



'WARFIGHTER' TAKES CHARGE AS NEW SERGEANT MAJOR OF THE MARINE CORPS



Sergeant Maj. Micheal P. Barrett became the 17th Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps during a relief and appointment ceremony June 9 at Marine Barracks Washington as Sgt. Maj. Carlton W. Kent retired from the Corps. "The Marines in uniform today, every single one of them, had a choice and they all chose to serve. I get to serve them, and I am privileged to get to serve in this capacity," said Barrett after he took the reins as the senior enlisted advisor to the Commandant of the Marine Corps. "I expect all of our Marines to continue to be selfless. I

expect our Marines to continue to sacrifice for one another. I expect our Marines to continue to do brave deeds and endure the tough times that lay ahead," Barrett said. The position of Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps was established in 1957 and was the first such post in any of the branches of the United States Armed Forces. Typically, it's a duty served for four years at the Commandant's discretion. Barrett praised Kent for his successful tour and said

he plans to carry on from where Kent left off - to "work in line with the commandant's priorities and modernize the force." Before the appointment that brought Barrett to his current post, he was serving as the sergeant major of 1st Marine Division, a combat-ready unit of almost 20,000 Marines and Sailors headquartered at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif. He recently returned from a deployment to Helmand province, Afghanistan, where he served as Regional Command Southwest's sergeant major. In addition to a leader of Marines in a combat zone, Barrett was a sniper early in his career, made Marines as a drill instructor, and led Marines on the forward edge of the warzone, to include two tours to Iraq as battalion sergeant major of the battle-hardened 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment. "The man is a warfighter," said Kent, describing Barrett. "And, he's a leader. The Marine Corps is in great shape because of the leaders that we have."

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SGT. MAJ. KENT SAYS GOODBYE

Throughout his 35 years of service in the Corps, Retired Sgt. Maj. of the Marine Corps Carlton W. Kent has served as a drill instructor and made Marine aviators as a chief drill instructor and senior enlisted advisor at Naval Aviation Officers Candidate School in Pensacola, Fla. He took on lead roles a sergeant major of an artillery battalion, sergeant major of the West Coast's Recruit Training Regiment, and sergeant major of I Marine Expeditionary Force, a position that put him in front of tens of thousands of Marines and Sailors. He said it was an honor to serves as a



leader, and he's leaving with a sense of pride in knowing that the Marines today are living up to the legacy Marines from the past have created. Here, Retired Sgt. Maj. Kent and his wife, Liz, wave goodbye at the conclusion of the Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps relief and appointment ceremony at Marine Barracks Washington June 9, 2011.

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HEROES

MARINES SHOWED EXTRAORDINARY BRAVERY 'WHEN THE WORLD BECAME FIRE'



On Friday, Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus presented Capt. Ademola Fabayo and Staff Sgt. Juan Rodriguez-Chavez with the Navy Cross during a ceremony at the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Quantico, Va. Fabayor and Rodriguez-Chavez were on a mission with two platoons of Afghan troops and some other U.S. Marine and Army trainers to meet village elders in Ganjgal, Afghanistan, on September 8, 2009. The Marines knew the village was in a dangerous valley. Their fears were realized when

some 50 Taliban fighters attacked their column, as rocket-propelled grenades and small-arms fire began to rain down upon them. Both Fabayor and Rodriguez-Chavez are immigrants to the United States and, most important of all, both heroes of a rare order. Mabus noted that these heroes were fighting for their adopted nation: "Neither of the recipients of the Navy Cross today were born in this country. But through their active service, both have demonstrated a deep and enduring love for the United States of America and a commitment to defend everything it represents." Fabayo was born in Nigeria but considers himself a New Yorker. Rodriguez-Chavez is a native of Acuna, Mexico. The Navy Cross is the second-highest award for valor in the military, surpassed only by the Medal of Honor.

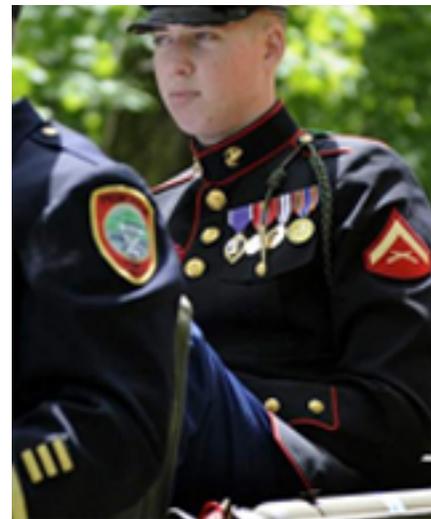
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INJURED PRINCETON, N.J., MARINE'S SACRIFICE SUMMONS A NEW CHAPTER IN A YOUNG LIFE

