



THE FRAG

2D Recon Battalion Association Newsletter

President's Letter

September 10, 2018

Marines,

First, let me say that it is my honor to address you as your new president. Secondly, on behalf of the Association, I would like to thank our outgoing president, Bob Moody, for all the great work he did for the Association during the past six years. Bob, you truly laid the foundation that was so sorely needed in order to get the Association moving forward. Bob is still serving on the Executive Board and assisting with the publication of the FRAG. Along with Bob, much thanks to the members of the Executive Board who have kept things up and running.

Many members of the Association have stepped up to fill leadership positions. The Association's revised "Order of Battle" is as follows:

Executive Board: Vice President: Brian Broadhurst; Past President: Robert Moody (also assists with newsletter); Treasurer: David Leathers; Jason Oliver: Membership; John Actis: Historian; Steve O'Hara: Secretary; Luke Rutherford: Newsletter Production Officer; Michael Graham: Sergeant-at-Arms; Bill Page: Chaplain.

The following task-oriented committees have been formed:

Monuments Committee: Steve Shi (Chair), Scott Borngrebe, and Steve O'Hara

Membership Committee: Jason Oliver (Chair), Michael Graham (Public Affairs Officer/Media SME), Daniel D. Barton (Webmaster), Larry Hansen (Recruiting SME)

Reunion Committee: Monroe Stueber (Chair), Terry Sahlbom, and Frank Seaman

Scholarship Committee: Carol Froisy (Chair), Steve Shi, Joe Clark, Bill Page, Thomas Mundell

Regional Events: Michael Graham (“Grambo”) said something to me at the reunion which really stuck in my mind. He said, “We need to be seen as more than a reunion club.” To that end, there are several upcoming regional get togethers. Many thanks to those who are sponsoring them. They are:

Sawmill Shootout: 13 October 2018, hosted by Frank and Rhonda Seaman at Old Fort, NC.

Sprague Farm Get Together: Weekend of 27 July 2019 at Fort Plain in upstate New York, hosted by John Sprague.

Western Front Get Together: Memorial Day weekend, 2019, hosted by yours truly, vicinity of Winslow, Indiana.

All Association members are invited to attend the Battalion’s birthday ball on 16 November.

Information about these events is or will be available on the 2d Recon Bn. Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/130012812137/>

One of the initiatives that have been discussed for several years is now moving forward. Other reconnaissance units are represented at the National Museum of the Marine Corps at Quantico, Virginia; our unit is not. I believe this is a top priority for our Association. Steve Shi, Scott Borngrebe, and Steve O’Hara quickly volunteered to jump on this task and our moving forward. More to follow.

As always, it was great seeing old faces and meeting new ones at the Reunion. The Battalion put on a great show for us, thanks to the work of the outgoing operations chief, MGySgt. Brad Dean. He has been replaced by MGySgt. Corey Paskvan, who is definitely cut from the same mold. Sergeant Major Costa had things well organized, as always. Unfortunately, LtCol. Bopp was deployed and could not be with us, but Melissa Bopp, the “Light of 2d Recon Battalion” was there to represent.

Those who attended know there were concerns about the quality of our stay at the Comfort Inn, with which I fully agree. The Reunion Committee is searching for new venues, and I plan to personally assess them in November.

Again, thanks to all who make it happen. I look forward to seeing you at the numerous upcoming events!

Semper Fidelis,



Editor's Corner

Greetings Recon Marines, Corpsmen, and family members:

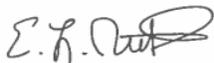
It's truly a privilege to serve as the editor and a member of the Association's executive board. Never could I have imagined when I joined the Battalion as a RIP candidate in August 1981, that 37 years later I would be in an association of reconnaissance Marines that included members of that very RIP school. I spent three busy years in the Battalion, later transitioned to the counterintelligence MOS, and eventually retired from the Corps. But what I learned as a member of "Team Onslow" (before it was known as Team Onslow) in the early 80s has served me well throughout the years—in the Corps, during a second career, and life in general.

Reconnecting with some recon brothers and joining the Association a few years ago has been beyond rewarding. Visiting Onslow Beach with recon brothers from 35 years ago was a moving experience. Something about crossing that bridge. So when the President asked if anyone would like to be the new Association newsletter editor, I jumped on the opportunity—a very small way that I can support the Association and honor a battalion and recon Marines who have given me so much.

