

The

HOTLINE

The Official Publication of the Marine Air Traffic Control Association, Inc.
Volume 14, Number 3 June 2005

2005 Marine Corps 230th Anniversary Silver Dollar



In this Issue

COMM CENTER.....	3
From The President.....	4
Our Word.....	5
Five years ago in the	5
An Iwakuni Snow Job.....	
An out of air control center?.....	8
Ft. Lauderdale 2005 information.....	9
Ft. Lauderdale 2005 registration form.....	10
2005 Golf Tournament registration form.....	11
Son Tay Recollections - Part One.....	12
From: Jim Dargan.....	15
230 Anniversary of the USMC.....	15
Iwo Jima Survivor.....	16
Couth Corner.....	19
Member Additions and Changes.....	19
Marine Air Traffic Control Association, Inc	
Membership Application/Renewal Form.....	20

Rita encourages everyone to join the Wyndham ByRequest Club for free goodies. To join go to the web site - www.wyndham.com
No charge to join.



REUNION SCHEDULE NOTICE



The narrated tour of Ft. Lauderdale and the Tour of Flamingo Gardens on Thursday will take place at the same time as the golf tournament.

MATCA BIRTHDAYS

June

13 - Don Eskam
17 - Audrey Sumner
20 - Dick Wooten
20 - Marie VanOrden
22 - Jerry Fisher
25 - Ed Wargin
25 - Ed Bayne
26 - Donna Mefford
30 - Al Tomer
30 - K. Patricia Withers

July

4 - Gary Fitzgerald
6 - Carl Cullison
9 - Leon Coxe
15 - Rosalie Oliver
17 - John Rego
18 - Debbie Walczak
19 - John Rush
20 - Bob Switzer
22 - Lois Pahl
23 - Del Harman
24 - Rena Huber
26 - Bill Murdock
28 - Richard Szuba
31 - Jim Rector

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and MATCA Historians
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All forms may be photocopied

Deadline for all copy is the 8th of
the month preceding issue.

About The Cover

See the article on the sale
of these coins on page 15.

2005 Marine Corps 230th Anniversary
Silver Dollar



www.usmint.gov, Call (800) USA-MINT, or write: United States Mint, Customer Care center, 801 9th St. N.W., Washington, D.C.20220

The coin is 90-percent silver. Pre-issue prices are \$33. for a silver dollar uncirculated in a gift box and \$35 for a silver dollar proof in a presentation case. The coins go on sale in July. The pre-issue period will be the first 30 days of sales. After that, the prices will be \$35 and \$39, respectively.

A surcharge of \$10. from the sale of each commemorative coin will go to the Heritage Foundation for the building of the museum. Coins will be available for a short time only.

COMM CEN-->TER



Dakota Fannin spent a week at Boot Camp. He belongs to the Young Marines and goes once a month for exercises and on camp outs. His squad leader is 18 and on his way to Annapolis in the fall.



Del Yetter with greatgrandson Dakota Fannin at Marine Corps Boot Camp. Dakota graduated March 19, 05. Missing from the photo is Dakota's Marine grandfather.

Thanks from Ed LeBaron

Enclosed in our latest Hotline, I was pleased to find a very special flag pin. The thought and effort of logistics and insertion of same is greatly appreciated. I also enjoyed the nice article on your AZ trip. Bill and Marie Van Orden are gracious hosts - I fondly remember (en route to new duty at the Point) arriving late at night in the North Carolina wilderness with a car load (wife, four kids and dog) and unable to find a room. I called Bill at New River and they welcomed us in the middle of the night and even put us up for an extra day so that I could check in and find housing. Another example of Marines (and friends) taking care of one another. You and Carole do a great job. Cody and I look forward to and enjoy "your" Hotline.

Semper Fi,
Ed & Cody LeBaron



Eric Nebel, Rudi's Marine grandson



From The President

By: J. J. Dargan

As we move into the summer months we get closer to our reunion in Ft.Lauderdale in September. If you're going and we hope you are, now is the time to make reservations at the hotel and send your registration form for the reunion and golf to Herm & Rita Moyers. Knowing them as well as I do it will be a great reunion, and you will have a very enjoyable time.

I have signed up for the Skip& Terry South Beach Tour along with the Used Car Lot Tour with Frank Fodor, you need to contact them ASAP to reserve a seat on the Bus to South Beach and a ride in the back of Frank's Pickemup Truck to the used car lots. Since I was the first to sign up I get to ride shotgun.

Herm is waiting for all you golfers out there to sign up, so he can set up the tournament. Remember if you must cancel later on it will pose no problem for Herm. So get those reservations in.

The Blue Angels are here this weekend at Cherry Point as always there will be big crowds, up to 150,000 each day. I had the opportunity to watch them practice Thursday, a great display of precision flying. If you haven't had the chance to see them make it a point to go if they are in your area.

I called Pappy Young this week to see how he is doing, he sounded pretty chipper and I know he enjoys hearing from his "kids". Please take time to give him a call, you will both enjoy it. I also spoke to Davy Crocker my only friend(according to him) he and Dana will join us in Ft. Lauderdale, I am still trying to find out his handicap so I can figure the amount of strokes he will need to give me.

Talked to Dave Pettipas also Polly and Dave will grace us with their presence in Florida.

The weather here has been good, warm enough to visit the beach or play golf in short sleeve shirts and it will get better. Summer is one of our favorite times as it allows us to eat out on the deck more often, and enjoy being out in the warm weather. I hope you enjoy it as much as we do.

Please remember all our members who are ill, many of them don't say much about it, as they consider it a private matter, but we can still say a prayer for them.

Arlene and I will arrive in Florida on the Sunday before the reunion starts, I understand we will be bringing our daughter Kathy (Nurse Fussbudget) with us. It should be an eventful two day trip, one I look forward to, I think.

We hope to see many of the regulars and many new attendees at the reunion, it is always nice to put a face to a name, so we look forward to seeing all of you in September.

As I sit here typing this column it again has occurred to me that without Roger and Carole McIntosh our editors it would all be for naught. They take great pains to make our Newsletter as excellent as it is. I know they have to format all the articles, make room for the reunion/golf registration, then get it to the printers and have it mailed in time for all of us to enjoy the fruits of their labor. When you see them please take time to say thank you for all you do for MATCA.

As Skip would say" See you in Ft. Lauderdale" I agree.

An Irish Blessing for all:
May good luck go with you
Wherever you go,
And your blessings outnumber
The shamrocks that grow.

