgt. Vu Nguyen Ho
University of California at Berkley
Economics
(Member #2936)

GySgt. Javier Obleas Scholarship Award - \$1,500.00

David Y. Kim
American River College
Fire Technology
(Member #2998)

Cpl. Seamus Davey Scholarship Award - \$1,000.00

Fletcher P. Loder
West Virginia University
Chemical Engineering
(Son of Art Loder, #1226)

Siegal/Houghton Scholarship Award - \$2,500.00

Mathew D. Quattrocelli
Tulane University
Ecology
(Member #2921)

Sasser Scholarship Award - \$1,000.00

Keturah L. Childs
University of Michigan
Biology
(Granddaughter of Wes Johnson, #1711)

**Scott Rubenfeld Memorial
Scholarship Award - \$1000.00**

Katrice A. Childs
Clark Atlanta University
Business Management
(Granddaughter of Wes Johnson, #1711)

Total Awards Recommended: \$10,000.00

The Ladies Club has requested the Scholarship Committee select an applicant to receive a special scholarship named for two of their own in Memoriam, Donna Johnson. Donna was the wife of member Wes Johnson and Dot Ascher was the wife of member Chuck Ascher. The Ladies Club presents these awards from the donations of their members.

Donna Johnson Scholarship Award - \$1,000.00

Tiffany L Stiteler
Gloucester
Nursing School (to be an RN)
(Granddaughter of Charles Gillespie, #1538)

Dot Ascher Scholarship Award - \$1,000.00

Naomi Miller
Chapin
Landscape Architecture
(Daughter of Reginald T. Miller, #2994)

The committee's responsibility of recommending applicants to receive Force Recon Association cash grants for scholarships is humbling. Each applicant deserves recognition in his or her own right and the committee is delighted with the quality of all our applicants. We are proud to have the Force Recon Association represented by these men and women.

Respectfully submitted,

Wayne M. Lingenfelter, Ed.D. #0042
Chairman



MARSOC:

A Year in Review – challenge, growth, success

Story by: Lance Cpl. Josephh Stahlman

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C. (Dec. 15, 2007) – This holiday season, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command approaches its second anniversary as part of U.S. Special Operations Command. Throughout the past year, MARSOC's five subordinate units -- Marine Special Operations

Advisor Group, Marine Special Operations Support Group, 1st and 2d Marine Special Operations Battalions, and Marine Special Operations School -- have grown in manpower and equipment, excelled on the battlefield, and integrated fully into the special operations community.

MARSOC began this year with 1,379 personnel and grew to more than 1,730, bringing it to approximately 70 percent of its anticipated end-strength of 2,516 Marines and Sailors.

Marine Special Operations Support Group formally activated Jan. 19 to deploy task-organized enabler Detachments capable of providing combined-arms planning and coordination, military working dogs, special operations communications support, combat service support, all-source intelligence fusion capability, and logistics support. In addition to supporting MARSOC units directly, tailored MSOSG detachments can deploy as directed to support special operations missions throughout the world.

The Jan. 27 activation of Marine Special Operations School, the last of five planned MARSOC units, marked another step toward full operational capability for the Marine SOF component. Marines and Sailors of the school-house began conducting pre-deployment certification exercises for MARSOC units even before MSOS formally activated and continue to play a vital role in assessing and selecting personnel best qualified for assignment to MARSOC billets and success in SOF missions.

MSOB Marine Special Operations Companies deployed for the first time this year to conduct special operations missions in the Philippines and Afghanistan with great success. On June 23, special operations Marines, Soldiers and Afghan Security Forces routed a tough group of Taliban insurgents using air strikes, rockets and an imposing show of force in the area of Washir, Helmund Province, Afghanistan.

Success on the battlefield did not come without loss. Cpl. Travis Woods of 1st MSOB and Petty Officer 1st Class Luke Milam of 2d MSOB were the first MARSOC Marine and Sailor to lay down their lives in combat. Both were killed while conducting combat operations in Afghanistan and more than 20 Purple Heart Medals were awarded to MARSOC Marines and Sailors for injuries sustained during combat throughout 2007.

MARSOC's commitment to success during operations abroad was mirrored by numerous individual accomplishments among MARSOC's Marines and Sailors here at home.

