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Index



Gunnery Sgt. Mark Oliva

Operation Mesopotamia II: A Marine walks alongside a rolling M-1A1 Main Battle Tank during a search north of Fallujah as part of Operation Mesopotamia II. A platoon of tanks and a reinforced infantry squad conducted a series of weapon searches and snap vehicle checkpoints near Dra Digla to disrupt insurgent activity in the Northern Regimental Security Area recently.

Tank-infantry team denies insurgency near Fallujah

Gunnery Sgt. Mark Oliva
1st Marine Division

DRA DIGLA, Iraq —

Insurgents no longer have free

reign in the rural farmlands

north of Fallujah.

A platoon of Marines from Company D, 2nd Tank Battalion, joined with a reinforced squad from Company E, 2nd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment to scour the area north of Fallujah for insurgent activity in Operation Mesopotamia II. The operation took place in the Northern Regimental Security Area and disrupted insurgent activity, keeping terrorists from using the sparsely populated region as a staging area to launch attacks in Fallujah.

The combined tank-infantry team is serving in Iraq with Regimental Combat Team 5.

"We came out here to interdict anti-Iraqi forces and provide a secure environment for

the Iraqi people," said 2nd Lt. Jim A. Neville, a 32-year-old tank platoon commander from West Newfield, Maine. "It's not a permanently occupied area for us, so there's always something new for us."

Marines conducted a series of cache sweeps, cordon-and-knocks and snap vehicle checkpoints, searching for hidden weapons and insurgents on wanted lists. Marines searched abandoned chemical factories, squatters' huts, farms and roadside stores. At least two were detained for matching descriptions of wanted individuals and several weapons were confiscated.

The operation marked just one smaller operation in a string of efforts north of Fallujah. While most Marines work in the more densely populated areas of Fallujah, Saqlawiyah and Ameriyah, the

See INSURGENCY page 11A



Gunnery Sgt. Mark Oliva
An M-1A1 Main Battle Tank crew from Company D, 2nd Tank Battalion follows in the wake of a seven-ton truck filled with Marines from Company E, 2nd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment during Operation Mesopotamia II.

DoD working to prevent sexual assaults

Rudi Williams
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Sexual assault is one of the most underreported crimes in the military and in society as a whole, a top defense personnel and readiness official said.

"Some studies indicate that only five percent of sexual assaults are reported," Air Force Brig. Gen. K.C. McClain, who heads DoD's Joint Task Force for Sexual Assault Prevention and Response, said during the DoD Women's History Month observance at the women's memorial here March 21. "The highest number we've ever seen is [approximately] 35 percent. We don't know where DoD fits in that range, but we're in there somewhere."

McClain is the single point of accountability for DoD sexual assault policy matters. The task force, stood up in October 2004, develops policy and programs to improve prevention efforts, enhance victim support, and increase offender accountability.

A DoD directive on the issue was published a year later. A DoD instruction that expands on the directive is expected to be published shortly.

One task force goal was to remove barriers that prevent victims from reporting sexual assault, McClain said. "Immediately following a sexual assault, there is an overwhelming sense of loss of control and a sense of powerlessness," she noted. "For many, the thought of participating in

See PREVENT page 11A

Marine-led Task Force trains Republic of Georgia soldiers

Staff Sgt. Jonathan Moor
American Forces Press Service

KRTSANISI, Georgia — A U.S. Marine-led task force marked the completion of training for two Georgian logistics battalions in a ceremony March 24.

"I know personally many of the U.S. task force members feel this was the most rewarding thing they have done since they joined the U.S. military," said Lt. Col. William McGowan, commander of the Georgia Sustainment and Stability Operations Program task force.

"They believe that helping Georgia, a country that not long ago was a stranger to the United States,

is the right thing to do."

The U.S. European Command program assists and enhances Georgia's military capability to sustain its contribution to peacekeeping efforts in Iraq. In this round, the Marines trained logistics soldiers with the Republic of Georgia's 1st and 2nd brigades.

"Georgia is also helping the U.S. in many, many ways with the Global War on Terrorism. Both the United States and Georgia view one another as true friends today and for the future," McGowan said.

When deployed, the Georgian soldiers will be part of the international coalition providing stability

operations in Iraq.

The Georgian soldiers started their training in January with squad-level tactics and battalion staff-level operations. The squad-level training included patrolling, weapons handling, convoy operations, military operations in urban terrain, and first aid, Staff Sgt. Roy Brady explained.

The staff training will help the Georgian staff handle command and control of their battalion, Capt. Jason Richter, the training program's operations officer, said.

The language barrier was a challenge during the training, Brady mentioned. Few people speak Georgian outside the Caucasus region. The training had to be conducted entirely through a team of interpreters, which presented difficulties when communicating complicated military terms and concepts.

A primary effect of the program is that the Georgian army, along with U.S.-trained Georgian law enforcement officers, is more capable of securing Georgia's borders, U.S. officials said. They added this keeps the Caucasus region off the ever-shrinking list of potential safe havens for terrorists.

With relatively little funding and few U.S. troops acting only in a training capacity, the U.S. is helping its Georgian ally in



Staff Sgt. Jonathan Moor
Republic of Georgia soldiers on weapons marksmanship at a range in Krtisanisi.

See GEORGIA page 11A

Commanding General of MARSOC speaks at Marine Corps Association luncheon

Cpl. Ken Melton
MARSOC

Brig. Gen. Dennis J. Hejlik, Commander, United States Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command, spoke about the new unit to members of the Marine Corps Association during a luncheon at Paradise Point Officer's Club March 22.

Hejlik took the opportunity to answer questions and clear up some common misconceptions about MARSOC.

MARSOC remains under administrative control of the Marine Corps, but U.S. Special Operations Command will maintain operational control of the organization. According to Hejlik, this means Marines with MARSOC will be required to maintain Marine Corps training standards and attend required schools in order to remain competitive for promotion, but MARSOC's missions will

be assigned by SOCOM.

One member of the audience expressed concern regarding how Marine Force Reconnaissance battalions will be leveraged by MARSOC.

"The assets of their skills and experience will be used to help form the bodies of the Marine Special Operations Companies for the two MSOs [Marine Special Operations Battalions]," Hejlik said.

MARSOC will also draw on Marines and sailors throughout the Corps to help fill its ranks to 2,600 and meet its goal of full operational capability by October 2007.

Questions were also raised about tour dates posted and deployments for Marines assigned to MARSOC.

Hejlik explained that while the MARSOC headquarters is non-deployable, it will remain battle-ready and Marines from

See LUNCHEON page 11A



Hejlik

Man on the street

If you saw a Marine who was inappropriately dressed in civilian attire, would you correct them? If so, how?



"The Marine Corps is a well established organization. Simply for our reputation out in town, I would let the Marine know what he needed to adjust in order to look presentable."

Lance Cpl. Bryant M. Myers
Small Arms Technician
Headquarters and Service Co.
2nd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment
Watkins Glen, N.Y.

"I would definitely pull him aside and inform the Marine of his deficiencies."