Semper Fi

Jim & Arlene



Ft. Lauderdale





Our Word

I'd like to start this column with a special thanks to Skip Redpath for making it possible for the membership to receive the lapel pins we sent out with the last issue of Hotline. He took care of the design and purchase of the pins, which, I hope, all of you received in good shape. Our local Post Office bulk mail unit was also helpful by advising us on how to best prepare that mailing. New members will automatically receive a pin with their membership packet and extra pins will be available for sale at the reunion/business meeting in Fort Lauderdale.

Speaking of the business meeting, there will be issues to be dealt with at the meeting, which President Dargan will address in his column. You need to keep in mind that, except for changes in the by-laws, only members attending the business meeting can vote on board elections and other matters brought before them. You will note that the privilege to vote is my number 2 pick for reasons to attend.

Mac's Top Ten Reasons for Attending a Reunion

10. For one week you don't have to set out the trash for the garbage men
9. You get to use up old airline miles
8. The "you never take me anywhere" argument is dead for a year
7. You can hear about John Gibbs train ride first hand
6. An annual "fix" of Acey Deucey games is taken care of
5. The sea stories are again confirmed as being the whole truth and nothing but the truth
4. Dieting is forbidden at all MATCA events
3. The booze is free
2. You get to vote on MATCA business affairs
1. You get to see all your MATCA friends again

In the area of production of the Hotline, Carole and I recently went through a major upgrade in both software and hardware of our computer systems. My EMac blew out its CRT and after getting two opinions from different repair shops, I concurred with their advice and decided to invest in a new computer. That necessitated an upgrade of operating system for Carole's computer since we needed to be in step with each other. The result was a couple of weeks of "computer hell" around here. On the positive side, the Hotline is now given to our printer on a CD in PDF format; a much easier process, which also results in better picture quality than we had been getting in the past.

Our thanks to the great writers who made contributions to this issue's contents. We continue to plead for more of our readers to become authors. The only way the Hotline can get better is with your sea stories and pictures filling the pages.

Semper Fi,
Roger & Carole McIntosh

FIVE YEARS AGO IN THE

HOTLINE

The May 2000 issue of Hotline largely contained the registration forms for the superb reunion held in Nashville, TN that year, and the reminiscences of Boyd Murdock, our now deceased past President, of his last Vietnam tour. Boyd also contributed a short sea story about that tour that typifies the high quality of story telling most Marines are capable of, It deserves reprinting here.

Rogue Jets and Bouncing Bombs

A few days ago Marlene Young and Frank Porter were talking about wayward bombs & Frank mentioned the hung ordnance events at Chu Lai. (The Marine aviator's version of the "Bouncing Betty".) We were lucky in that we got scared a few times from the explosions, thinking they were incoming rockets, but no close calls. I watched a couple bombs cart wheeling down the runway that did not detonate. But those Moresst guys were a different matter! They had bunkers and holes to dive into but a real close one would render them a little goofy for a short time.

AN IWAKUNI SNOW JOB

By Ray Mischok

It was late evening one dark and cold winters night in January, 1961, when the alert phone rang in the MATCU-60 ready room. The wind was blowing light snow flurries down from the foothills of the Chugoko-Sanchi Mountains northwest of Iwakuni. The weather forecast was that Southeast Honshu would have unusually heavy snow over the next 12 hours. The field was IFR most of the day with low overcast, and visibility that was ranging from one to two miles. It was warm in the ready room of our Quonset hut, located adjacent to the CPN-4 and MSQ-1 radar vans. The potbelly stove was glowing, and "Lucky", MATCU's German Shepard was curled nearby. Ackerman, our duty driver, was watching intensely a western movie with John Wayne chattering in Japanese on the black & white TV. I was involved in a fast Acey Ducey game with our radar technician, whose name to this day escapes me. Gordon Grey, our Crew Chief, was sitting at the duty desk writing a letter, and the rest of the crew was in the barracks, released on stand-by status. Our Duty Watch Officer had pattered back to the BOQ on his blue Honda 50cc moped earlier in the day before the snow, and shortly after the field was considered closed with no operations scheduled for the next 6 to 8 hours. Because of a shortage of controllers, we were on a Port & Starboard watch and at this time had only one IFR qualified controller on each crew. On the other crew, Frank Poole was the qualified IFR controller as well as the crew chief.

Gordon answered the alert phone quickly. Charlie Fulks working that night in the Iwakuni tower reported "We have an aircraft." All of our base Cherry Beaches (Japanese Self Defense Force SNB's) were down, as well as the R5D's from VMR-253, and VP-50, our tenant Navy Patrol Squadron had no P2V's or P5M's airborne. Nothing had been reported inbound. It was supposed to be a quiet night with nobody flying in this weather south of Atsugi. Not even JAL.

Ackerman was quickly dispatched to the outside observer position located on the approach end of the runway, and the Duty Officer was notified. The radar technician, Gordon and I quickly manned the CPN-4 and fired it up from its stand-by slumber. Jim Sumner was in the MSQ-1, which MATCU-60 used for conducting radar approach control, and was already talking to the aircraft. It was an Air Force C-47 (R4D) coming in from Matsuyama, located southeast of Iwakuni across the Inland Sea on the island of Shikoku. The air-

craft had made several missed approaches there, and then decided to try Iwakuni that had been reporting better weather. Jim Sumner and Jim Ledford were our radar approach controllers. Jim had radar contact with the aircraft twenty miles south southeast, headed straight for our NDB. A radar handoff was quickly made, it was the only target on the entire search scope and our MTI was working beautifully despite the snow showers. However, our Precision Approach Radar (PAR) scope was beginning to clutter up with weather returns from the falling snow. We already had cranked in CP on both Az & El antennas earlier, and now began toggling the FTC and STC switches on the precision radarscope to reduce the clutter. Gordon, working the phone and coordinating, gave me the requested Special Weather Report. The report was ceiling estimated at 500 feet, visibility 3/4 mile with light snow showers, wind 360 @ 5, and the altimeter setting. The WX report and the altimeter setting were transmitted to the aircraft. This was going to be an easy approach with weather well above our GCA minimums of 100 & 1/4. The weather was just a hair below our ASR minimums of 500 & 1. We had P5M's make ASR sea-lane approaches in this kind of weather and lower when the sea conditions were right. With this weather, the Air Force pilots should be able to see the approach and runway lights long before flying over the seawall, and reaching our visibility minimum of 1/4 mile from touchdown. The seawall surrounds the airfield to keep Japans Seto Inland Sea from flooding the runway. [During the Navy Flying Boat era, IFR qualified GCA controllers at Iwakuni were also required to be qualified in making ASR sea-lane IFR approaches with the P5M, and any other flying boats. There are several great stories out there on sea-lane ASR approaches conducted at Iwakuni.]