Now to the important topic: the newsletter. Wayne and others have done a terrific job with previous newsletters, and I hope to carry that torch by ensuring the Association continues to produce a timely, accurate, and informative newsletter each fall and spring. To a certain degree, the format and content are pre-set, and there is a page limit tied to postage costs. That restricts the length and number of topics we can include in the newsletter. Still, if there is anything you would like to see changed, added or improved, please contact me. I will do everything possible to accommodate your input. And, especially, for those of you with particularly entertaining recon sea stories, why not share them with a wider audience? Contact me if you'd like to discuss submitting a story for the newsletter, whatever the topic. And if you need a little help with the wordsmithing, that's what I'm here for.

Lastly, I wanted to say "thank you" to everyone who played a part in planning, organizing, and facilitating the 2018 Reunion. As expected, it was an overwhelming success.

S/F,



Luke Rutherford
edluker@comcast.net
(719) 641-0056

Notable & Quotable

"Hell, these are Marines. Men like them held Guadalcanal and took Iwo Jima. Baghdad ain't shit."

— Major General John F. Kelly

2018 Association Reunion



This year's reunion was held in Jacksonville, North Carolina, from Thursday, 21 June, to Saturday, 23 June, and was quite a success. Like in recent years past, the Comfort Inn served as both our "rally point" and "harbor site." Approximately 100 members and guests were in attendance from around the country.

Festivities kicked-off Thursday evening with an informal meet-and-greet in the hotel conference room and around the pool. It didn't take long before the hugs, handshakes, and introductions gave way to cigar smoke, sea stories, and hearty laughs that filled the air until late in the evening. For many, it seemed like we were on active duty with our recon brothers just yesterday, and we were simply picking up where we had left off. No better way to get things started!

On Friday morning we boarded buses for the short trip out to Onslow Beach, where the Battalion put on an impressive demonstration of helocasting and SPIE rigging. There was also plenty of time to walk the beach, survey the sand dunes and ocean, and remember back to the times we trained there, swam in the ocean, and ran on that beach.

Afterwards we made the short trip to Range G-21, where the Battalion provided a machine gun demonstration and safety brief. Then the real fun began: Under the close supervision of recon Marines, members and guests were permitted to shoot machine guns. It's safe to say, every target was taken out repeatedly. Doesn't get any better than that. Hats off to the Battalion.

After an action-packed morning we boarded busses and headed to Battalion's compound in Courthouse Bay. Once again, we had a busy agenda. Things got started with a Battalion formation and awards ceremony. President Bob Moody joined Battalion leadership in bestowing awards for Team Leader of the Year, and Outstanding Team NCO. A memorial service then commemorated the fallen Marines and Sailors of the Battalion. This was followed by the Association's "change of command" ceremony, wherein President Bob Moody relinquished his leadership position, and Wayne Dillon (SgtMaj, USMC, ret.) assumed duties as President. Many thanks to Bob for his years of leadership as Association President. Bob's vision, determination, and untiring efforts were instrumental in building the Association into the outstanding organization it is today. Lucky for us, Bob is staying on with the Association as a member of the Executive Board.

Once the formalities were through, we were free to explore the Battalion's facilities and equipment, and mingle with our active duty recon brethren. These young men are some of the Corps' finest Marines and Sailors. It was especially enjoyable to talk with them about new equipment and tactics, and their experiences in Afghanistan and Iraq. Many of us could see ourselves in their faces...20, 30, 40 or more

years ago. We may be separated in age, but we're not that different in mindset, attitude, and values, and we share a proud legacy.

Our afternoon with the Battalion culminated with an outdoor barbecue, AKA "pig picking" Carolina-style. It was nice to finally sit down at covered picnic tables with a heaping plate of delectable chow and reflect on the day as we ate. Of course, it was also a great time to talk some more with our active duty brethren and trade a few more sea stories. Eventually we boarded busses and returned to the Comfort Inn.

Friday evening was a time to relax, socialize, and hold the annual meeting in the hotel conference room. Association business was taken care of in fairly short order. Afterwards, for many, it was sort of like liberty call on a payday Friday. Members and guests commandeered the pool area, hotel lobby, and breezeway. It was time to seriously catch up with buddies and acquaintances from over the years, fueled along for some by fine cigars, beer and spirits. A good time was had by all!