Sgt. Chris W. Smith
Machinegunner
Headquarters Co.
6th Marine Regiment
2nd MarDiv
St. Mary's City, Md.

"I would tactfully inform the Marine in a way that wouldn't embarrass him. If it were me getting corrected, I wouldn't want the entire 7-day store watching someone give me a [but] chewing in aisle 10."

Cpl. Ramon Pinto
Infantryman
Foreign Military Training Unit
MARSOC
New Britain, Conn.

"I have no problem with embarrassing Marines if the situation calls for it. I would tell the Marine to fix himself and ask what command he is with."

1st Lt. Nathan A. Smith
Weapons Platoon Commander
Company K, 3/2
2nd MarDiv
Cumberland, Maine



"If a Marine isn't in proper civilian attire, I would correct them right there on the spot."

Staff Sgt. Anita B. Angell
Postal
Headquarters and Service Bn.
2nd MLG
Pelham, N.C.

Pursuing a College Education while active duty; you can't afford not

Guest Commentary
Master Gunnery Sgt.
Billy D. Stewart Jr.

If someone offered you annually \$3,500 while serving on active duty, would you accept and use it? Of course you would. The Marine Corps offers this amount of money to any Marine that desires to attend college while on active duty utilizing the Tuition Assistance program. While most Marines plan to attend college following their Marine Corps careers using the G.I. Bill, many find out that they will come up short financially. Unless you have funds saved for room and board, meal plans, or generous parents, plan on working your way through college or taking out student loans.

The G.I. Bill provides approximately \$1,034 per month while you are actually sitting in class. The bill does not provide any payment during college breaks. Often times the tuition/books is not what causes a student to go into debt. It is the living expenses. Rent is expensive in any college town and most former service members have no interest in living in the dorms. They have had their fare share of barracks life. The average student pays about \$5000-\$7000 per year living out in town. In addition, if dorm life appeals to a student, the going rate is close to \$6000 with a meal plan included. Be advised that these dorms are only available while classes are in session. However, be encouraged because there is hope.

The military offers the best "work your way through college" program. Where else can you find a meal plan, dorm room and 75 percent paid tuition while receiving a full salary. I tell Marines daily of my college adventures and end the discussion with the phrase "if I can do it, anyone can." I truly believe this statement and after you read this column, you will too.

Like many of you, I tried my hand at the college entrance tests (ACT/SAT) when I was 18 years old. I hated school and sported a blazing "C"

average. I tried to find every excuse not to excel. I was much more interested in the three "Ms;" Making Money, Misbehaving, and My Girlfriend." My ACT scores came back and proved that the only part of a college that I could be accepted into was the bathroom. After that day I knew that college was not for me and I would forever remain a blue-collar worker. I was off to the Marine Corps to find my fame and fortune.

Following my first tour on the Drill Field, my company First Sgt influenced me to take some college courses. I was used to working 18-hour days anyway, so I decided to bide my time in the evenings with night classes. Little did I know after only seven years of college I would earn my Bachelor of Science Degree in Aviation Management and a Master of Science Degree in Administration. My BS cost around \$18,000-\$25,000 for tuition and books alone. I paid approximately \$7,000. My MSA totaled close to \$10,000, while I paid a little more than \$3,000. These estimates are both extremely conservative. So, I am sure some of you are saying "big deal, so what, why should I waste my time now?" Before you close the page of this paper, note some additional hard facts concerning a college education while serving on active duty.

Virtually every military base has a college, university or trade school on base or within close proximity. The majority of these colleges are Service Member Opportunity Colleges that understand the military and provide appropriate educational programs, courses and services to their students. These colleges also offer credit for non-traditional learning, military training and flexible opportunities that are not always available to the civilian world. This prevents Marines from repeating courses and starting over every time they transfer to a new duty station. Many of the degree programs are much more flexible and user friendly. There are also the same colleges that offer distant learning programs through the internet, correspondence, or on the weekend. In fact, many service members complete their entire

degrees on line or without putting foot on a campus. I another great service opportunity education offices is the opportunity to utilize College Examination Program. The www.collegeboard.com CLEP as the most widely credit-by-examination program in the United States today. It helps all ages earn college degrees by obtaining credit for what they know. By receiving a score, a student can earn college credits toward a college exam subject. These tests are active duty service members. Civilians pay \$50-\$75 for the

Besides the obvious college degree, a Bachelor of Science degree today equals what a high school was 20 years ago. A college degree will enhance your organizational skills, as well as your oral and communication ability. A college degree proves to an employer that you have a sense of personal responsibility. A college education will develop the ability to operate under stress and others. More importantly, you will be better educated Marine. Your educational value will increase.

This article was certainly written to steal the thunder of the office or to brag about myself through college while on active duty but only to pass on that opportunity and challenges await you in the future. Time goes by quickly and diminishes before we hang up the phone. Many times the best accompany our service are greater. Attending college while on active duty is a reality that is more than most Marines know. It is possible, but not easy. It requires time, dedication, and self-sacrifice. Do yourself and visit the education office. Success to attend college while serving is 99 percent determination and one percent inspiration. Just read your personal motivation, now get hot. Semper Fi. For more information call the Education Center at 451-3000.

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For a CI/HUMINT Screening Interview
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Retention Assistance Visit Team

The Retention Assistance Visit Team is scheduled to be at Camp Lejeune April 3-5, 2006. The first-term Marine Marston Pavilion at 7:30 p.m. For more information about boat space availability, contact your Career Retention Specialist.

Sempertoons

by Staff Sgt. Wolf

PART 2 of a 4 PART SERIES Sempertoons Presents: How Easter Eggs get hard for Easter.

Training begins with the "Easter Fitness Test" (EFT), this is the first time "Hard Boil" gets to see what his Yokes are made of.

The EGG-HANG pull-ups are quite hard. The minimum is to do one. Yokes that can't do one EGG-HANG are dropped from training and shipped off to DENNY'S where they become part of the breakfast menu. The worst fear and greatest motivator for a Yoke is, to know if they don't give 100%, they can end up being scrambled into an omelet and served during the 3am club crowd at DENNY'S. (Not a pretty sight)



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Appropriate attire not just for service members

Lance Cpl. Brandon R. Holgersen
Marine Corps Base

Marines are recognized as Marines in and out of uniform and are expected to uphold the high standards of the Corps and the tradition of excellence they were founded on.

Marines are responsible for this and many other things; they are also responsible for the way their family members and guests dress while aboard the base, according to base order 1020.8W.

Civilians are expected to wear appropriate clothing and follow the same base orders and regulations as Marines.

Marines, sailors and civilian supervisors are responsible for making sure civilians understand the rules of the base.

Dressing appropriately is no different than any other rules of the base. It's just like using a hands free device for a cell phone when driving a car, according to Sgt. Maj. Michael A. Brown, the Marine Corps Base sergeant major.

The order states family members, retirees, guests and government service employees will be required to conform to the proper dress standards. Appropriate civilian attire is considered to be clothing that meets the common sense standards of safety, decency and cleanliness.