The aircraft was given the standard GCA R/T: lost communications, landing cockpit check, PAR minimums, runway information, slow cruise, wheel check, and fuel state in time. On the fuel state I get back "enough fuel for our alternate plus 30." I quickly digested this. If he filed Iwakuni as his alternate, he must have about 40 minutes of fuel remaining. I fired back "understand 40 minutes of fuel remaining." He replied, "yeah, that's about right." Hum, this could be serious.

I descended him to minimum obstruction clearance altitude and continued to vector him to the final approach course. There is an altitude restriction on a straight-in approach to Iwakuni because of an island with some high terrain sitting under the final approach course. A thought

danced around my head about how well this Air Force pilot was going to fly our glide path. The Air Force GCA controllers give this crap about the aircraft being so many feet above or below the glide path. I wondered how this pilot was going to translate slightly above or below, above or below, and well above and below glide path into Air Force feet? Missed approach instructions were given and acknowledged. I held the aircraft a few seconds longer at the obstruction clearance altitude before descending him to the final approach altitude to give him time to get squared away in the cockpit, and for a smooth interception of the glide path. On final the aircraft target became very difficult to see on the precision radarscope as the weather clutter had increased. The precision scope IF gains were re-tuned, gradually decreasing the IF gains as the aircraft flew in closed to touchdown point and our PAR antennas. This helped to better define the target that started to blend in with the weather clutter. Once established on glide path and on the centerline with a few corrections, the pilot flew a darn good approach so far as we passed 3 1/2 miles from touchdown. Our radar tech was doing a great job continually tweaking up the precision radar to give me the best target possible under these weather conditions. The weather clutter kept on increasing, making it difficult keeping the radar target from fading into it. The radar target of the aircraft, as difficult it was to see, was viewed as the small blip moving from right to left and not to be confused with the sparkling clutter illuminating on each scan of the PAR antennas.

When final landing clearance was given, Gordon also gave new weather as we reached 2 miles from touchdown. Sky obscure, ceiling indefinite, visibility 1/8 of a mile, heavy snow showers, wind 360 @ 10. The weather and wind was immediately given to the aircraft with the continuation of control instructions, "one and one half mile from touchdown, on glide path, on course." My mind flashed, should I tell him we are now below GCA minimums? Hell, he knows it, "one mile from touchdown, on glide path, on course." He already acknowledged minimums and the pull up instructions. Why scare him more. I can just picture the pilot, head down looking at the instrument panel, eyes scanning his airspeed, rate of descent, directional indicator and attitude gyro. With his sweaty left hand on the yoke, right hand on the throttles, and feet firmly on the rudder pedals. The copilot must be straining his eyes to pick up the approach and runway lights out of the right side of the windshield. Peering through the sweeping windshield wipers that are laboring to clear the snow away, and also glancing at the

altimeter. "One half mile from touchdown, on glide path, on course...over GCA touchdown, land your aircraft, over."

As the aircrafts target blip blended into the ground clutter, I waited a half minute to give him time to land his aircraft before transmitting the Iwakuni Ground Control frequency for taxi instructions. The last mile of the approach appeared to be right on the money. Now the question is, did the pilot see the runway lights? There is no centerline strobe.

All of a sudden the CPN-4 operations van became deathly quiet, except for the humming of electronics equipment. We usually can hear an aircraft going past the operations van. There was no radio response from the aircraft. Another call to the aircraft was transmitted. Still no response. Gordon relays a message from Ackerman as I repeated my call again to the aircraft, and eyeballing the search scope for any targets moving away from the apex. Ackerman reported "I didn't see the aircraft but heard him go by." I could understand that the pilot would elect not to use his landing lights because of the snow, but Ackerman should have at least seen the aircraft position lights, unless the pilot pulled up steeply to execute a missed approach. Things began to unravel quickly. The tower and approach control reported no-joy, and the crash truck located on the opposite end of the runway also reported no-joy with the aircraft. Just then the Duty Watch Officer burst into the operations van asking "what's happening?" This really is turning into an "oh sh—" situation. Gordon was on the phone alerting the crash boat people that we may have an aircraft down. The search scope appeared to be clear of moving targets, but was starting to clutter up with weather reflections. My mouth became dry as the Sahara Desert. Repeated calls to the aircraft were not answered. The duty officer kept yelling "where the hell is the aircraft?" Eight eyeballs in the operations van were locked on the search scopes, looking for any moving radar target. We had directed Ackerman and the crash crew to start a runway ground search from both ends of the runway. They reported that the visibility was nearly zero in the heavy snowfall. About ten minutes later it happened. Ackerman nearly ran over the crew chief from the Air Force aircraft, who was walking on the runway with a flashlight looking for a taxiway. The aircraft had landed safely, and for some unknown reason shut down on the runway. Operations closed the field. The aircraft commander never contacted us for a post-mortem, or later picked up his skivvies from the base laundry.

From: John Gibbs

An out of air control center?

Overtime dispute between FAA and air traffic controllers leads to increased tension and claims that skies above metro area are unsafe

BY SYLVIA ADCOCK
STAFF WRITER
April 18, 2005

If you fly in or out of New York, your pilot has to talk to them. Inside the chunky white building just west of Eisenhower Park in Westbury are the air traffic controllers of the New York TRACON. They are widely regarded as among the best in the nation, a group of calm professionals in a high-stakes job.

But it hasn't been so calm in recent weeks. A bitter dispute between the work force and the Federal Aviation Administration over cutbacks in overtime has drawn in special investigators scrutinizing radar tapes, scores of reported midair infractions and an outcry from New York's two senators who say the skies over the metro area are unsafe.

Discord is everywhere, according to the people who work in the TRACON, or Terminal Radar Approach Control. A union official was escorted from the building by security officers during a recent Saturday night shift, and managers have posted warnings that anyone participating in a strike or a slowdown will be fired.

"Everyone is on edge," said one veteran controller. Some are afraid to work the positions that guide planes just before they are handed off to airport towers because that's where most of the reported errors have occurred. "Nobody wants to even train anybody on final," the controller said.

The working conditions inside the windowless building are important to the nation's air travelers because these are the people who are charged with keeping the system operating safely — and efficiently — as jets crowd the skies to land at metro-area airports. If over-strapped controllers keep planes too far apart, it can mean huge delays. If they let them get too close, it can mean disaster.

January order cut overtime
The dispute between the FAA and the controllers

came to a head in January, when managers issued a new directive cutting overtime. In February, reports of operational errors — when a controller lets two planes come closer than standards allow — spiked. Many of them were called in anonymously to the FAA and the Department of Transportation's inspector general's hotline.

