



TWO 1ST MARDIV MARINES TO RECEIVE NAVY CROSSES

Sgt. Cliff Wooldridge of Port Angeles, Wash., and Sgt. Christopher Farias of LaPorte, Texas, received the Navy Cross May 18 for heroic actions in Afghanistan. Wooldridge was deployed with 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines in 2010 when his unit was ambushed in Musa Qala. He snatched a machine gun from the hands of a Taliban fighter and killed the enemy in hand-to-hand combat. Wooldridge received his award from Navy Secretary Ray Mabus at Twentynine Palms, Calif. Farias was deployed with 1st Battalion, 11th Marines in 2010 when he and several other Marines were severely wounded in a Taliban ambush in Helmand's Kajaki district. Farias pulled himself onto the roof of the unit's patrol base, directed medical treatment of the wounded and coordinated suppressive fire while exposed to the enemy. Farias was recognized by Navy Undersecretary Robert Work at Camp Pendleton, Calif. The Navy Cross is the second-highest award for combat valor.

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NEWS

MARINE'S BLOOD SAVES AFGHAN SOLDIER'S LIFE



Navy corpsmen anxiously waited for the blood flowing from Lance Cpl. Meng Lu's arm to fill the bag near his feet. Waiting in the next room was a critically wounded Afghan National Army (ANA) soldier. Blood from Lu and three other donors would save his life. In the early morning of May 8, the soldier stepped on a pressure plate while on patrol, setting off an improvised explosive device that nearly killed him. The soldier would have died had it not been for the response of the Navy healthcare team at

Forward Operating Base Delaram II's Shock Trauma Platoon (STP). The ANA soldier arrived with almost no blood left, said Navy critical care nurse Lt. Cmdr. Phillip Boyer, STP assistant officer in charge. "We replaced essentially his whole blood volume," he said.

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SNIPERS DEADLIER THAN EVER

Over the last decade, Marine Corps snipers have emerged as one of the most effective yet least understood weapons in Iraq and Afghanistan. Advancements in technology and training have made them even deadlier than their revered predecessors. The ability to kill the enemy while minimizing collateral damage is invaluable in the counterinsurgency. The snipers work in two-man teams, expertly using cover and concealment to avoid detection. The unseen threat wears on the enemy's



psyche. "When a sniper shoots them...it translates to, 'I just went to a fight man-on-man and I was bested by another man,'" said Col. Tim Armstrong, commander of the Weapons

AT EXFOB, CORPS SEEKS SOLUTIONS TO BE MORE SELF-SUFFICIENT

The Marine Corps evaluated wearable electric power conversion kits and man-portable water purification systems at the Experimental Forward Operating Base (EXFOB) at Camp Lejeune, N.C., April 30-May 4. Renewable energy technologies are already in use in Afghanistan, lightening the load of Marines on combat patrols and reducing the need for battery resupply. The cutting edge technologies demonstrated at Camp Lejeune have the potential to further increase self-sufficiency of expeditionary forces. "We know that resource efficiency aids in combat effectiveness, and that our investments in reset and modernization will provide a force that operates lighter, faster and at reduced risk," said Gen. James F. Amos, Commandant of the Marine Corps.

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2ND MAW RECEIVES TWO MORE F-35B JOINT STRIKE FIGHTERS



The fourth and fifth F-35B short takeoff vertical landing (STOVL) production aircraft were delivered to the 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing's F-35 training squadron at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., May 10. The aircraft, BF-9 and BF-10, departed Naval Air Station Fort Worth Joint Reserve Base, Texas, for the 90-minute flight to Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron 501 at Eglin. A tactical,



fixed-wing aircraft, the F-35B Lightning II is a fifth-generation fighter slated to replace the Marine Corps' aging F/A-18 Hornet, AV-8B Harrier and EA-6B Prowler. The aircraft supports the Marine Corps' tactical and operational needs for close air support in

severe conditions and locations that may be inaccessible to traditional fighters.