Sgt. Michael G. Lyborg, Marine Special Operations Advisor Group's chief instructor for the Individual Skills section of Standards and Training, graduated from the U.S. Army Ranger School at Fort Benning, Ga., as the honor graduate of his class in July.

MSOAG's Marine Special Operations Teams must maintain a high level of tactical proficiency and cultural expertise in order to ensure success when operating in austere environments far from the nearest friendly support. To that end, Lyborg and his fellow instructors provide a six-month course to prepare their fellow MSOAG Marines

and Sailors to execute foreign internal defense missions as part of USSOCOM's persistent engagement strategy designed to strengthen relationships with foreign nations and improve the capabilities of their military forces.

Gunnery Sgt. Joseph A. Gerace, Command, Control, Communications, Computers (C-4) Requirements manager, was selected as 2007 Reservist of the Year by the Marine Corps League for his integral role in the initial formation of USSOCOM's Marine Corps component. Gerace, a native of Chelsea, Mass., attended a ceremony in Washington D.C., Oct. 3, where he formally accepted the award.



Figure 1 MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C. (April 15, 2007) – Capt. Andrew Christian, Branch Head for U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command, 1st Special Missions Training Branch, is joined by his son as he completed the 2007 Ironman Arizona triathlon in Tempe Ariz., April 15. (Photo courtesy of Capt. Andrew Christian)