In uncharacteristically strong language, Greg Martin, the FAA's chief spokesman in Washington, blamed the spike in errors on "a rogue group of employees engaged in a shakedown" and said, "There is no methadone treatment for withdrawing overtime."

What followed has left some controllers saying they have little room to breathe. TRACON controllers say FAA investigators have been standing behind them as they guide planes and pull radar tapes if they think the three-mile separation standard was violated.

"If we run them too tight, they're calling deals on us right and left," said one controller, using the colloquial term for an error charged against a controller. But extra space between planes — more than the three miles that applies to most situations — could be viewed as a slowdown, controllers said, and for that they could be fired.

Martin said the agency is not using the minor mistakes as punitive measures against controllers. The FAA sent in the investigators after reports surfaced of a six-fold increase in mistakes by controllers.

"These guys are doing a tremendous job moving traffic," said Martin. The FAA — and the controllers — are under tremendous pressure to keep airplanes coming in and out of New York moving. As a result, the planes handled by the TRACON are spaced extremely close to the margin. In fact, studies have shown the rate of arrivals at LaGuardia Airport often exceeds the number computer models show can land safely.

"We've got too many planes," another controller said. "It only takes one student pilot to get on the frequency for 30 seconds ... and all of a sudden all hell breaks loose."

Whether this close-to-the-edge approach is a safety problem is debatable. "The problem is, to a certain extent, it's the camel's nose under the tent flap," said Wilson Riggan, an airline pilot and former air traffic controller.

"We all know at places like LaGuardia ... they're pushing the airplanes in as close as they dare." But three miles, he said, is about as close as he wants to get to another airplane when he's preparing to land the Boeing 757s he flies.

John Hansman, a professor of aeronautics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, said the three-mile standard was set in the 1950s, back when radar was much less reliable. "I'm not particularly worried if airplanes are 2.7 miles apart," Hansman said.

Number of controllers drops

The controllers in Westbury say the facility is dangerously understaffed and the overtime is necessary to staff the positions properly.

The number of controllers is down to 205 from 240 last summer; the staffing number the FAA and the union agreed on in 2002 was 270. The number of controllers in New York and nationally is decreasing as those who were hired shortly after the 1981 strike are retiring, many facing a mandatory retirement age of 56. The FAA says it plans to hire more controllers.

"They are trying to see how cheap they can run the New York operation," said Dean Iacopelli, the TRACON union chief.

For years, most controllers at the New York TRACON have been scheduled for six-day weeks to fill the positions, but it also was not uncommon for a controller to take a day off during that week. The controllers make an annual base salary of \$110,000 — and with overtime and other adjustments, 57 controllers — about one-fourth of the work force — made more than \$200,000 last year, according to FAA records. That compares with less than a dozen at other large TRACONS like those in Chicago or Los Angeles.

The agency is being pressured by the White House to cut costs. FAA officials have even calculated the amount of overtime spent in New York per airplane handled. For planes coming in and out of Chicago, it's 47 cents. At the New York TRACON, it's \$1.89 per plane.

2003 hotline complaint. The discord dates back several years.

In 2003, a hotline complaint about sick leave and overtime abuses launched an internal FAA probe that in 2004 led the FAA to vow to put in tighter controls on overtime.

Last summer tensions grew when the FAA tried

to fire a veteran controller. In November, the FAA sent a letter to a former TRACON controller telling him he was being fired because he did not fill out a medical form properly, and the FAA said cases of abuse of workers' compensation were being investigated. Then, on Jan. 18, managers put out a notice that overtime could only be approved by high-level managers.

On Jan. 26, six operational errors were called in anonymously, and on Feb. 3, the controllers sent another letter to the FAA administrator urging her "to resolve this situation as expeditiously as possible to avoid an impending disaster."

Later that month, New York Sens. Charles Schumer and Hillary Rodham Clinton, both Democrats, told the FAA that the safety of the skies over New York was at risk. The FAA sent in a "Tiger Team" of investigators. By mid-March, the investigation uncovered more than 100 midair mistakes, and that number has since grown. Most were minor, FAA officials said, but 20 of those involved serious risks to airplanes.

Last week, those FAA investigators were still in Westbury, some perched on the raised floor in the center of the control room, according to people who work in the building. "People used to come in with a huge amount of camaraderie, a kind of firehouse, we're-all-in-it-together type of thing. That's not the way it is anymore," said one veteran controller.

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Reunion Hotel Reservations

Call 800-426-8578 and identify yourself as a MATCA member to receive the special room rate. Reservations must be made by September 5th for the quoted room rates. Make your reservations early. You can cancel prior to 5 days before to avoid forfeiture of payment.

Single & double occupancy - \$85.00 inclusive of all taxes. One bedroom suite - \$170.00 inclusive of all taxes.

Also hotel is pet friendly BUT there may be a fee, ask upon making.



Ft. Lauderdale 2005

Attendees: _____

Address: _____

Phone no.: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Guest(s) name _____

Do you need name tags? Please circle: Yes / No

Do your guests need name tags? Yes / No

Registration Fee: \$15.00 Per person No. @\$15.00 pp. Total _____

Late fee (after Aug. 22nd) \$25.00 pp. No. @\$25.00 pp. Total _____

Wednesday, Sept. 14th

Surfside Barbecue: \$35.00 pp. No. @\$35.00 pp. Total _____

(All you can eat buffet of baby back ribs, chicken, hamburgers, hot dogs, smoked sausage plus salads, vegetables, desserts & drinks)

Thursday, Sept. 15th

Narrated tour of Ft. Lauderdale, No. @\$24.00 pp. Total _____

Tour of Flamingo Gardens, lunch on your own on Las Olas Blvd.

Friday, Sept. 16th

Jungle Queen Dinner Cruise: \$45.00 pp. No. @\$45.00 pp. Total _____

(Evening cruise up the New River to a tropical island for an all you can eat barbeque of shrimp, chicken, baby back ribs, plus all the fixings & an after dinner variety show)

Saturday, Sept. 17th

Banquet Dinner: \$40.00 pp. No. @ \$40.00 pp. Total _____

(A dual entree of beef and chicken breast with potatoes, vegetables, dessert & beverage)

Any special Diet requirements: _____

Sunday, Sept. 18th

Royal Palm Breakfast Buffet: \$20.00 pp. No. @ \$20.00 pp. Total _____

(Breakfast buffet of eggs, assorted juices, fruits, cereals, bacon, sausage, potatoes, breads, coffee, tea)

Acey/Ducey Tournament: \$10.00 pp.

