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The ultimate high school experience
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Book & Arts Fair opens with laughs

By LISA BROOKS | FOR THE JHV

Alan Zweibel is hilarious. He entertained a nearly capacity crowd to kick off the 2014 ERJCC Jewish Book & Arts Fair. It was an evening of laughter, with poignant moments, but mostly laughter at the personal memories Zweibel shared with the audience.

The evening began with a video from Zweibel winning the 2006 Thurber Prize for American Humor for his book, "The Other Shulman." The video featured Larry David, Garry Shandling, Rob Reiner and Billy Crystal, all funnymen who have worked with Zweibel. The Larry David

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MARK KATZ

Ann and Stephen Kaufman share a laugh with Alan Zweibel.

Jewish Veteran's desires for *tikkun olam* still strong

By ALICE ADAMS | JHV

'Semper Fi!'

The familiar salutation or sign-off among members of the United States Marine Corps – *Semper Fidelis* or "Always Faithful" – signifies the dedication Marines have to "Corps and country," and to their fellow Marines. It is a way of life – not negotiable – not relative, but absolute. Marines pride themselves on their mission and steadfast dedication to accomplish it."

A past president may have said it best: "Some people spend an entire lifetime wondering if they made a differ-

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ence in the world. The Marines don't have that problem."

When you first meet Col. Terri Zimmermann, 47, civilian attorney, wife and mother to two active teens, you immediately understand the importance of *Semper Fi*.

Beginning her life in Albuquerque, N.M., where lawyer-father Jack Zimmermann was serving as an active duty Marine during the Vietnam Conflict, Terri was in sixth grade when her family moved to Houston and her father accepted a position, working for the legendary Richard "Racehorse" Haynes. (Notably, Jack Zimmermann – one of his daughter's most influential mentors – served on active duty in the Marine Corps for 14 years and 16 years in the Marine Reserves before retiring in the mid-1990s.)

While earning a degree in government from The University of Texas at Austin, she interned her junior year for the now-late Congressman J.J. Pickle. The Washington experience soured Terri's interests in politics, but not her determination to make a positive difference, to repair the world.

So, what to do?

"I finally relented. A law degree is a good way to help others," she explained; and later, while she was at it, she decided to go back on her adamant teen-years refusal not only to become an attorney, but also to become a Marine. It took only a few visits with a Marine recruiter before she began thinking, "Hmmm. That sounds pretty darned good."

Attending classes at Georgetown University Law Center, she spent one summer attending a 10-week officer candidate school, an experience she said was used to evaluate and screen out anyone not up to the job. She also learned to be a Marine first and an attorney second. After earning her law degree, she spent another six months of basic infantry training (one of 15



Terri Zimmerman, current day (left) and during a field exercise in a snowstorm (right).

women in a 200-person integrated training school and the first integrated school the Marine Corp had attempted).

"We carried the same equipment our male counterparts carried," said the attorney, "and we went everywhere the men went. I have a photo during a five-day training exercise in the snow. You can tell by my expression, it was not all fun, but we completed the exercise," she added proudly.

Zimmerman's active duty included OCS (1990) and TBS (January-July 1993) at Quantico, Va.; Naval Justice School (September-October 1993) in Newport, R.I. Then, active duty tour at Marine Corps Air Station, El Toro, Calif. (1993-1996); and active duty mobilization at Camp Pendleton, Calif. (February-August 2008).

"The military justice system isn't perfect, but it is usually more fair than how cases are handled in civilian courts. The perception that the military protects its own is not accurate," she continued. "Remembering civilian prosecutors are elected, there is much pressure for them to por-

tray themselves as being tough on crime. That's why they don't always take the hard cases. The military, in the same situation, will take the case. Not only will the military prosecute, even difficult sexual assault cases, but they will appoint a lawyer, free of charge, to people who file a claim of sexual assault.

When you read about civilian lawyer Terri Zimmermann's early practice, one might assume – like father, like daughter – that her early professional life was punctuated by some high-profile cases – cases like the so-called "Cheerleader Mom Murder Case" and the "Border Shooting Case."

"Those cases came to us because of my father," the attorney is quick to point out, but she cannot deny her thoroughness, her love of research and her demand for unquestioned accuracy – talents that played significant roles in her early success.

"I was taught not to say anything without believing it was true," she explained. "My parents also taught us to first think about what you say before you say it."

She sees a symbiotic relationship in being an attorney and a Marine. "When someone once asked me how my military experience influenced my law practice, my response was, 'Absolutely.' There is an emphasis in the military as there is in law on values and doing the right thing. It's the same when it comes to giving a full effort to every task and that attention to detail is important."

She also triangulates her Judaism into the equation. "We were always taught to be kind, to do the right thing and to be helpful," she said. "Judaism fosters this. In the military, we take care of each other, too. We don't leave anyone behind. As Jews, we repair the world. Our military tries to do the same thing."

Terri's husband is a former Marine (as is her brother), and she commits her free time to him, children and 10-year old Labrador retriever, currently undergoing chemotherapy.

"As I begin the second part of my career, I'm aware I am evolving and I'm enjoying what I do," she said. "Although at this point, I always want more time and I constantly feel the pull to be a full-time mom, a full-time Marine and a full-time civilian lawyer, but I'm where I need to be."

"My problem is having a hard time saying 'no,'" she confessed. "I always want to have a finger in every pie, but it is all a matter of priorities."

When she returned to civilian life, the young attorney became part of Zimmermann, Lavine & Zimmermann, P.C. Her father now calls her "the brains of the business," and co-workers acknowledge Terri is the only person who wins arguments with her father.

She and her family are longtime members of Congregation Emanu El. She grew up there. They also attend Congregation Shma Koleinu.

As another Veteran's Day approaches, Col. Terri Zimmermann is humbled by those who have made the ultimate sacrifice, families of loved ones who have served multiple deployments, veterans whose love of country exceeded all others.

"I've continued to serve – as a Marine and an attorney – because I enjoy helping people and enjoy being involved," the veteran said. "In the Marine Corps, there's another saying that goes something like, 'Stay in as long as you're having fun.'" □