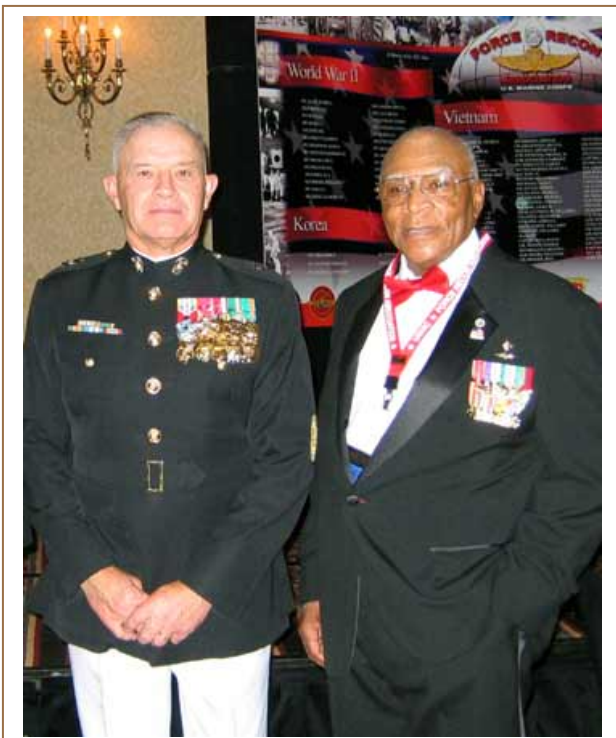
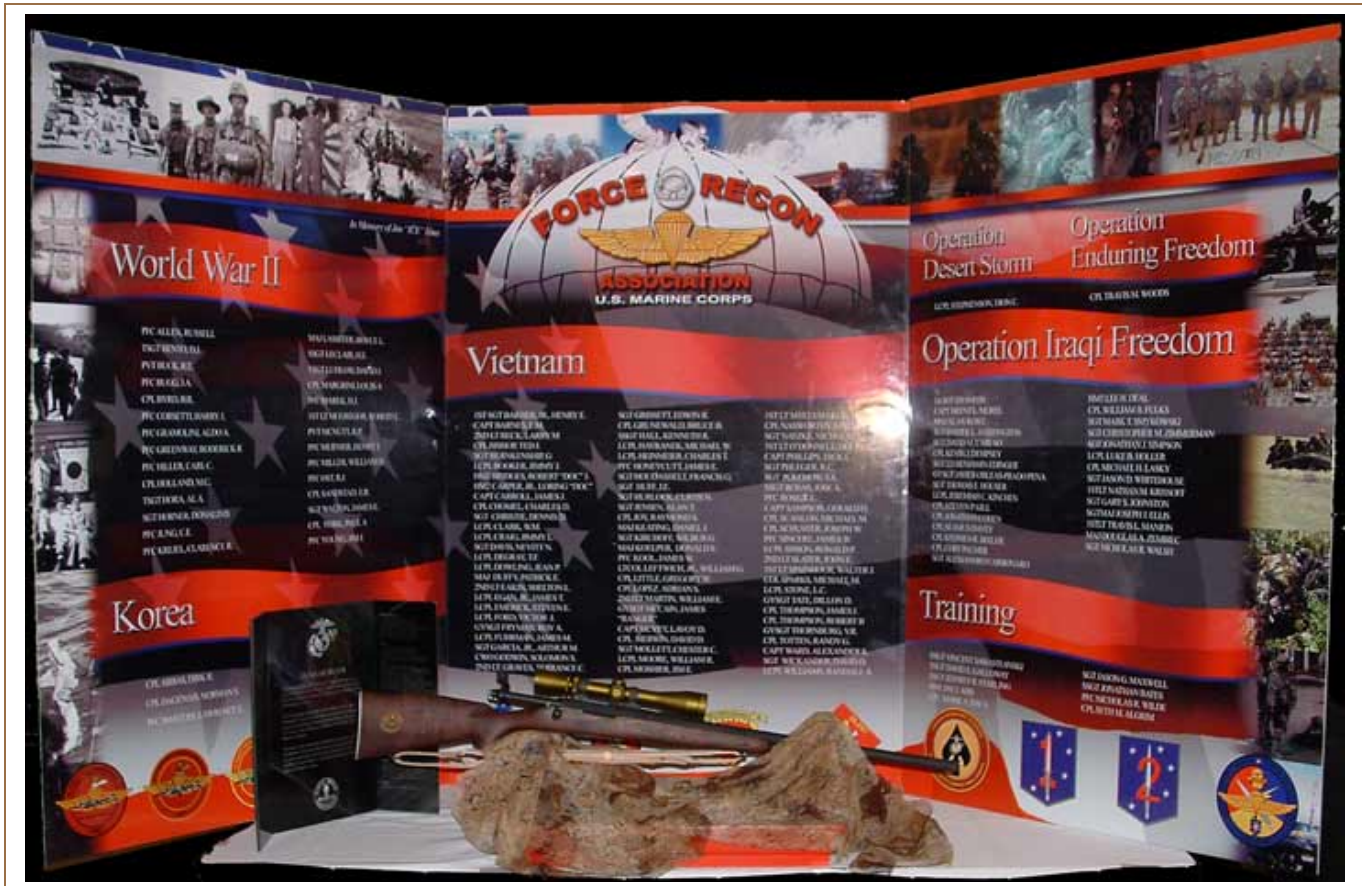
Another MARSOC Marine raised more than \$80,000 for the families of comrades killed and injured during the Global War on Terrorism by competing in several endurance events, including the Iron Man Arizona triathlon in April. Capt. Andrew Christian of 1st MSOB swam 2.4 miles, completed a 112-mile bicycle ride, and then carried a 3 x 5 foot American flag throughout the marathon portion of the race to cross the finish line after a grueling 10 hours, 54 minutes and finish 185th out of 2,066 participants.

Throughout the year, MARSOC continued to grow and improve while simultaneously deploying special operations units in support of the Global War on Terrorism. This year, MARSOC companies and teams deployed worldwide to execute nearly 20 special operations missions. MARSOC continues to advance toward full operational capability and plans to carry out more than 40 additional special operations missions in 2008.

Whether deployed as part of an MSOAG Special Operations Team, an MSOSG Detachment, or an MSOB Special Operations Company, or certifying units for deployment at the MSOS here at home, each MARSOC Marine and Sailor did their part to provide USSOCOM with added special operations capacity and capability throughout a challenging and successful 2007. The year ahead promises to be even better as USSOCOM's newest component continues to take the fight to the enemy on all fronts in the Global War on Terrorism.



RECON 2007 CHARLESTON, SC !











TAPs and Remembrance



Sgt. Major Thomas H. Griggs, Jr. #2365 passed away on November 15, 2007, at Live Oak, Florida. He was born on November 30, 1949 in Fort Myers.