Clothing that is considered to be inappropriate is clothing that is ripped, torn, ragged, excessively dirty, revealing or displays drug-related images, racist groups or other illegal activities.

No physical fitness clothing can be worn in stores or shops and headgear, such as hats and visors, must be removed indoors, including gyms. Other clothing items, which are not specifically designed to be normally worn as headgear such as bandanas or do rags, are prohibited anywhere on base.

Anyone who is not following the base regulation should be told of the base order and be told to correct themselves, according to Brown.

"There would be nothing wrong with telling a Marine or his dependent that they are out of regulation," Brown said.

There are consequences to breaking the rules of the base and they are determined on a case-by-case basis, according to Brown.

Military personnel are accountable for the actions of their family members and for the civilian attire worn by their family members aboard Camp Lejeune.

"Every family member should follow the rules aboard the base and fall under the regulations," Brown said. "It is our responsibility that our dependents know the rules. We take full responsibility of our dependents." ■

No ripped or torn-down clothing

No sweat pants

No shower shoes

Marines can be instantly identified in and out of uniform and are held to a high standard by other Marines and civilians in the community. Marines and their family members must always maintain a presentable appearance and follow base regulations, while on Camp Lejeune.

Photo by Lance Cpl. Brandon R. Holgersen

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News from Iraq

Marines assist in search for Army Sergeant



Fallujah: British Lance Cpl. David Berry motions to Cpl. Iain Hammond as they drag a ground-penetrating radar during a search for the remains of Army Sgt. Keith M. Maupin south of Fallujah. Marines, U.S. and British soldiers acted on a tip that Maupin was buried in a desert grave.

Gunnery Sgt. Mark Oliva
1st Marine Division

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq — It was an honorable mission.

Marines from 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 5, assisted recently in the search for Army Sgt. Keith M. Maupin's remains. The recovery team consisted of U.S. Army and British soldiers.

Test results confirmed that several partial sets of remains that were recovered were not American. Still, Marines and soldiers were proud to take part in the search to recover Maupin.

"It is the noblest of missions," said Gunnery Sgt. Brett A. Turek, a 37-year-old Mobile Assault Platoon commander from Hinsdale, Ill. "Fifty years from now, when we're bouncing our grand kids on our knees and they ask what we did in the Marine Corps, we'll be able to say this is what we did to make a difference."

Marines searched several possible grave sites south of Fallujah. Maupin was taken captive by insurgents April 9, 2004, when his convoy was attacked near Abu Ghraib, south of Baghdad. He was shown on insurgent propaganda films and insurgents later claimed to have executed him, although the video was never authenticated.

"We exploit every single one as if it's the one," said Army Sgt. 1st Class James Haftmann, a 37-year-old from Charleston, S.C., assigned to Multi-National Corps Iraq's Personnel Recovery Detachment. "But we don't stop searching."

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The recovery team was comprised of Marines from 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Logistics Group, as well as soldiers from MNCI's Personnel Recovery Detachment and British soldiers from the Joint Forces (United Kingdom) Explosive Ordnance Disposal Group, 32 Engineer Regiment.

Maupin is the only U.S. service member listed as missing in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Navy Capt. Michael Scott Speicher is still listed as missing from Operation Desert Storm.

Efforts to find Maupin have been ongoing since June 2004, shortly after his capture. A total of 72 grave sites were excavated, unearthing remains. Still, the search for Maupin continues.

Haftmann said the dig here to recover Maupin's remains came from a "reliable source."

"He's been reliable in the past," he explained. "He has some credibility with us. He knew there was a Caucasian buried here. He said it was American."

Haftmann said although the source was inexact as to Maupin's identity, each tip was treated as if it was completely accurate. He spoke of the mission as Marines operating heavy construction equipment began scraping the loose desert sand, just inches at a time.

"One source could be wrong, but it could be right," Haftmann explained. "We don't want to rule anything out."

Haftmann said hundreds of service



Fallujah: Marines drive engineer equipment up to an excavation site during a search for Army Sgt. Keith M. Maupin south of Fallujah.



Fallujah: The team of Marines, MNCI's Personnel Recovery Detachment and British soldiers pose for a group photo after the mission to search for Army Sgt. Keith M. Maupin's remains.

Gunnery Sgt. Mark Oliva
1st Marine Division

members behind the scenes have been dedicated to recovering Maupin. Intelligence gatherers and analysts down to infantrymen and engineers poured over multiple sites, hoping each hole would yield the answers for which they searched.

Marines seized the suspected burial site, pushing forces out to maintain security. On a small hilltop, they found four crude graves marked with simple weather-worn stones. A fifth empty grave was just feet away, half-filled with wind-blown sand.

British engineers, 1st Lt. Chris Elworthy, Cpl. Iain Hammond and Lance Cpl. David Berry dragged a ground-penetrating radar over the protruding mounds of sand and confirmed that anomalies — disturbances — lay beneath the sand. This was the proof they sought that remains might actually lay beneath the ground.

Marine engineers were called in and began digging, scraping away the sand and shards of limestone. Marines and soldiers searched each bucket for signs of remains.

"It gets very personal," Haftmann explained. "Not just because he's an Army guy. Anybody in the service is a priority. My motivating factor is if I had a son, the last thing I'd want is nobody looking for him. The toughest part is not knowing ... finding something like we did today and wait."

Nearly an hour into the digging, the first bones

were unearthed. Marines and soldiers, however, carefully combed through sand, of the diesel engines from the constant use of the engines from the constant nearly drowned out the Marines they bent closer, examining nearly every

Army Master Sgt. Roy D. Lee, from Picayune, Miss., assigned to MNCI, said he had a connection to finding Maupin was serving in Baquba when Maupin was

"You get to know a guy when you happened and how he got taken," Lee

to know him as well as someone you

The team photographed and marked

remains. They placed the bones gently

Each time a fragment of bone was found

digging stopped and Haftmann jumped in

digging by hand.

"These are moments in time that

Turek said. "You start to become more

want to help out."

Turek said he didn't inform his

exact nature of the mission until

they mounted their vehicles to leave.

"Once they got the mission stated in," he explained.

"You treat it as any other mission,

very personal for me," Turek added.

He and a daughter and if this happened to

that someone would make this effort."

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Its demonstrate that patient, persistent presence is key in Iraq

Nathan Braden
Marine Division

FALLUJAH, Iraq — Not "jackpot day" in Iraq, roves that a patient and roach to counter-insurgents can be very effective.

Marines turn up huge numbers of small-arms rounds pulled from buried holes, though, yield much more hitting a "dry hole." On Scout Platoon, 1st Lt. Braden, currently assigned to 2nd Assault Amphibian Battalion, experienced this recently in his company operations in Fallujah. The Marines from Toms River are on duty in Iraq with Combat Team 5.

"We are a good platoon.

"The right approach to what we are doing here," said Capt.

Johns, Jr., 32, Company

Commanding officer from Toms River.