Lance Cpl. Evan D. Reichenthal flew back to the United States in an induced coma with his body burned and broken. On January 5 while deployed in Marjah, Afghanistan, he and



about a dozen other Marines were on patrol. They were walking along a field when they noticed four men on the other side of the field walking together. Suddenly, the men started shooting. The Marines fired back. Reichenthal dropped to the ground and crawled into a muddy ditch, trying to close in on the assailants. Reichenthal walked ahead of the group, sweeping the ground for Improvised Explosive Devices (IED). A bomb, possibly made of cardboard and copper wire, exploded in a split second. But in that instant, he knew exactly what was happening to him. The 6-foot-4-inch Marine stayed conscious as the blast threw him through the air. After five months, he doesn't think about changing that moment, but he is looking ahead thinking about what he's going to do now that his wounds have forced him to give up his job as a warrior. Reichenthal said he was just doing his job, that he was proud to serve, but he hates the idea of war. He wants U.S. troops to come home as soon as possible.



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QUANTICO MARINE AWARDED FOR LEADING A SNIPER TEAM RESCUE PARTY

On May 27 Sgt. Brandan Jensen was presented the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with Combat V for his actions in Zad Afghanistan. During a deployment in 2009, Jensen led his team through improvised device infested alleys, and though he witnessed the death of a fellow Marine and friend, he pushed his team through the contested city streets to rescue a four-man, downed sniper team. "When stuff like that happens you never think you're going to get an award for it," Jansen said. "My team



and I were just concerned with getting those Marines out of there. When I first heard about the award, I wanted to make sure the other Marines in my team were getting the award, too. Once I found out we all were, I had a tremendous feeling of pride. I was the one who trained and prepared these guys and they performed great when the time came." Jansen attributes his

Marines dedication, in part, to the training and preparation he put them through. The commanding officer of WTBN felt there was no better way than to pay tribute to Memorial Day weekend than honor one of his Marines for his valor and sacrifice.

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THANK YOU

WOUNDED MARINE INSPIRES IWAKUNI TROOPS TO GIVE BACK

The Marine Corps attracts a certain kind of person: dedicated, perseverant, and courageous but perhaps just as important, relentlessly positive. When doctors informed Sarah Elliot that her husband, Sgt. Joshua Elliott, had been injured in an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) explosion, she was terrified to find out the extent of the damage. Her husband, lost both of his legs and half of his left hand with the explosion, but he did not let that bring him down. In fact, the doctors that tended to him reported that he was "very funny" and had made an impression on them with his attitude. Sgt. Elliot has been a constant inspiration to friends and fellow service members throughout his deployment, being described as "an indomitable spirit," and he has continued to be a guiding light through his recovery. On June 10, a group of his fellow Marines will be raising money for the Wounded Warrior project in Elliot's names by playing golf from sun-up to sun-down. He says of his situation, "There is no reason to dwell on the past. What you've lost, you've lost. With the doctors and nurses and the technology they have today, you're going to be put in a position where you will be able to do things better than you did before. There is no reason not to be happy. Don't look back, look ahead." His family expects his release to come shortly.



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NEWS

GROUND-BREAKING CEREMONY INSTILLS HOPE FOR GROWTH IN MARJAH

A large majority of Afghanistan's economic activity is made up of agricultural enterprises in the Helmand and Nimroz, positioning these provinces as attractive areas for coalition forces to develop and promote independent agricultural growth. With the help of the local government and co-operative members, mostly farmers, coalition forces have begun the planning needed to develop better agricultural process. Planning became a reality on May 29 with a groundbreaking ceremony for a packing facility in



Marjah. The packing facility will allow farmers to expand and manage their own business. "The process we have in this area is too old," said Abdul Mutalib, the district governor of Marjah. "We need a modern approach, and the international community is helping us with this." Capt. Mike McDowell, a LaGrande, Ore., native said "This building represents a chance for local farmers to control their business, creates jobs, and gives them an opportunity to sell their own fruits and vegetables at a good price." The building process also includes a plan to develop more roads in order to expedite the distribution process. Without the roads, the farmers will remain unable to sell all of the produce they harvest because they cannot get it out of the local community. "The success is the result of the contributions of the Afghan leaders sitting here today," said Maj. Gen. John A. Toolan, commanding general of Regional Command Southwest. "If it wasn't for [their] courage and hard work, things like today wouldn't be happening in Marjah."