Sgt Major Griggs served over 28 years in the United States Marine Corps. During his career he served with 1st Force Reconnaissance Company, 1st, 3rd, and 4th Reconnaissance Battalion's, plus held numerous assignments aboard both ship and shore stations around the world. He served 3 tours of combat duty in Vietnam and was part of the team who made the first combat parachute jump in Marine Corps history.

His combat decorations include 2 Bronze Stars, 3 Purple Hearts, and 2 Navy Commendation Medals with Combat "V". He received over 95 non-combat awards for meritorious service as well.

He is predeceased by his father and stepmother, Halbert and Alma Griggs, and his mother, Pat Oesterle.

He is survived by his sister, Pamela Cole; nephews Bill (Debbie) Eisert and family, Matthew Eisert, Mark Eisert and niece Kimberly (Mike) Linsinbigler; aunts and uncles Wilma (Vernon) Maxey, Charles Griggs, and Laurie (Russell) Mackinzie. Cousins include Frances Douberly, Mary Carolyn (Bob) Ellis, John (Janet) Griggs, Jr., Rusty (Vicki) Hill, and John, Larry, and Debbie Sorrentino, Ron Oesterle, and their families.

Visitation was held on November 18, 2007 at Coral Ridge Funeral Home, 1630 Pine Island Road, Cape Coral. Services were held Monday, Nov. 19, 2007 at Indian Springs Cemetery, Punta Gorda at 11am.

SSgt Virgil Prater #2338 - 1st Force Recon Co. 1959-61, passed away December 17, 2007 in Ouebec, Canada. His sister, 91year old mother, wife ,children and step children wanted his fellow Marines to know he was brave to the end and never stopped loving and honoring the Corps.

Henry Lee Balters #0238 passed away 1 DEC 2007

Larry Rieck #997

Col James P. McWilliams Jr. USMC (ret) #905 died of cancer 16 DEC 2007

He Was Cerebral, Honest, Fair -- and a Marine to the Core

By Adam Bernstein
Washington Post Staff Writer
Sunday, January 13, 2008; C08

The village of Xa Viet Thang, in Prince William County, never appeared on Virginia maps. But the Vietnamese hamlet -- with bamboo houses, a system of hidden tunnels, a Buddhist pagoda and a smattering of farm animals -- was a fixture at the Marine Corps Base in Quantico for much of the Vietnam War.

Its construction in 1965 was overseen by James P. McWilliams Jr., a heavily decorated Marine Corps officer and counterinsurgency expert who died of cancer Dec. 16 at 72.

"A whole generation of Marine second lieutenants marched their way through this Vietnamese village," said Marine Corps chief historian Charles D. Melson.

The mock-up town, whose name meant Village of Vietnamese Victory, featured a simulated rice paddy and Marines dressed as Vietnamese.

Beyond the lecture room, Xa Viet Thang provided vivid demonstrations of what Marines could expect in a conflict 10,000 miles away and a culture few Americans understood.

"The village may not be what it looks like, with lots of farmers," Melson said. "People are in the trees and underground."

Melson, who participated in training at the simulated village in the winter of 1970, joked that the only incongruity was the snow and ice on the ground that "did not necessarily reflect the realities of Vietnam."

Starting in 1963, McWilliams participated in 14 combat operations as an adviser to the Republic of Vietnam marines -- two years before the bulk of U.S. Marines went over. He was assigned to Quantico's officer training school and was asked to ensure authenticity at Xa Viet Thang.

For starters, he found a man in Richmond who cultivated bamboo and placed an order for 15 truckloads.

He returned to Vietnam as a battalion operations officer in the 9th Marines in the late 1960s and participated in Operation Dewey Canyon, one of the Marine Corps' last major operations of the war. The operation, in an area controlled by the North Vietnamese army and bordering Laos, involved going inland without supply lines on the ground in heavy rain and mountainous terrain.

In March 1969, McWilliams received the Silver Star for his defense of a landing zone during the operation. He braved constant enemy fire as he developed a plan that provided maximum cover for his men during their helicopter evacuation.