At the start of the operation

the platoon left the combat area, shortly after the dusty column of armored

mission called for them to rural area suspected of activity. They bounced over estates fields and around houses for a couple of the first of a series of dry holes discovered nothing and headed for their next objective.

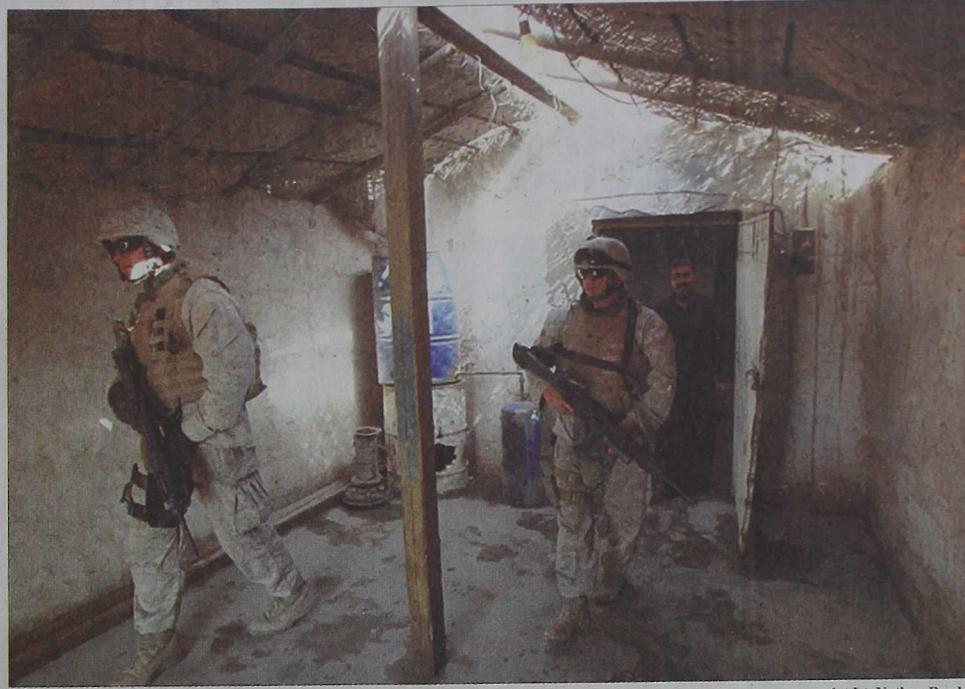
to catch people red-handed Lt. Troy M. Sayler, the Scout Platoon commander, Neb.

work can be frustrating, dedicated into the mission with fitting the intelligence to it sometimes, it doesn't it was a pattern that followed throughout the day.

An informant suggested station may have been

insurgent activity. Some intel from a guy we found Lt. Sayler decided to it," said Cpl. Andrew Yu, TOW gunner from Orange City, on his third deployment.

"It's a good idea to all the tips because you what you might get."



1st Lt. Nathan Braden

Fallujah: Cpl. William J. Nelson (left), 22, from Herrick, S.D. and Cpl. Michael O. Muhlenbruch (center), 21, from Galena, Mo. search a man's workshop while looking for weapons and evidence of insurgent activity north of Fallujah. Both Marines are TOW gunners with Scout Platoon, Company A, 2nd Assault Amphibian Battalion.



1st Lt. Nathan Braden

Fallujah: Cpl. Jon J. Rynes, 21, from Memphis, Tenn. and a section leader with Scout Platoon, Company A, 2nd Assault Amphibian Battalion, opens a crate suspected of holding stolen goods at a gas station north of Fallujah.

Marines discovered several industrial-size generators suspected of being stolen goods, but did not have enough evidence to detain anyone or seize the property.

While Marines searched inside the compound, Marines on the cordon stayed busy outside.

"We had to ensure the trucks were in the proper place to cover our sectors," said Lance Cpl. Matthew D. Partridge, 19, a TOW gunner from

Charlotte, N.C., who was one of the Marines on the cordon.

"We controlled traffic on the road, but at the same time we were looking for certain vehicles we were told about," he added. "We stopped a few trucks and searched them and the people, as the interpreter interviewed them."

"The op went well, we quickly gained control of the site, searched all the buildings, questioned the five individuals inside and got some information," Sayler said after their search was complete.

Still, nothing turned up they could act on. Dry hole number two.

The platoon mounted back on their vehicles and continued to search the area before stopping at a local restaurant to talk to locals and ask about insurgent activity in the area.

Their diligence paid off this time. They collected several tips when

the Marines used one of their more rewarding tactics, treating people with respect.

"People open up and just tell them stuff," Gibbons said.

"That leads to them developing a trust and

confidence with the people at the same time getting bad guys off the street.

"They reserve the heavy hand for those guys who really need it," he added. "Lt. Sayler knows how to butter people up. His section leaders are the same way."

Although the platoon did not detain any suspected insurgents or locate any improvised explosive devices this day, they made several significant contributions during their deployment.

"We've probably done at least 50 cordon and searches," Sayler said. "But, where the platoon has really shined is finding IEDs. We've found close to 30 of them here."

The Marines know that dry holes are part of the job in Iraq. They understand that not every tip leads to a weapons cache. Still, they leave nothing to chance.

"The hardest thing for a Marine to do is sit and wait for something to happen," Partridge said. "It's not in the Marine nature to sit around and wait."

The one tip they don't act upon, might be the one that gets hundred of roadside bombs off the street or catches the insurgent making them.

"It's a good feeling when we catch a guy because I know it helps out our fellow Marines out here, plus it helps the civilians," Yu said. "Sometimes

civilians are scared to give us information and it feels good when we take someone off the street who's scared that guy."

Sayler said he understood the frustrations of days like these, when things don't turn out like they planned. Still, he said these are successes, and his platoon continues to push ahead because of strong leadership among his noncommissioned officers.

"I'm very lucky to have a platoon with intelligent and professional Marines and strong NCOs," Sayler said. "The vast majority of the missions are lead by the section leaders, a sergeant and a senior corporal. Both have led over 100 patrols."

The Marines has developed their tactics into methods that work for them.

"We did good today, we've defiantly developed since we've been out here," said Sgt. Christopher J. Fortin, 22, 1st section leader from Lakeland, Fla. "We are at our peak performance after six months of refining our operations out here. We are as good as we are going to get without becoming supernatural."

Scout Platoon is comprised of TOW gunners, Marines trained to fire wire-guided anti-tank missile systems. The platoons are typically assigned to tank battalions and employed as forward and flank protection for tank formations. ■

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Iraqi soldiers graduate Humvee course, receive two dozen of the vehicles

Staff Sgt. Jim Goodwin
Regimental Combat Team 7

CAMP AL ASAD, Iraq — Iraqi soldiers from the 2nd Brigade, 7th Iraqi Army Division received 24 High Mobility, Multi-wheeled Vehicles March 20, after graduating from a three-week Humvee licensing and preventive maintenance course.