Please make checks payable to MATCA Trust Check No. Total _____

(THIS FORM MAY BE PHOTOCOPIED)

2005 MATCA INVITATIONAL GOLF TOURNAMENT



Thursday, September 15

Jacaranda Golf Club



Format: TBD

Time: Tee-times start around 9

Please enter the following golfers in the 2005 MATCA Invitational:

Player 1: _____ *HDCp: _____

Player 2: _____ *HDCp: _____

*If you do not have a handicap, enter your average score for 18 holes. if you desire to play with any particular person, please indicate. Attempts will be made to pair those desiring to play together. pairings will ultimately depend on the tournament format and the individual's handicap.

Pair me / us with: _____

Entry Fee (includes cart, greens fee, and prizes); \$55.00

_____ Golfers @ \$55.00 per golfer = _____

Please mail this form with a check payable to _____

No entries will be accepted after September 10, 2005. Pairings, starting times, and prize list will be available at reunion and tournament check-in.

Ed note: This is the first of two parts of the recollections of a Navy A-1 driver's participation in the famous Son Tay raid to free POW's in Hanoi in 1970. The raid was a failure in that no POWs were found

Son Tay Recollections - Part One

The Fog of War - an A-1 driver's viewpoint of the Son Tay Raid

The following is what I remember of the A-1 participation in the Son Tay prison camp raid. Wayne Mutza asked for some input to research he's doing on a book he's writing. This is what I came up with.

A-1 participation in the Son Tay raid, 21 November 1970 On the Saturday night of 20 November 1970 a C-130 picked us up from Takhli where we had been housed in the CIA compound since deploying from Eglin. The NKP flight line was blacked out, even the tower people had been relieved and was empty. The C-130 landed, without any lights on it or the runway and ramp, and taxied to the ramp. It had already lowered the rear ramp and when it came to almost a stop ten of us ran out, 2 pilots for each of the five Fat faces (A-1s) we were taking. It then continued on, pulling up the ramp, taxied out and took off.

It had other people to deliver to other locations. The only people out and about were the crew chiefs and us. Of course the Wing Commander met us and followed me around like a puppy dog asking question after question. None of which I could answer. He got rather pissed as I recall.

Picking up our flight gear we went straight to the birds, cranked up and taxied out. No taxi, runway or aircraft lights were used and no radio either, total silence. (The radio was not to be used till we were over the camp and our target.) Taking off at the exact second we did a 360 over the base to join up. A specially equipped C-130, (Combat Talon) was to rendezvous with us there and lead us onto our target.

For this mission, timing was everything. Our C-130 Talon wasn't there. We did two more 360's and couldn't wait any longer. We were, by that time, about ten minutes behind schedule. The backup plan was to navigate ourselves to Son Tay,

following the planned route and arriving at the appointed time, 0200 local Sunday, 21 November. No way Jose.

We had agreed among ourselves earlier that that was not a viable plan. We would fly the course until we got lost, which we knew we would, and then head straight for Hanoi. Hold just south of the IP, which was the Black River straight west of the camp, and do our thing at the TOT. (Time Over Target)

The route was Na Kom Phenom (NKP), straight to Vientiane, Laos, straight north out of there and then drop to low level and weave through the karst and valleys all the rest of the way to Son Tay at Hanoi's doorstep. Impossible at night for A-1's.

A back up rendezvous with the Talon was over Vientiane at the appointed minute but because we had made an extra 360 over NKP waiting we were running late. We had been unable to make up all the lost time, some of it but not all. We hit Vientiane a few minutes late, maybe five, no Talon.

We turned north and pressed on. After passing over Vientiane, there were no lights, none anywhere, ink black. And then our worst nightmare loomed up. A cloud bank. Being lead I wasn't worried about being hit but the rest of the flight exploded like a covey of quail, everyone in God only knows what direction. Pushing it up I climbed straight ahead and soon popped out on top. Not an A-1 in sight and no hope of joining up again without lights or radio. We were all on our own.

After a short time we noticed a speck of light far ahead. A star? After watching it a while we were sure it was below the horizon and no Laotian in his right mind would have a light on. Had to be something else. Heading straight for it, it took some time to catch. A fully loaded A-1 like we were in is no speed demon. Sure enough, there was our Talon with a teeny-weeny white light on the top of the fuselage and a dim bluish glow coming from the open ramp in the rear. Couldn't see the bluish glow until you were only a few meters from it.

There were already two A-1's there, one on each wing. We moved up and the left one moved out and we took our place on the left wing tip. A few minutes later the other two A-1's slowly pulled up and once we were all in place the little white light

went out, the bluish glow went out and the Talon descended into the black. From there on it was hold on tight as it bobbed and weaved through the hills and valleys. The Talon driver was top notch. His power applications during climbs and descents and gentle banking allowed our heavy A-1 to hang right in there.

>

The three day "moon window" we had for this operation provided good night visibility. With one exception. Several valleys we drove through were so deep that mountains, karts, trees or whatever we were passing by (flying below), eclipsed the moon. When that happened it was like diving into an inkwell. You could make out only a few feet of wing tip and that was only because of our own exhaust flame. When turns or ups and downs occurred at those times it was tough.

As we emerged from the back country out over the Red River Valley it was almost like being over Iowa farm country with Omaha/Council Bluffs up ahead. (It was Hanoi). Lights everywhere.

Soon thereafter, the Talon started climbing and we knew the IP was coming up. We had a controlled altitude over the Initial Point (IP). The choppers, with their own Talon, were going to be under us coming in from a different direction. They should have been slightly ahead of us but one couldn't be sure everyone was on time. The control time of each of the various flight elements involved in the mission was based upon everyone's overhead time over the Son Tay camp itself, so IP times were adjusted for the different speeds of all of the different raid elements.

Then the Talon transmitted the code word. First word of anything we heard on the radio all night. I can't remember the word but it was to be picked up by a high orbiting EC-135 over northern Laos and relayed back to wherever needed by the different ground and air-based command and control units involved. It meant we had crossed the IP. (We were two seconds off.

The best anyone had done during practice was ten minutes. Of course we didn't have Talons for the practice.) The Talon then accelerated out and up like a shot and disappeared in the night.

The heading to the camp was 091 and trying to

reset our DG by a giggly whiskey compass was an effort in futility. You remember the high tech, latest hardware we had on board.

Good thing all the towns, cities and roads were lit up. With the target study we had done it was like being in your own back yard. Next number 5 peeled off to the right. He was backup in case anyone was shot down and was to orbit a large hill just south of course until called in. As it turned out the hill was a North Vietnamese Army artillery practice range and it wasn't long before they started taking a few rounds. They moved off to somewhere else, probably closer to the camp, don't know where. Just another example of the brilliant Intel we had.