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HMH-363 TRANSITIONS TO OSPREYS



Hawaii-based Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 363 (HMH-363) is replacing its CH-53D Sea Stallion helicopters with MV-22 Ospreys. Lt. Col. Mark Revor, HMH-363's commanding officer, relinquished command at a ceremony at Kaneohe Bay May 17. Following the casing of the colors, Lt. Col. Timothy Miller assumed command and activated Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 363. The MV-22 Osprey is a tiltrotor aircraft, allowing it to fly further and faster than a standard helicopter, and has

both a vertical takeoff and landing, and short takeoff and landing capability.

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MARINE RETURNS, SON WITH CEREBRAL PALSY WALKS FOR FIRST TIME



When Staff Sgt. Jeremy Cooney deployed to Afghanistan in 2011, his son Michael, who suffers from cerebral palsy, could not walk. But when Cooney returned to Camp Lejeune, N.C., in December, six-year-old Michael had a surprise up his sleeve. "While daddy was away, he learned to walk," said Cooney's wife, Melissa. "For his homecoming, we set it up for Michael to



walk to his daddy for the first time ever. We kept the fact that he could walk a secret the whole time his dad was gone." During Cooney's deployment, Michael began standing unassisted. Then, his mother and

siblings taught him to walk without a cane, despite doctors saying that he would never walk. "I can't describe it," Staff Sgt. Cooney said. "It was years in the making just trying to get him limited mobility with surgery and a walker. It's probably one of the happiest moments of my life."

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[Watch: 6-Year-Old Boy Walks to His U.S. Marine Father for the First Time](#)

OLDEST LIVING MARINE DIES AT 105

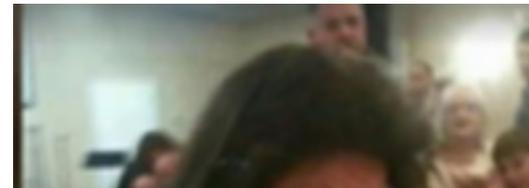
Alfred L. DeSerio, a 42-year veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps who was believed to have been the oldest living Marine in the country, died May 5 at the age of 105. Before he turned 18, he lied about his age to enlist in the Corps and served overseas during World War II, as well as the Korean and Vietnam wars. "He said that he would go to Iraq if he was able to do it," said DeSerio's close friend, Dorothy Barnes. "He got into the Marines and it was just in his blood." He retired from the Corps in 1970 as a master sergeant, but was a dedicated member of the Marine Corps League Detachment #884 in Upper Darby, Pa., which named him Citizen of the Year in January.



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WOUNDED WARRIOR SURPRISES MOM ON MOTHER'S DAY

Lance Cpl. Sean Adams, who lost both legs while deployed in Afghanistan, traveled from Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., to Gainesville, Ga., May 13 to surprise his mom on Mother's Day. Arriving at church Sunday morning,



Adams said his mom practically bowled him over when she saw him roll through the door. "It was scary," he joked. "I started rolling backward thinking she's going to tackle me out of the chair." Adams and his mother both believe something more than his Kevlar vest had a hand in his fate. "God saved him, no one but God," Tina Adams said.

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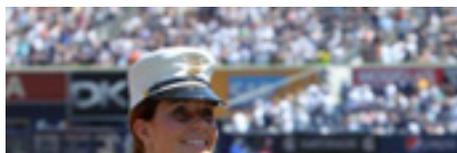
FAMILY HONORS MARINE'S LEGACY WITH SCHOLARSHIP FUND

As many as 40 veterans will receive partial college scholarships through the Col. Paul D. LaFond Veterans' Scholarship. LaFond, who passed away in 2011, believed the greatest gift that could be given to a veteran was a college education. In his honor, his family donated \$50,000 to the Foundation for Maine's Community Colleges to establish the scholarship to send veterans to school. "He had seen the sacrifices these men and women endure and believed strongly that every veteran deserves the promise of a future made possible through a continuing education," said Geoff LaFond, one of his sons. Col. LaFond left college before graduating to join the Marine Corps during World War II and later earned a bachelor's degree between his service in the Korean and Vietnam wars.

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YANKEES HONOR MARINE-WORKING DOG DUO



The New York Yankees honored Marine veteran Cpl. Megan Leavey and Sgt. Rex, her retired military working dog, at the May 13 game against the Seattle Mariners. While on tours in Fallujah and Ramadi, the two worked



more than 100 missions searching for roadside bombs. Leavey recently adopted Rex upon his retirement from service. At the game, Yankees players Nick Swisher and Alex Rodriguez presented Leavey with an autographed jersey and a heart-shaped charm from Tiffany & Co. inscribed with "Rex." The Yankees, with assistance from the Wounded Warrior Foundation, helped replace her Purple Heart medal, which had been stolen during her rehabilitation.