Saturday morning and afternoon were free time. A lot of folks joined up into small groups and took advantage of the opportunity to shop at places like Saigon Sams and the Marine Corps Exchange, pay respects at the Beirut Memorial, and explore old hangouts in "J-ville."

On Saturday evening, after cleaning up and putting on some more presentable duds, we boarded busses and made the short trip to Camp Lejeune for the annual banquet at the Ball Center. It was great to see such a turnout—a real indication of how the Association has grown over the years. We enjoyed a social hour, a sumptuous meal, fitting words from a number of speakers, and a rather spirited auction. Once again, member-donated items were auctioned to raise money for the Battalion. One item that stood out was a massive inscribed wood plaque donated by Frank Seaman. Congratulations to Vic Zwolak for placing the winning bid.



Association Banquet—Great food and drinks...and lots of sea stories!



Helocast and SPIE Rig Demo at Onslow Beach—Go Recon!



Machine Gun Demo and Firing at Range G-21—Knocking down targets!



Onslow Beach—Fun in the sun!



Battalion Award Ceremony and Association “Change of Command”

2D Recon Battalion SITREP

In the last several months we have had our share of twists thrown at us. This flexibility and adapting to situations are what makes us the premier Task Organized unit across the Division. We had 6 teams participate in the 10th Annual Recon Challenge in Camp Pendleton at the Reconnaissance Training Company on 17 May 2018. Out of the 6 teams we were 2nd and 3rd place.

The Battalion Commander Lt. Colonel Christopher Bopp was forward deployed to Command 2D Bn 6th Marines on the 26th MEU in May 2018. The Executive Officer, Major Geoffrey Newton, was posted as the Battalion Commander as a result. The Battalion has recently welcomed Alpha Company back from the 26th MEU where they were forward deployed with the USS Kearsarge Amphibious Ready Group. We are preparing to see Charlie Company off on the 22D MEU this fall. The Relief and Appointment from SgtMaj. Tom Costa to Sgt Maj. Jeffrey Chamberlain took place on 7 Sept 2018.

The Battalion will support 2D Marine Division in Exercise Trident Juncture in Norway in the Fall of 2018, as well as conduct our USMC Birthday Ball at the Hotel Ballast in Wilmington, NC on 16 November 2018. Tickets are \$65.00 per and you can send payments to 1stSgt Andre Guay at 203 Honey Court E. Jacksonville, NC 28540 until 1 November. Payable by check/money order or stop by and see him in the Force Company Office at A-71 Courthouse Bay.

Highlights per company:

Alpha Company: Will transition to a rebuilding phase and prepare for future taskings within 2D Marine Division and II MEF.

Bravo Company: Has completed their Individual/Team Training Phase and is currently working in their Unit Training Phase. They just completed an Advanced Airborne Package in Raeford, NC and an Advanced Combatant Diver package in Key West, FL. Next their company staff has prepared them for a series of off-site Deployments for Training to enhance their Core Mission Essential Task's of Amphibious/ Ground Reconnaissance and Conducting Limited Scale/Precision Raids in conjunction Battalion Landing Teams and MARSOC. They will begin their MEU Pre-deployment training in 2019.

Charlie Company: Is currently finishing up their MEU Pre-deployment Training Program and conducting some Airborne/Combatant Diving operations before they exercise their leave period and will then deploy in the Fall of 2018.

Force Reconnaissance Company: 1st Platoon-Performed Reconnaissance and Surveillance in support of Battle Space Shaping at ITX this past July thru August. 2d Plt-Finished their Schools Phase, Individual/Team Training, and Platoon level training for Conducting Limited Scale/Precision Raids at T1G in Crawfordville, Arkansas. They were scheduled to perform a Combatant Dive Deployment for Training in Aruba but Hurricane Florence postponed that event. 3d Plt-Is currently in their Individual/Team Training Phase. They completed R&S Training and Parachute Operations at Camp Lejeune, NC. The entire company will support II MEF in Exercise Trident Juncture in Norway in the Fall of 2018.