Then 3 & 4 peeled off to the left to hold just short of the camp till called in. The plan was to call them in when we had expended 50% of our ordnance. Then they would do the same with us, each time expending 50% of what you had left. That way, if someone went down, there would always be aircraft in the air that had some ordnance left for support. Then 2 dropped back so we could set up a two aircraft Daisy Chain around the camp. It was like a precision ballet, a computer simulation would not have been better timed.

Just as I rolled into a bank along side the camp two flares popped right over it, having been released from one of the Talons. At the same time Banana (the HH-3 helicopter with the Blue Boy assault team aboard.) crash-landed inside the camp compound and the first Apple (CH-53) opened up with mini-guns on the watch towers and the guard quarters. The towers either blew apart or caught fire as did the guard quarters. We didn't want big fire consuming the two story quarters, attracts attention, but it was too late. At that time we had nothing to do except to make sure no one approached the camp.

No one did. We could see the sparkles from a Fire Fight Simulator dropped by one of the Talons on the other side of town as a distraction and soon a large explosion and fire where another Talon dumped napalm on an infantry base armory a few clicks to the South.

Then the shit hit the fan. Gear Box (The Command and Control team.) started yelling about

losing Axle. Axle was Col. (Bull) Simons personal call sign.

"We've lost Axle" he kept yelling. I thought to myself, "God damn, Simons has been killed, we're all in deep shit." At this point I'd like to say that I think the Universe will collapse in upon itself in the Big Crunch before the Army and Air Force will ever be able to talk to each other on a radio and have each other understand what's going on. He wasn't lost like being dead in AF jargon, they just didn't know where he was, couldn't find him. Then the radio erupted with chatter from everywhere.

The second Apple carrying half the assault force and Bull Simons, had landed in the wrong place. Their heading had been one degree off coming in from the IP. (Whether pilot or equipment error I don't know.) Placing them several hundred meters south of the camp. When the time ran out they saw a building that didn't quite look like the guard quarters but it was the only building around, so landed. That's where the infamous "Fire Fight at The School" took place.

By the way, we gave every North Vietnamese facility in the area a "name" for ease of reference. These names really had nothing to do with their true function in life, in fact most of which were unknown. This particular building we called a "school" because it looked like a school, regardless of what it really was. You couldn't just keep referring to it as the white building south of the camp. There were lots of buildings south of the camp. Everything had to have a name. That way everyone knows what you're talking about. Our liberal media, though, had a small Field Day with that name.

I remember some time later a female TV reporter asking Col. Simons if he had killed anyone at The School. He said something to the effect "I was approached by a big fella, I had a tracer as every third round in my M-16 and saw three go through his middle." The reporter didn't have a follow up question.

The troops in the wrong place were screaming, Gear Box was screaming and all the Apples were screaming. The FM and VHF radios were almost impossible to read let alone get anything in of your own. (The UHF was kept for AF use to call

the MIG Cap or Weasels if needed or to talk among ourselves.)

The Apple that had dumped the guys in the wrong place was the closest so he did a 180 and went in to pick them up. All the others took off and headed for the School as well just in case. Other than the usually effective Big Sky Theory, no one has figured out yet why there wasn't a midair.

The troops at the school were in a fierce fire fight the whole time they were on the ground. Right after they landed people came pouring out of the building. Most were too large in stature for Vietnamese. The guess was Chinese or Russian but no one had time to check. The estimated kill was between one and two hundred and again, no one had time to count.

Bull Simons and the rest of the assault force made it back to the camp without a casualty. The whole incident only lasted a few minutes but it put the entire ground operation off schedule. The two perimeter teams, Red Wine and Green Leaf, headed out to do their thing outside the compound but Blue Boy, the assault team inside the prison compound, had already searched most of the prison.

As soon as Simons got on the radio he asked Blue Boy for a status report. The answer was "No Packages so far, still searching". (A Package was the code word for a prisoner.) Simons then told us to take out the foot bridge to the Citadel. We called a group of buildings surrounded by a small moat the Citadel. It was a few hundred meters southeast of the Camp and had a small foot bridge over the moat on the camp side. Intel told us it was a military cadet training facility and probably had a small armory for small arms.

We didn't want anyone coming across that bridge armed and get within rifle range of the camp. Jerry and I put two WP bombs on it and when my wingman came in, he saw the bridge was wiped out and dropped short to get anyone that might have already come across. In the process taking out a few blocks of a housing area between the camp and the citadel. WP does a real number on wooden structures, the fire storm was not small. About this time the sequence of events gets all jumbled up. I have no idea what happened first,

second and so forth. About the time Simons and the troops got back to the camp the first SAM took off. To Be Continued



230 Anniversary of the USMC

From: Jim Dargan

I watched the flag pass by one day,
It fluttered in the breeze.

A young Marine saluted it,
And then he stood at ease..

I looked at him in uniform
So young, so tall, so proud,
With hair cut square and eyes alert
He'd stand out in any crowd.

I thought how many men like him
Had fallen through the years.
How many died on foreign soil
How many mothers' tears?

How many pilots' planes shot down?
How many died at sea
How many foxholes were soldiers' graves?
No, freedom isn't free.

I heard the sound of Taps one night,
When everything was still,
I listened to the bugler play
And felt a sudden chill.
I wondered just how many times
That Taps had meant "Amen,"

When a flag had draped a coffin.
Of a brother or a friend.

I thought of all the children,
Of the mothers and the wives,
Of fathers, sons and husbands
With interrupted lives.

I thought about a graveyard
At the bottom of the sea

Of unmarked graves in Arlington.
No, freedom isn't free.

Enjoy Your Freedom & God Bless Our Troops

Author unknown

This year, the United States proudly honors the Marine Corps and all Marines who have sacrificed and contributed in our Nation's service. Public Law 108-290, signed August 6, 2004, authorizes the minting of a Silver Dollar to commemorate the 230th Anniversary of the United States Marine Corps.

On November 10, 1775, the Continental Congress authorized the raising of two battalions of American Marines, thereby creating the legendary institution today known as the United States Marine Corps. From the Nation's birth to the present day, the Marines represent a proud culture of service and contribution in defense of the values and freedoms at the heart of the American experience.

According to the United States Marine Corps Hymn, Marines have "fought in ev'ry clime and place" throughout our Nation's history. The story of the Marine Corps is the personification of American military history beginning with the American Revolution. The flag raising at Iwo Jima, represented at the Marine Corps War Memorial, is ingrained in the public mind as perhaps the enduring image of World War II.

Today, the Marines continue to exemplify the warrior ethos that has made it a fighting force of international repute. The philosophy of the Corps—and of the hundreds of thousands of individuals who have earned the title "Marine" over the last 230 years—is simply stated in its core values: Honor. Courage. Commitment.