More than 20 enlisted soldiers were recognized in a formal graduation ceremony, where they received certificates of completion from the commanding general of the 2nd Brigade and the commanding officer of Regimental Combat Team 7, Col. W. Blake Crowe.

The ceremony marked another milestone in the 2nd Brigade's progress toward relieving Coalition Forces in western Al Anbar province of all security operations.

The new Humvees will offer added protection for the soldiers on Iraq's dangerous roads — a step up from the small, unarmored pick-up trucks they were using.

"We get new vehicles to help us fight terrorism," said one Iraqi Army officer following the graduation. "Now, we can help our battalions with convoys and use this vehicles to help support our battalions. There are future bad days for the insurgents."

Following the ceremony, the Iraqi soldiers loaded up their new Humvees and drove them to Camp Yasser, the 2nd Brigade's camp.

To graduate from the course, the Iraqi soldiers were required to obtain 250 driving miles in the vehicles under four different conditions — day, night, off-road and "black out" driving, which required them to drive in the darkness.

Furthermore, they were required to pass a written test, road test and various performance tests used to maneuver the vehicles on specific courses.

"I was particularly impressed with how [well] they grasped the knowledge for the written test," said Master Sgt. John F. Greene, RCT-7's motor transportation chief. "They hung in very well with the long and arduous hours we put in. I had no idea they would average 90-



Al Asad, Iraq: An Iraqi soldier from 2nd Brigade, 7th Iraqi Army Division walks to receive his certificate from 2nd Brigade's commanding general during a graduation ceremony for completing a Humvee licensing and preventive maintenance course.

percent grade average."

Greene and a handful of his Marines worked "day and night" with the Iraqi soldiers to complete the training, which was taught entirely in English through the use of an interpreter, who had to translate everything into Arabic for the soldiers.

"I found that by learning a little Arabic goes a long way because they don't have (interpreters) or they couldn't tell me conversion words for things like 'bear' when they have to bear left or right in traffic," said Greene, of Washington. He added that overcoming the Iraqis' cultural driving habits and the language barrier presented a unique challenge when teaching the course.

Regardless of any barriers — language-related or on the roadways — the Marines were impressed with the Iraqis' ability to quickly learn the required material and their eagerness to demonstrate their knowledge.

"They're like little kids at the first day of school — their curiosity is unreal," said Lance Cpl. Ian Eichel, a 23-year-old from Canton, Mich., who spent the past three weeks showing the Iraqis the mechanics of the Humvees. "It's amazing."

Lance Cpl. Jonathan B. Vest, a 20-year-old mechanic from

Claremore, Okla., also spent countless hours under the hoods of the vehicles with the Iraqi soldiers, and says he was impressed by their eagerness to learn.

"They're fast learners," said Vest. "Most of them were in one of the Humvees the whole time. It shows that progress is being made and that they are improving."

Furthermore, Vest has developed a new respect for the soldiers, and says he trusts them with his life.

"I know they would watch my back and I would watch theirs," he said. "This country is going to be better because what we're doing for it."

Now that they are licensed to operate the vehicles, the Iraqi soldiers are also qualified to teach and qualify other Iraqi soldiers to work on and drive the Humvees.

"The fact that you can train yourselves will show the whole



Al Asad, Iraq: An Iraqi soldier from 2nd Brigade, 7th Iraqi Army Division, clambers Mobility, Multi-Wheeled Vehicle for a better view of the vehicle's engine at the start week basic operator and maintenance course taught by Regimental Combat Team at Al Asad, Iraq.

nation that you will very soon lead this fight," said Crowe during the ceremony.

In addition to obtaining their new wheels, the 2nd Brigade — one of two Iraqi Army brigades in western Al Anbar province — have spent months now partnered with Coalition forces learning the various military skills they'll need to function as a military headquarters element to the three Iraqi infantry battalions which will eventually be under their charge.

Partnered with a Military Transition Team — groups of Multi-national Forces service members assigned to track and guide each Iraqi military unit's transition to full control — the Iraqi soldiers are learning the skills required to operate as a command staff, such as administration, logistical procurement, command and staff relations and tactical decision making.

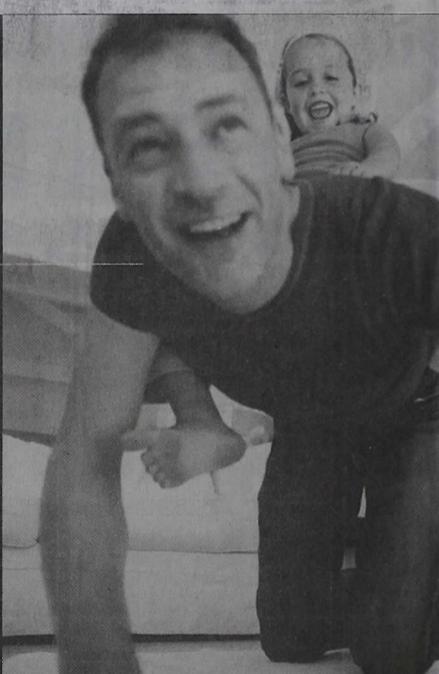
Marines from RCT-7, who arrived in Iraq two months ago,

have spent the past evaluating, training and the Iraqi soldier

While waiting to the new Humvees following the graduation, one Iraqi soldier driver's door and answer a quick question did you learn during weeks behind the Humvee?

His response we smile to Greene's family safety, safety." ■

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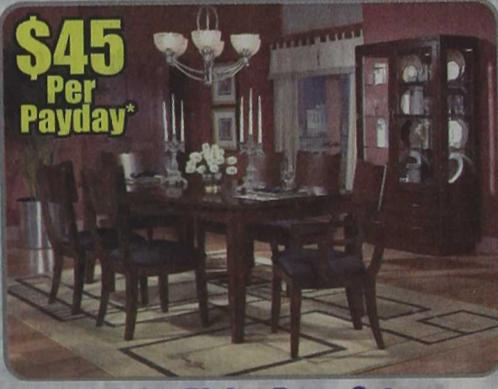
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Advisors keep Iraqi Army on track



Iraq: Army Lt. Col. Frank M. Sajer, a 43-year-old from Camp Hill, Pa., speaks to an Iraqi soldier while on patrol in Fallujah. Sajer is part of a Military Transition Team of U.S. Army soldiers tasked with assisting 1st Bn, 2nd Brigade, 1st Iraqi Army Division to increase capabilities and combat effectiveness.

Cpl. Christopher J. Zahn
Regimental Combat Team 5

LUJAH, Iraq — The small group of military advisors working hand-in-hand with Iraqi soldiers are nothing as they expected in Iraq. It's better. Advisors assigned as the Military Transition Team liaisons partnered 2nd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 5 they had their work cut out for when they deployed. They've that Iraqi soldiers are eager, and ready for the challenge of the insurgency in Iraq. From the outset, the U.S.

soldiers had to rethink their plan. They thought they'd be teaching the basics and brought soldiers well versed in building basically trained soldiers.