Retired Marine Corps Lt. Col. Justin "Jerry" Martin, who trained under McWilliams at Quantico in the mid-1960s, said: "Jim was a really tough guy but really fair. We were setting up a practice ambush, and my leg was visible because it was laying on the trail. He kicked me right in the leg and said, 'Lieutenant, you're dead.'

"That little bit of carelessness, if I had done that a year later in Vietnam, I would be dead."

James Patrick McWilliams Jr. was born in Philadelphia on June 2, 1935. He was an all-city and all-Catholic football star in his youth and won a football scholarship to attend what is now LaSalle University.

A Marine Corps recruiter went to the college and enthralled McWilliams, who began his 30-year military career after graduating from LaSalle in 1957. About that time, he married for the first of three times; he would have five children.

He trained in commando schools in the United States and England, and he served on many clandestine missions. He rounded off his expertise by becoming fluent in French and Swahili, a language useful to his growing interest in African affairs, in which he received a doctorate.

McWilliams, who retired at the rank of colonel, was known in the military for being cerebral and bluntly honest, sometimes to a fault, Martin said.

He wrote a book that argued against the United Nations arms embargo of 1977, saying it was counterproductive to ending apartheid. He also disagreed with economic sanctions, once writing: "Economic power inevitably leads to political power. . . . The disinvestment strategists have played into the hands of the power brokers in Afrikanerdom."

As a civilian, he worked as a Culpeper County magistrate, or first officer of the court, and raised cattle on property he shared with his third wife, Karen Hayes McWilliams. He attended Catholic Mass on Saturdays and spent Sunday services at his wife's Methodist church.

His wife said: "Jim was a gentleman who was a graceful ballroom dancer," and in contrast with the macho military demeanor that defined much of his life, he was once named the "Twist King" in Philadelphia, referring to the 1950s dance craze.

To: All FRA Members
From: Colonel Bruce F. Meyers USMC(Ret)
Subject: Obituary of First Sergeant Levi W. Woods USMC(Ret)
Date: 11 December 2007

Obituary of **First Sergeant Levi W. Woods USMC(Ret)**, Hood River, OR

It is with deep regret that I report on the passing of an exemplary Marine. First Sergeant Levi W. Woods USMC(Ret) died of lymphatic cancer today Tuesday December 11, 2007 at his home in Hood River, Oregon. Sgt. Woods was a pioneer in the formation and founding of 1st Force Recon. He was an accomplished test parachutist with over 100 jumps, many of them experimental which led the way for future means of insertion of small teams behind the lines. Many of the techniques that Levi helped develop are in use by Special Operations forces around the world, including MARSOC, SEALs, DELTA FORCE, and Army Special Forces.

While serving in 2nd Force Recon, Levi volunteered for and became the first human recovered by use of the Fulton Skyhook. For this achievement, he was given the Navy-Marine Corps medal. Following retirement from the Marine Corps he had a successful career in law enforcement, retiring a second time several years ago.

He is survived by his wife of 40+ years – Dickie, Son Hal and Daughter Tammy. A private service is planned in Hood River. Remembrances may be sent to 3670 Mud Alley Drive, Hood River, OR 97031.

Respectfully submitted,

Colonel Bruce F. Meyers USMC(Ret)

You Will Be Missed and Never Forgotten.





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We're on the Web!

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Back Page Info

About Our Organization...

The Force Recon Association Inc (FRA) was formally established on 21 September 1989, as a non-profit fraternal veterans association, in accordance with provisions of Section 501(c)19 of the United States Internal Revenue Code.

The FRA maintains a Scholarship Fund to provide educational assistance for its members and or members of their families.

We welcome corporate sponsors and their donations to our scholarship fund. If you're a corporation and desire to make a donation to our organization, please contact our "Executive Director" via the Communications Chief at commchief@forcerecon.com.

The FRA strives to maintain and foster fellowship, comradeship and perpetuate the ideals and professionalism between and among its members and the members of our reconnaissance units, whether Force or Battalion Recon, Regular of Reserve.

In extraordinary cases, we provide benevolent assistance to its members. Our Motto remains... *"Link Forever Those Who Served Together"*.

Founders: Patrick "Pat" J Ryan; Thomas "Tom" L. Gibson; and Ernie "Gunny" DeFazio (Deceased).

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