Coins offered in both proof and uncirculated condition may be issued under this Act only during the one-year period beginning January 1, 2005.

Surcharges from the sale of each coin are authorized for the creation of the National Museum of the Marine Corps at Quantico, Virginia, which is being developed as a partnership of the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation and the United States Marine Corps.

Coins will go on sale in July. Order early.

Iwo Jima Survivor- MATCA Member

Former Marine, Guy Rowe of Otsego, describes his 26 days of battle

By Ed DuBois

The black sand of the Iwo Jima beach had been terraced by the elements before the shelling took place in 1945. The explosions loosened up the sand so much, the U.S. Marines' tanks and other vehicles were getting stuck, recalled Guy Rowe of Otsego. Bulldozers were used to pull the vehicles out of the sand.

Rowe was among replacement troops who came ashore after the initial landings during one of the bloodiest battles of World War II.

"We saw stacks of cordwood in the distance," he remembered. "Then as we got closer, we saw it wasn't cordwood, it was bodies."

"We really took it to them,' someone said. But the bodies were not dead Japanese soldiers. They were Marines," Rowe said.

The replacements knew it would be tough on Iwo Jima, a tiny island no one had heard about before their arrival. They had witnessed the bombardment by the Navy and the initial landings by more experienced and combat ready Marines.

"We loved listening to Tokyo Rose. She told us how tough it would be," Rowe said.

Assigned to Charlie Company in the 1st Battalion, Rowe was in the 4th Division. Two other divisions, the 3rd and the 5th, were also involved with the invasion of the island. The 4th Division was near the center of the island, where two air bases were located.

Charlie Company was trying to take Hill 382, the second highest point on the island. The highest point is Mount Suribachi, where the famous Iwo Jima flag raising took place. A giant statue depicting the flag raising honors the Marines in Washington, D.C.

Rowe remembers someone saying, "Look at that," when the flag went up. It could be seen by just about all the Marines all over the island. Ships were blowing their whistles when the flag was spotted.

Rowe was designated an assistant BAR (Browning Automatic Rifle) gunman. The .30-caliber weapon,

which he used during his remaining time in the war, had a 20-round magazine and a bipod on the front. He said that 20 rounds went through the automatic rifle very fast.

He remembers spending most of his first day firing from a 15-by-20 foot concrete building. "Every time we fired, we got return fire. We were covered with bits of concrete from where the enemy's bullets hit above us," Rowe recalled. They pulled back to the edge of airfield number-two for the night.

"Just before dusk, a man came running and jumped into my foxhole. He looked up over the edge of the foxhole like a gopher, and just as I was about to tell him not to do that he was shot in the eye. The bullet went out the back of his head," the former Marine remembered.

Earlier that day, he was running across the barren landscape with a machine gun chasing him. He stumbled and fell, but the machine gun fire stopped and then resumed in another direction.

"He must have thought I was dead and decided to shoot at someone else," Rowe said. Someone yelled, "Rowe, you okay?"

His response was to run for cover. Then, checking himself over, he discovered one of the machine gun bullets had cut through his canteen cover and burned his back. Another round had passed through his pants and burned the back of his leg.

He must have been running very fast. Asked if he was an athlete in high school, Rowe said he was a cross-country skier and a baseball player. He would have played football, but he was on the small side and his father had advised against risking his long-term health and well-being.

Rowe fought on Iwo Jima a total of 26 days. On one of those days, Marines were checking out an area where there had been some sniper trouble. One of the Marines noticed a fellow Marine lying in an area all by himself. It seemed unusual, so the first Marine called to the one who was lying down. When the second Marine raised a rifle in an apparent attempt to fire, "the other fellow beat him to it," Rowe said. The man who had been lying down was actually an Imperial Japanese Marine who was wearing a U.S. Marine uniform. Rowe said he must have taken the uniform off a dead U.S. Marine. He added, there was no more trouble with snipers in the area after that.

Snipers were the cause of a large number of ca-

sualties on Iwo Jima. Rowe said snipers killed or wounded two or three Marines from his company each day.

He recalled seeing some Marines get hit by white phosphorous artillery bursts. Meanwhile, flamethrowers were being used to burn the enemy out of underground fortifications on the island.

A very harsh battlefield, Iwo Jima's natural volcanic heat added to the horrible circumstances. Rowe remembers some foxholes in areas with sulfur springs were too hot to stay in for more than about a minute. Steam would rise from freshly dug foxholes and give away the Marine's position to enemy artillery spotters.

"We learned to dig our foxholes early and let them cool off," Rowe mentioned.

He carried numerous stretchers with wounded Marines to the beach, where the wounded were taken to hospital ships. Once while he and another Marine were carrying a stretcher with a wounded man, an artillery shell struck nearby and lifted all three men off the ground. Fortunately, they were not struck by shrapnel.

Rowe survived several close calls on Iwo Jima. One night while preparing for sleep in a foxhole, he grabbed what he thought was a flat rock, which he used as a pillow. In the morning, he discovered the flat rock was actually a discus-shaped mine. He put a red flag on it so another Marine did not make the same mistake. "It was either a dud or an antitank mine," he surmised.

One day Rowe was asked if he wanted to check a cave to see if any enemy soldiers were inside. He jokingly replied, "Sure, if I had a flashlight." He was immediately handed a flashlight.

Entering the cave, Rowe discovered it was actually a fairly elaborate complex of reinforced concrete tunnels about 50 feet underground. The tunnels turned this way and that way as he made his way deeper and deeper inside. Along the way he found himself in a fairly large room with about seven entrances.

High up on the walls, the Japanese had cut notches. This is where the soldiers slept. One Japanese soldier was still in one of the notches. A noise had alerted Rowe to the enemy soldier's presence. He was facing away from Rowe. When the discovery was reported to the unit commander, Rowe was told that by the time they got

back to the location where the enemy soldier was seen, he would be long gone. That was the only Japanese soldier Rowe saw on the island. Most of them were dug in so well, they could not be seen, he explained.

Fixing breakfast one morning, Rowe heard someone suddenly say, "Get your rifle." Two enemy soldiers were approaching with their hands in the air. All they had on were white loincloths. It turned out that they were Korean laborers.

On the day Rowe left Iwo Jima, he had another close call. A bullet passed so close, he swears he saw it shoot past the tip of nose.

Later, he was approaching a landing craft that would take him out to a ship. A sailor working on the beach looked at Rowe and asked, "Do you want to be the last Marine off the island?" He suggested dropping something so Rowe could get on the landing craft last. So, Rowe dropped his gas mask and kicked it once or twice as he tried to pick it up. A lieutenant passed him and boarded the craft ahead of Rowe.