"My guys are all drill sergeants who thought they would be coming over to train Iraqis," said Army Lt. Col. Frank M. Sajer, the MiTT leader for 1st Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 1st Iraqi Army Division. "Our job is to advise the Iraqis, not fight for them. We carry weapons for our own personal protection, but that's it."

Sajer, a 43-year-old from Camp Hill, Pa., explained Iraqis do their own planning for the operations, conduct their own briefings and are ultimately

responsible for all aspects of the work. The advisors live up to their name — they advise and gently nudge the Iraqi soldiers in the right direction.

Army Staff Sgt. Donald J. Luther, a 39-year-old from Williamsburg, Va., said he was astounded when he first saw the Iraqi soldiers in action, when their bravery takes over and their fear evaporates.

"You would have to be here to understand how much it means just to drive along behind them in a

Lance Cpl. Christopher J. Zahn



Fallujah, Iraq: An Iraqi Army soldier looks out at the streets of Fallujah while on patrol. The soldier is part of 1st Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 1st Iraqi Army Division.

humvee," Luther said. "They get a stroke of courage. They think that as long we are out there nothing can happen to them, that an up-armored humvee is invincible."

When the team arrived in Iraq they had only a slight idea of what would be expected of them. They soon learned Iraqi soldiers were exceeding expectations.

"When we first got here we were holding these guys' hands," said Luther. "As time progressed we realized that these guys were better than a lot of people gave them credit for. We gave them a lot more freedom. Now we're more like referees."

The trust and respect that developed between the two groups of soldiers is a result of shared experiences.

"There was a car coming down the street — accelerating towards me," said Luther. "I began to go through my

escalation of force procedures and pointed my weapon at the vehicle. Apparently there was a teenager behind me whose parents were driving the vehicle and he was going to hit me in the helmet with a rock," he continued.

"I was so absorbed with the car that I never noticed it until I turned around and saw that one of the Iraqi soldiers had the kid in a headlock and had stopped him from hitting me. I felt like if they didn't care they would have just let the kid hit me in the head."

The morale of the Iraqis is high, Luther added. They work hard because they know that they are the ones determining their nation's future.

"A lot of these guys are getting a second chance [in] life," he added. "Under Saddam they were tortured, locked up in jail. Now they can actually account to something."

Marines escort pilgrims across western Al Anbar during religious pilgrimage

Capt. Mike Alvarez
Regimental Combat Team 7

AMP AL ASAD, Iraq — Marines operating in western Iraq provided a security escort for several buses of travelers making a religious pilgrimage across the Middle East to holy city of Najaf, Iraq.

The pilgrims traveled from Saudi Arabia to the point-of-entry crossing at Al Asad, Iraq, along the Iraqi-Jordanian border in southwestern Al Anbar province. Marines from 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, based out of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., were asked by the facility's director to "please do this favor" by escorting these pilgrims to Nukhayb where they can get to Najaf from there.

Furthermore, the pilgrims were concerned at their safety while traveling through western Al Anbar province.

Najaf, a holy city of about 500,000 people,

is located in An Najaf province, about 370 miles east of Trebil.

"In the interest of maintaining good relations, we said we would help," said Maj. Matt Good, the battalion's operations officer. "We sent an element to pick them up at [Port of Entry] Trebil and escorted them to Nukhayb — an eight-hour drive."

After arrangements were made, the Marines escorted the pilgrims without incident. The escort allowed the pilgrims to avoid traveling through more dangerous parts of western Al Anbar province, and encountering any potential run-ins with insurgents.

"Any time we can extend the olive branch, we do," said Good. "The only better course of action would be to have Iraqi Security Forces do the escort, but that will happen soon enough."

The Marines will continue to work closely with the Iraqi military and border patrols here to provide security and stability throughout the area.

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Marines teach Iraqis humvee maintenance

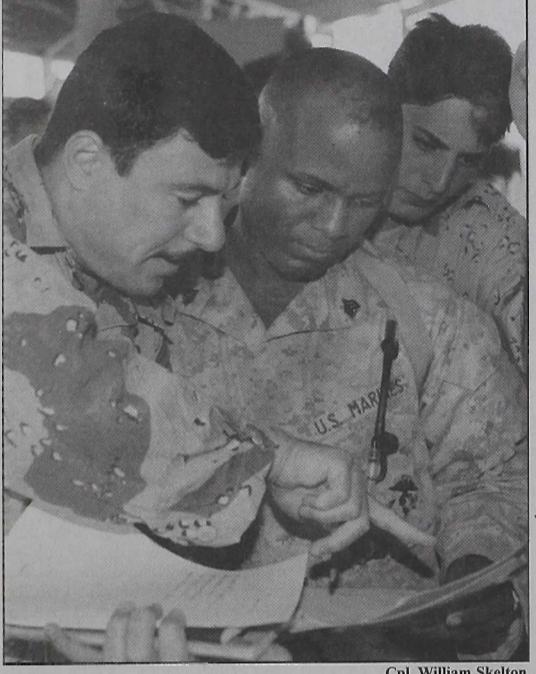
Cpl. William Skelton
1st Marine Division

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq

— Marines are making knuckle-busting, wrench-turners out of Iraqi soldiers.

Marines from 1st Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment working with Regimental Combat Team 5, are teaching Iraqis the ins and outs of humvee maintenance.

Mechanics from the battalion's Headquarters and Support Company are training Iraqi Army soldiers on maintenance and operations for humvees. The Iraqi soldiers received their new humvees less than a week ago.



Camp Fallujah, Iraq: 2nd Lt. Raad Marda Idan and Sgt. Laurice Kelly go over English measurements and the metric conversion system. Kelly and other Marines with 1st Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment's motor pool are teaching the Iraqi service members a two-week humvee maintenance course.

"We are teaching the Iraqis the basics," said Sgt. Laurice Kelly, a 36-year-old motor transport operations chief from Coppers Cove, Texas. "We are teaching basic maintenance and functions of the humvee."

Marines designed a down-and-dirty two-week course, including evasive driving techniques. It is a grease-under-the-fingernails, oil-stained session to get the Iraqi soldiers prepared to take out their new humvees.

"I took them out [on] a mile-and-a-half course here on Camp Fallujah and taught them how to drive in sand and on the hardball," Kelly said. "Most of the Iraqis are

very good drivers and picked it up quickly."

Kelly and his fellow instructors tied-in the training with realistic scenarios, including hard braking during emergency stops.

"Once they had the concepts of the driving techniques, I showed them how to stop using both the brakes and the gears to slow down," Kelly explained.

Iraqi soldiers already came with some of their own experience, all of them had time turning wrenches before they crawled under the vehicles.

"The men chosen for the course already had some mechanical experience," said Iraqi 2nd Lt. Raad Marda Idan, a 34-year-old transportation platoon commander with the 1st Battalion, 4th Brigade, 1st Iraqi Army Division. "But the skills they are learning in this course are very important."

The second week of training covered the major things Iraqis need to know in order to keep the humvees running, according to Kelly.

