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Marilyn L. Grady

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The Few, The Proud

Marilyn L. Grady

Two days in San Diego were a memorable learning opportunity for me. On a Thursday, my daughter Elizabeth and I stood and watched about 579 young men run around a parade field at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot. We were treated to the same individuals marching around the parade field in their spiffy uniforms. Later, we had some audience rehearsal of how to respond to a variety of orders. This was a particularly useful set of drills since the group needed extensive practice in screaming, volume enhancement, and understanding what the orders were. Younger group members seemed to be very enthusiastic about these drills as were individuals who may have had a military experience in their lives.

On day two of the extravaganza, we stood on the bleachers and watched the 579 young men march around the parade grounds and listened to the Marine Corps Band. I thought about what the young men had experienced in order to become Marines and where their assignments would take them in the future.

In the midst of all the marching and band activity, a newspaper called the *Chevron* was distributed to the audience members. I was euphoric since I had something to read while standing in the sun.

A considerable portion of the small newspaper was devoted to stories about the Brigadier General who was leaving the Marine Corps Recruit Depot for a position in Quantico, Virginia.

One front page article detailed the farewell. Two pages provided detailed biographical information about the brigadier general's various roles in a career beginning in 1974. A series of pictures of the brigadier general in action accompanied the articles. These included photographs of the brigadier general passing an annual fitness test that included carrying another Marine in what looks like a fireman's rescue carry, serving meals to the family members of the Marines at a special event, helping to build a home for a needy family in the San Diego area, and formal photos at special events. Many complimentary quotes from Marines at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego were included throughout the articles.

As I was reading these articles about Brigadier General Salinas, the activity on the parade grounds moved into the official pass and review by the 579 new Marines. As they saluted Brigadier General Salinas, I could see that she was, as other articles described her, barely five feet tall. In 2006 she became the sixth female in the Marine Corps to reach the rank of brigadier general. Brigadier General Angie Salinas is the highest-ranking Latina

woman in the Marine Corps. (Ireland, 2006: *Marines*, 2007) She is a female in an organization that is 97% male. (Sneyd, 2009)

When I traveled to San Diego, I expected to see some of “*The Few, The Proud*” the United States Marines. I did not expect to see Brigadier General Angie Salinas.

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