Now Rowe can claim he was the last Marine of the 4th Division to get off Iwo Jima. He said members of the 3rd and 5th Divisions might have still been on the island.

On the ship, the Marines were served spaghetti. Even though there was a shortage of sauce, Rowe said he was glad to have the spaghetti after eating military rations on the island for almost a month.

Rowe mentioned the famous Iwo Jima flag raising on Mount Suribachi took place on Feb. 23, about four days after the initial landings on the island. The fighting continued for 31 more days. Rowe said there was fighting even after his unit left Iwo Jima. The Army took over after the Marines left, he added.

Back in 1942, when Rowe graduated from Murray High School in St. Paul, he did not immediately enter the military. His father, a school superintendent, had suffered a heart attack in January. His mother died in August. He was the head of the household for a while.

But Rowe was drafted in 1944. He had been working as a weather observer at Holman Field, which is the downtown airport in St. Paul. He remembers waiting all day at a federal building when he was planning to sign up for the Navy.

When all those who were entering the Marines were allowed to go for dinner, Rowe turned to a fellow recruit and said, "Let's join the Marines because they're eating."

He was sent to San Diego for boot camp. The train ride was 52 hours long.

When his Marine unit boarded a ship in a convoy, they sailed out of San Francisco "for parts unknown." Rowe remembers having a Thanksgiving Day dinner on Maui, which was the 4th Marine Division's headquarters. He was able to visit Pearl Harbor and see his uncle, who had served with the Seabees in a Naval Construction Battalion.

Waiting to land on the island, Rowe had an interesting experience at sea. He suddenly felt his ship shudder when the screw was put into reverse. The ship was about to collide with another ship.

"A sailor had fallen asleep with his foot on a lever that drained the hydraulic system for steering the ship from the bridge," Rowe recalled.

His ship went off course to the left and eventually struck another ship. The collision put a hole about 25 feet wide in the other ship. He thinks some people died as a result of the incident.

Also while waiting to land on the island, Rowe almost had an opportunity to fire Navy guns at Japanese aircraft. During an air raid, Navy gunners were away loading wounded Marines onto hospital ships. Rowe and other Marines asked for permission to man some twin 40 mm anti-aircraft guns.

No rounds were fired, however. The sky was overcast, and the airplanes were above the clouds. "We couldn't fire because the aircraft could have been friendly," Rowe said.

On the day he and others landed on the beach, the Navy created a smoke screen to help hide the approach of the land craft.

Altogether, Rowe served with the Marines two years and six days during World War II. He was out of the Marines several years after the war, but he reenlisted in 1956 and 1960. He served in Okinawa twice, from 1967 to 1968 and again in 1972. A gradual transition took place during which he was able to let go of the feelings he had from the war and become friends with some of the Japanese people. It was in 1958 when he decided to learn the Japanese culture and get to know the

Japanese people, he said.

In 1967, he served 30 days in Vietnam.

Through his years with the Marines, Rowe worked his way up to the rank of Captain. He served as a radar maintenance officer and later became an instructor with the Marine Analysis Corps.

After retiring from the Marines in 1976, Rowe worked as a supervisor with an electronics company in Bloomington from 1977 to 1995. He and his wife raised two children.

His church in Monticello recently thanked him for his service with the church by giving him a large plaque with an artistic reproduction of the famous Iwo Jima flag-raising picture.

His Marine uniform has several decorations, including a Marine Corps Good Conduct Medal, an Asian Pacific Campaign Medal, a World War II Victory Medal, a National Defense Medal, and a Vietnam Service Medal.

Looking back at his extremely dangerous 26 days on Iwo Jima, Rowe said the attitude of the Marines was to get the war over as soon as possible. They knew most of them would probably not come back from the island, but they also knew the best way to survive the war was to end it and end it fast.

Iwo Jima was extremely important in the overall war effort against Japan. That's why the Japanese tried so hard to defend it. Once it was held by the Americans, its airfields could be used on missions to bomb Japan itself. The battle to take Iwo Jima was a do or die mission for the Marines. Rowe realizes he was lucky to survive.

He was prepared to sacrifice everything, but somehow he escaped the fate of so many other fellow Marines. Out of about 70,000 Marines who landed on the black sand of the volcanic island, roughly 6,800 died and close to 20,000 were wounded. Almost all of the estimated 20,000 Japanese soldiers on the island were killed.



Couth Corner

By Syd Wire

Sgt. Jerry Benson was a helluva marine; always squared away lookin', the best machine gun section leader his senior NCOs had ever encountered, good with his subordinates and respectful to his superiors.

As is frequently the case, however, there was a fly in the proverbial ointment. Benson had a remarkable affinity for John Barleycorn. Let him get within rifle shot of one of them civilian slop-chutes and you could count on 911 bein' called and Benson, full of stupid juice, doin' somethin' stupid, like beatin' the crap out of a bouncer, tryin' to remove a young ladies clothes in public or standin' at attention on a bar stool bellowin' bawdy ballads at the threshold of pain.

His company commander, a pretty damn good marine himself, always tried to give a little slack to the truly good ones. One fine mornin' Benson was standin' tall in front of the CO's desk, sportin' a beautifully bloused eye, along with numerous cuts, scrapes and contusions. The old man (he was only 32) had decided that this was the last time Benson was getting' any slack. Next time, want to or not, he was gonna have to yank a stripe.

"Tell me something, Benson", he asked, "just how much do you drink?"

"With respect, Cap'n, I'm not sure what you mean by much", replied Benson.

"Well", said the CO, "do you drink more than a pint a day?"

"Great Jumpin' Jesus, skipper", replied Benson, "I SPILL more than a pint a day!"

Cpl. Benson is now happily machine-gunnin' away in some other outfit and visiting his favorite watering holes on a regular basis.

Y'all be good now, hear?

Syd

from page 5

Rogue Jets and Bouncing Bombs

This is a story I would write for the Hotline but the remaining shards of a once sharp mind have forgotten too many details. The tower alerted those of us in the radar complex to evacuate (great VFR day) and at the same time to look overhead. A Corsair was unable to land safely so it was decided to ditch it offshore. The pilot headed that way and bailed out over the base while a couple of escorts were in trail. Seems the plane had a mind of its own and decided to return to the base! The first thing we saw was the plane flying low & slow with two fighters raining bullets all over it. They had to quit while it passed the base and started a slow turn back out to sea. I have no memory of what happened after that but it was quite a sight and I kept thinking, if an unmanned plane with two in pursuit was that hard to bring down, what if it had been a couple of MIGs with pilots aboard who were fighting back?

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