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FONTANA MARINE DEVELOPS TROOPS IN COMBAT THROUGH UNIQUE LEADERSHIP

Capt. Ramon Pattugalan has shown a unique ability to develop and motivate the men under his command by focusing his effort on two key objectives: to bring everyone home alive, and to bring back his Marines better than they were when they left for deployment. The leader of FCTs 5 and 6, SALT Chuck, 2nd the Air and Naval Gunfire Liaison Company (ANGLICO), Pattugalan's outlook requires that his Marines cross train for other jobs (including his own), complete tough physical training regimens to "unwind"



at the end of a stressful day, and address each other with respect that is not based on rank. Pattugalan assumes the role of a mentor and teacher, not an authoritarian. The Captain had this to say about his management style, "The way I look at it is this: as an officer and leader of Marines, I am a manager of people. I can pull my rank as captain, but I would incur a lot of animosity from my Marines if I didn't do everything I could to take care of them first. These guys maintain the high professional standards of customs and courtesies. I've never had a reason to remind them that I'm a captain. It helps me focus on the things that matter." When his deployment ends, Pattugalan will return home to his family and attending the Expeditionary Warfare School at Marine Corps Base Quantico.

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Also read: BDAF Marines protect Leatherneck, declare 'Protect This House or Die Trying: Not on our Watch'



VIETNAMESE DELEGATES TOUR MARINE CORPS AIR STATION KANEOHE BAY



A Vietnamese delegation visited Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron



362 at Marine Corps Air Station Kaneohe Bay on June 7 in order to gain a better understanding on how the air station maintains 40-year-old Vietnam-era CH-53D Sea Stallion helicopters. "We look to build and encourage our military to military relationship with the Vietnamese," said Maj. John E. Sampson, Vietnam policy officer, policy and international affairs department, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific. During the visit, the

groups exchanged ideas on force sustainment. Lt. Gen. Trần Quang Khuê, deputy chief of the general staff, People's Army of Vietnam, was one of five Vietnamese delegates invited by U.S. Pacific Command to Hawaii to explore and engage in various military search and rescue and disaster management procedures in hopes of expanding their own capabilities. With the help of a translator, Khuê asked Chief Warrant Officer 2 David S. Westhoff questions about basic maintenance procedures. "It really surprised me how things run here because in our minds, an aircraft will usually only last 20 to 25 years," Khuê said. "[The Marines] have an excellent method of ordering parts, especially with the complex software." The delegation's visit to MCAS ended with a tour of the air traffic control tower. The group also plans to visit Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam while on the island of Oahu.

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THE FEW, THE PROUD, THE PICKY?

An article by My Fox Houston reported on June 7 that even with the nation fully engaged in a shooting war, Marines can safely launch a new motto; "The few, the Proud and the Very Picky." Nowadays the honor of being a Marine is not so easily had. In fact, qualifying to become a United States Marine is quite difficult. "We have so many people who want to be Marines, we can be selective right now. There is about a ten-month wait



to get to boot camp," said Maj. Jason Borovics, Commanding Officer of the Marine Corps Recruiting Station in Houston.



A record involving felony level crimes, serious drug use, failure to earn a high school diploma and even tattoos are grounds for immediate disqualification, and with the Corps slated to become smaller, the competition will only intensify. With so many young Americans willing, the Corps has elevated its mental, moral and physical standards for entry.

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NAVY CROSS RECIPIENT CREDITS KENT IN RECOVERY



When Retired Sgt. Maj. Carlton W. Kent hits the road to visit Marines, he likes to share the story of one man's fight with post-traumatic stress disorder. Details vary slightly each time the top enlisted Marine tells it, but the important pieces are always the same. Kent talks about a hard-charging squad leader who went through hell more than six years ago in Iraq, and how his life and career fell apart soon after he came home. Kent, who retired Thursday June 9, never mentions the Marine's name, but

Jeremiah Workman's combat exploits are legendary. Awarded the Navy Cross for coordinating the rescue of fellow Marines trapped inside a Fallujah house Dec. 23, 2004, Workman fought his way through machine-gun fire and grenade blasts three times during a battle that left three Marines and at least 24 insurgents dead. Less known is the bond the two men have formed and the fatherly role Kent has played after taking him on his staff. Workman, now medically retired and working for the Department of Veterans Affairs, credits Kent with showing him there was hope. "Where I'm at today, it's because of him," said Workman, 28. "Yeah, I've had some great doctors and counseling along the way, but I worked my ass off for him because it was an I-never-want-to-let-my-father-down kind of relationship."

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FEATURED BLOG

ONLY MARINES NO FORMER MARINES



A recent post by Medals of America Blog states and the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen. James F. Amos recently announced a new policy "there's no such thing as a former Marine. You're a Marine, just in a different uniform and you're in a different phase of your life. But you'll

always be a Marine because you went to Parris Island, San Diego or the hills of Quantico," Amos said.

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