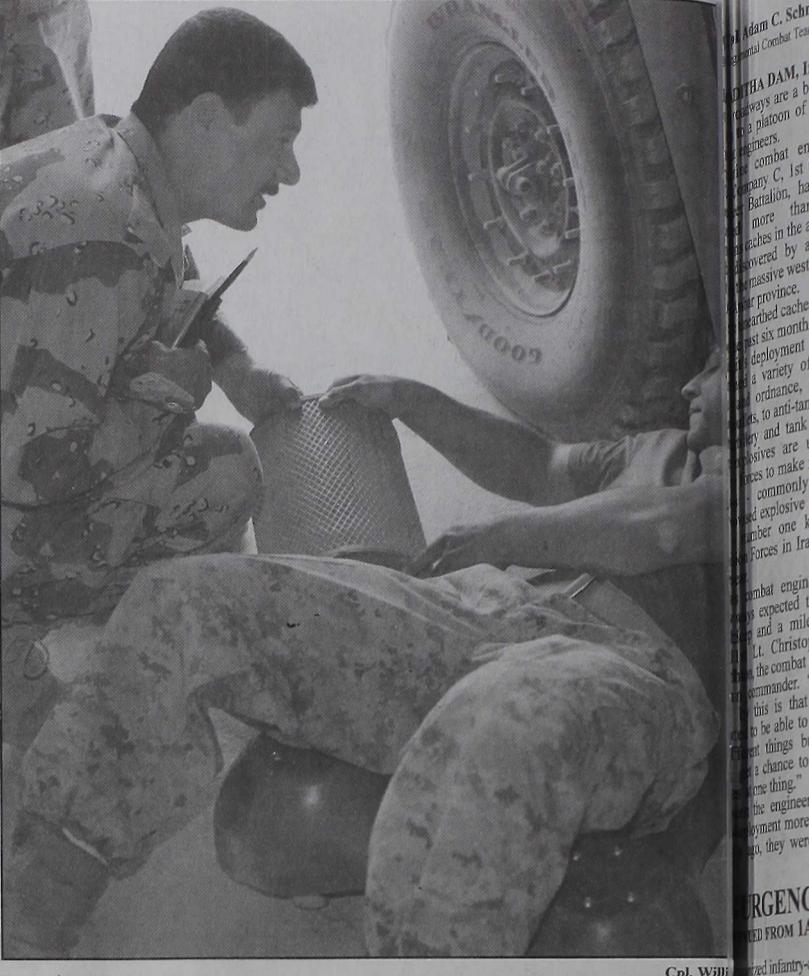
"We cover in a little more depth, the fluids that need to be changed and other maintenance issues that should be checked on a regular basis," he said.

One of the toughest challenges the Marines encountered during the course was the language barrier. Two Iraqi officers aided in bridging the gap, but instructions were short and concise, making it easy to understand.

"Not speaking their language and them not speaking ours, is definitely the hardest obstacle we have in the class," said Cpl. Nicholas R. Campbell, a 23-year-old maintenance chief from Allen, S.D.

Another obstacle was the conversion from English measurements to metric, of which the Iraqis are accustomed.

"Converting quarts and gallons to liters is the main



Camp Fallujah, Iraq: Iraqi 2nd Lt. Raad Marda Idan asks Sgt. Cesar O. Sanchez concerning the humvee's air filter.

issue we hit today," said Cpl. Christopher L. Gaytan, a 21-year-old mechanic from Garland, Texas. "We want to make sure that they understand the right levels to put in the humvees so that they can properly maintain them."

Marines knew the effort they put in teaching the Iraqi

soldiers brought them one step closer to being self-sufficient.

"We are teaching them to replace us," Kelly said. "This is just one of the many steps necessary in order for the Iraqi people to gain control of their country again."

The Iraqi service members were anxious to learn as

much as possible from the Marines. With programs in place, the Iraqis will have more opportunity to become an independent military force.

"This is very good," Raad said. "It's our mechanics to keep the humvees running."

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Combat engineers unearth more than 500 weapons cache, save lives in Iraq

Cpl. Adam C. Schnell
Company C, 1st Combat Engineer Battalion

Haditha Dam, Iraq — Days are a bit safer, to a platoon of Marine engineers.

Combat engineers of Company C, 1st Combat Engineer Battalion, have discovered more than 500 caches in the area, covered by a single massive western part of the province.

Unearthed caches, found

in six months during deployment to Iraq, a variety of explosive ordnance, ranging from anti-tank mines to tank rounds.

Explosives are used by

to make roadside

commonly called

explosive devices, one killer of forces in Iraq in the

combat engineers we

expected to be an

and a mile wide,"

Christopher D.

the combat engineer

commander. "What I

is that we are

able to do a lot

things but never

chance to become

nothing."

The engineers began

more than six

days, they weren't sure

what to expect while working with 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment — the infantry unit assigned to provide security in the Triad region of Haqlaniyah, Haditha and Barwanah.

"Without the combat engineers around, we would never find as many caches as we do," said 2nd Lt. Charlie Loya Jr., a Lamirada, Calif., native and a platoon commander for the battalion's Company I. "They really know how to use the metal detectors."

Historically, combat engineers are called upon to perform a number of tasks, such as constructing buildings, demolition, emplacing barriers, beefing up installation security measures, sweeping for mines and hidden weapons cache.

The platoon's 40 Marines did it all.

As the engineers rid the area of enemy bomb-making material, they also helped to save Marines' lives by constructing hardened shelters, such as those found at the various firm bases and entry control points throughout the region. They built more than 40 hardened structures, which provide shelter from enemy attacks.

Each post was built for a specific purpose, to serve a specific mission for a specific unit.

The engineers say no two structures are exactly alike.

"When I build something I always think of the people that

will be using it," said Cpl. Kurt Gellert, a combat engineer from Atlantic City, N.J. "They are the ones out there and I need to make sure that what I built will protect them in any circumstance."

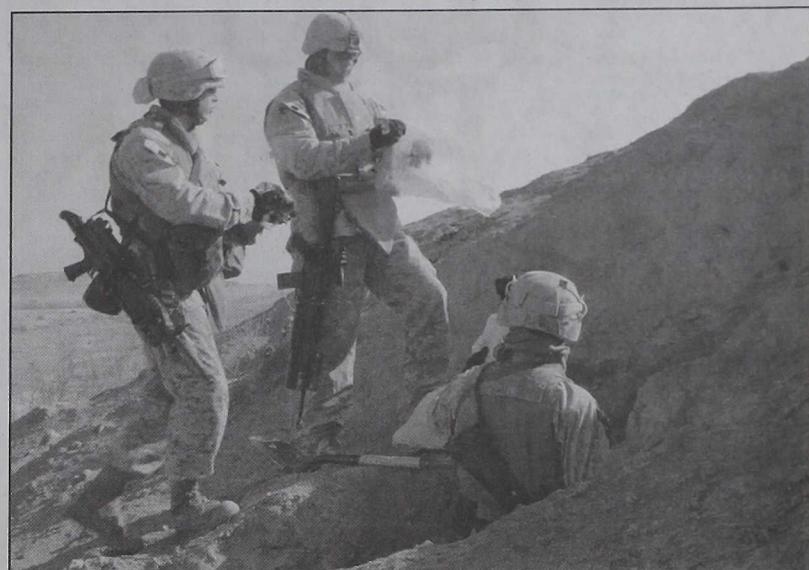
Although new to the Triad region when they arrived last year, most of the platoon's engineers were not new to deployments in Iraq. The platoon heavily relied on their Iraqi Freedom veterans to provide expertise when searching for caches in Iraq's volatile Al Anbar province.