--Master Gunnery Sergeant Cory Paskvan

Association Merchandise

Sergeant-at-Arms Michael Graham is exploring the feasibility of using an outside vendor to make merchandise for the Association that can be ordered through our website. The vendor is a Recon Marine who already produces and sells recon-themed items. This will be a “no touch” operation for the Association that should make it a lot easier to manage. Once Michael works out the details with the vendor he will submit a proposal to the Association for approval. You could help in this process by letting Michael know what types of items (and what designs) you would potentially want to purchase. For example, t-shirts, hoodies, coins, mugs, etc. Please contact Michael at recondiver8653@yahoo.com with your suggestions.

Extraordinary Auction Item

Chaplain Bill Page’s wife and a friend are making a queen-sized quilt that will be ready for auction at the 2019 Reunion banquet. Usually they make quilts to be given to veterans and felt that donating it to the Association to raise money for active duty recon Marines would also be fitting. Thus far they have

invested over \$1,000 in material and work. When complete, it will be a handcrafted, heirloom-quality masterpiece that any veteran or veteran’s family member would be proud to own. In the picture below, you can see the beautiful red, white and blue colors and intricate patterns. It should command a fairly good price at auction so be sure and bring your cash or checkbook to the next banquet! We’ll put high-resolution pictures of the finished quilt in the Spring 2019 Newsletter.



Memorial Committee Update

We have been in touch with the National Museum of the Marine Corps and several vendors regarding a memorial plaque for the Battalion to be placed along the trail in Semper Fidelis Memorial Park. Scott Borngrebe visited the museum to recon possible locations and ideas from other plaques. Otis Kerr is working on some artist renderings of a suitable plaque.

We also have been in touch with the Battalion regarding a plan for upkeep and maintenance of the existing memorials at the Battalion as well as placing memorial plaques at each location where the Battalion was previously headquartered aboard CLNC. In this regard, if anyone has

reliable information as to historic locations of the Battalion before Onslow Beach, please let me know.

We will be back in touch once we have established a budget for these matters so that you can all have an opportunity to donate the needed funds. In this regard, if you know of any potential corporate donors, let me know.

Colonel J.S. Shi USMC Ret.

Larry Ashton Memorial Scholarship Fund

Eligibility

The Larry Ashton Memorial Scholarship Fund is awarding a scholarship in the amount of \$1,000 to either an eligible undergraduate student who will enroll full-time or part-time in a university, college, community college, or a Veterans Administration-approved post-secondary career training school within the United States in the 2018-2019 school year, or an eligible graduate student pursuing studies in mental health, medical technology, biomechanical engineering, nursing, or social work. Furthermore, special consideration will be given to those applicants who have been impacted by a personal diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), or PTSD diagnosis or suicide of their 2d Reconnaissance Battalion veteran sponsor. Scholarship funds are awarded to offset the expense of tuition/registration, textbooks and materials, and/or room and board for the recipients.

Application

Applicants must submit the following for consideration:

- Cover letter including applicant full name, address and status as either a dependent of or veteran of the 2d Reconnaissance Battalion, requesting consideration for the scholarship.
- Resume to include a description of a career goal in a mental health, medical technology, biomechanical engineering, nursing or social work discipline.
- Copy of last transcript from accredited undergraduate institution. This does not need to be a sealed official transcript.
- Copy of letter of acceptance into accredited graduate level education program.
- Essay, 500 words, describing how this program of study will support veterans in your chosen field of endeavor.
- Sanitized copy of your 2017 tax records showing an annual income of \$90,000 or less.

Application Deadline

All documents must be postmarked no later than 15 August for consideration. Send completed packet to:

Larry Ashton Memorial Scholarship
c/o 2d Reconnaissance Battalion Association
P.O. Box 1679
Westminster, MD 21158

For questions about the Larry Ashton Memorial Scholarship Fund, send inquiries to:
ashtonunc@yahoo.com.

Holiday Travel Assistance

The Association has set aside funds to help active duty Marines in need of travel assistance during the Holiday period. Travel money to be distributed by Battalion. Those wishing to apply should contact the Battalion Operations Chief.

Membership

Jason Oliver is our Membership Chairman. If you need any assistance or have questions with renewing your membership, please connect or contact Jason via the following options listed below.

Email: membership@2dreconbn.org

Phone: (704)808-1004

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/jason1oliver>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/jasonoo>

Mail:

2nd Recon Bn Association Jason Oliver
PO Box 1826
Los Gatos CA, 95031

2D Recon Battalion Association

P.O. Box 1679

Westminster, MD 21158