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A LETTER TO THE EDITOR: MARINES MADE AN IMPRESSION DURING NAVY WEEK IN NEW ORLEANS

"I had the pleasure to spend quality time with more than 100 Marines from the USS Wasp who donated their time in service to the community during Navy Week. The recipient agency was Raintree Children and Family Services. Since 1926, Raintree has serviced the less fortunate children of the city, including a home for abused and neglected young girls. For three days these fine young men scraped, repaired and painted the wrought iron fence that surrounds the property. It was an inspiring experience to meet and talk to such dedicated, humble and well-mannered young men. I learned later that many had just returned from Afghanistan and some had received Purple Hearts. Not one spoke of their accomplishments or awards. How proud we should be, not only for their sacrifices and service to their country-- but also their service to the community. Semper Fi!" - Joan Ingram

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TRANSITION

HORSES GIVE VETS HIGH HOPES FOR RECOVERY

Marine veteran Katye Zwiefka found that bonding with horses and other equestrians helped her cope with the anxiety and isolation she felt since leaving the military. Zwiefka turned to High Hopes Therapeutic Riding center in Old Lyme, Conn., two years ago while struggling with post-traumatic stress disorder. "Coming here, it was really in a way, lifesaving," she said. "It's beautiful out here and I'm able to enjoy every moment." Zwiefka is still trying to process the emotions she buried while serving from 2002 to 2007, which included a deployment to Iraq in 2006. Liz Adams, program director, said developing a relationship with a horse and having control over something that's so large can help empower veterans who have trust issues. High Hopes currently helps four veterans through scholarships, and they hope to expand their veteran services program by partnering with the Wounded Warrior Project.

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DISABLED VETS GET HOT WHEELS



Car manufacturers are designing innovative vehicles to give wounded warriors their mobility back. Wounded veterans no longer have to resort to the modified minivan for transportation. The customers, mostly men in their 20s and 30s, want to preserve their former way of life despite their injuries and they want vehicles that look like those typically driven by others their age. Such features could include smoked glass, custom wheels, and a body kit to make vehicles look sportier and less obviously modified for disabilities. The disabled

transportation industry, which modifies existing vehicles, can now equip trucks with a crane that stows a wheelchair in the truck's bed or adapt motorcycles to allow drivers to remain in their wheelchairs. "[When you're disabled,] everyone does look at you differently. When I'm on the road, I don't feel different than anyone else," said retired Marine Jack Pierce, who has a modified motorcycle.

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THANK YOU

CORPSMAN RECEIVES SILVER STAR



When Petty Officer 3rd Class Todd Angell received the Silver Star Medal for heroism in Afghanistan, it was close friend Marine Cpl. Brandon Rumbaugh, whose life Angell had saved, who pinned it on during the April 27 ceremony. Angell rushed to Rumbaugh's aid after he stepped on an improvised explosive device while deployed in Helmand province, Afghanistan, last year. "One of the hardest (casualties) I worked on was Rumbaugh," he said. "Just to have Rumbaugh alive to pin me, that's more than

any Silver Star or any medal." As a corpsman with Weapons Company, 1st Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, Angell risked his life on many occasions to save others.

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TEN NAMES ADDED TO VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL



The names of ten American servicemen, including Marine Cpl. Frank A. Neary, were engraved on the granite wall of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., May 13. Neary was wounded by small arms fire Feb. 24, 1967, while deployed to Quang Ngai province in Vietnam. His death in 2006 was deemed to be a result of the wounds received in



combat. "The fact that more than 58,000 soldiers, Sailors, Marines and airmen were not able to return is incredibly humbling for all of us. It is an honor beyond words for us to sit amongst the family and friends of all the service members listed on The Wall," said his son, Frank Neary, Jr. The ten names added this year meet the Department of Defense criteria for addition to the memorial wall, as all of the men died in connection with combat related incidents during the Vietnam War.

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[Watch: Remembering Cpl. Frank A. Neary](#)