"Some of the Marines were experienced operators and were able to provide good knowledge to the newer Marines," said Troughton, a Torrington, Conn., native. "They knew finding caches was one of the things we do, but no one expected us to find as many as we did."

Though metal detectors are a "very useful tool" to discover hidden munitions, the platoon's success came from the Marines' experience and a keen eye, according to Troughton, 33.

Some of the engineers say they had to "put themselves in the enemy's shoes and think like an insurgent" when combing Iraq's roadways, towns and open desert.

"You kind of get an eye for it," said Pfc. Grant B. Jewell, a combat engineer and Denver



Haditha Dam, Iraq: A combat engineer with Company C, 1st Combat Engineer Battalion opens burlap bags containing weapons and ammunitions found buried near Lake Qadisiyah, Iraq, during Operation Brand Iron, a counterinsurgency operation.

native. "The metal detector is really useful, but usually the insurgents will leave a clue letting us know where they are hiding the caches."

With their deployment winding down, Marines from 1st CEB will soon reunite with family and friends when they

return to their base at Camp Pendleton, Calif.

They can do so knowing

they've made a difference, and

have saved lives.

Their next mission: to pass

on what they've learned and

experienced here to the next

wave of combat engineers who

will rotate into Iraq.

"This deployment has been

nothing but a positive experience and victory in the [area of

operation]," said Troughton.

"The Marines rose to every

occasion and gained many

experiences that will help them in the future." ■

EMERGENCY D FROM 1A

ed infantry-armor teams made the small-unit flexibility and impose the M-1A1 Main Battle Tank. People up here sometimes feel negative," said. "They feel they don't get the help they need against anti-Iraqi forces late and steal gas."

the convoy of humvees and a armored truck, loaded with selected a site to search and out to cordon the area, main back and forth as gunners threats. Meanwhile, Marines dis rushed to secure the buildings, military-aged males out and check cars for contraband items.

ations lasted sometimes for hours, questioned the men for information lead them to insurgents free area. Answers led to a trend of and a few names.

missions had engineers sweeping weapons caches, hidden in the dirt. others had Marines stopping suspect

cars that matched the description of cars suspected of being used by insurgents.

Neville estimated Marine questioned and searched more than 350 military-aged men in less than three days, creating a disruption of insurgent activity. Rolling the 70-ton tanks through the small towns sent the signal Marines were there for business, denying insurgents free use of the area.

"The intimidation factor is there when you use tanks," added Staff Sgt. Zachary Dona, a 29-year-old platoon sergeant for the reinforced infantry squad. "Tanks integrated with infantry shows good presence and a lot of force."

The presence of repeated missions to the area by tanks, infantry and crews of amphibious assault vehicles recently has paid off, Neville explained. Engineers swept miles of berms, farmland and enormous gaping wells scraped from the desert floor, known areas for hidden weapons. They turned up little, a sign Neville took as encouraging.

"It shows the efforts of the tanks and AAVs is paying off," he said. "Six months ago, you could throw a stick and find a cache."

For the infantry, the chance to work alongside tanks was a boost in confidence. They relied on tankers with their heavy armor and

weapons to provide protection while they finished their searches and questioning.

"I was confident they knew their job," said Cpl. Joshua J. Frazier, a 22-year-old fire team leader from Destin, Fla. "They intimidated anybody who wanted to mess with us."

Frazier worked with tanks in the past for training, but this was his first chance to operate alongside them in a combat operation. He was impressed by the effect they had on his Marines to complete the mission and the local population.

"They helped us to remain focused," he explained. "We don't worry so much about outside security. The reaction of the people was more calm. They knew we were there for business."

Neville said despite not maintaining a permanent presence, Marines were having a lasting effect in the area. Insurgents didn't have free movement through the villages and the villagers themselves grew more trusting of the Marines' intent.

"We know they have to adjust to our efforts," he said. "We're creating a time for the people to get established and the insurgents have to adjust around that because we have a good idea of what they're doing." ■

"Of those 2,374 reports, 435 were restrictive reporting," McClain noted. "So in a six-month period, in a brand new program that was still being implemented, we still had 435 people who were willing to come forward."

Of those who chose restrictive reports initially, a quarter later changed their minds and allowed investigations to proceed.

"Although we hate that we have any sexual assaults, we do think that these numbers indicate that our programs are working," McClain said. "We're still in the implementation stage, so we're not claiming victory, because we know we still have a long way to go."

Sexual assault prevention training begins in initial training and continues throughout members' careers. It's also incorporated into commanders' training. "Commanders are the key to sexual assault prevention and response," McClain said.

Individuals preparing to deploy also receive refresher training on what constitutes sexual assault, how to prevent it, and how to report it while deployed. McClain noted that the incidence rate of sexual assault in Iraq and Afghanistan is lower than it is across the rest of DoD.

"We don't know for a fact what to attribute that to, but my supposition would be that in the area of operation you're focused on the mission — quite frankly, staying alive," she said. "You're in a tighter group, a tighter environment with a sense of you're all in this together. We're all family, and we're all working toward the same mission."

McClain noted that the DoD theme for Sexual Assault Awareness Month, which is April, is "Sexual Assault Prevention Begins with You." She emphasized that sexual assault will not be tolerated in DoD.

"Everyone from our most junior member to our most senior member has a role in prevention and response," she said. "It's not a commander's program; it's everyone's responsibility." ■

ENT ED FROM 1A

negative process is so overwhelming that they chose to are rather than to go through that investigative

in said sexual assault turns the victim's world upside the trauma of being assaulted is a shock from which never fully recover. "And the thought that you're have to talk to your commander, supervisor, the investigator all these people are going to know," she noted. overwhelming for some people, and they don't want to it."

id some barriers that prevent victims from reporting assault include embarrassment, shame, and not wanting know what happened to them. Sometimes not understanding the process or misconceptions of what's going to happen individuals from coming forward.

overcome these barriers to reporting, DoD in 2005 d a "restrictive reporting" option to victims of sexual victims can come forward and seek counseling and treatment, but can choose to not have a criminal investigation the assault opened.

eneral said sometimes victims' initial reaction is: leave me alone! I don't want to see anybody! I don't do anything!" However, after having time to gather strength and resources, many victims think about what to them and decide to participate in an investigation, said.

5 report to Congress stated that the number of reported assaults in the military increased by almost 40 percent 2004 and 2005, McClain said. The 1,700 cases reported limbed to 2,374 in 2005, an increase of 674 cases.

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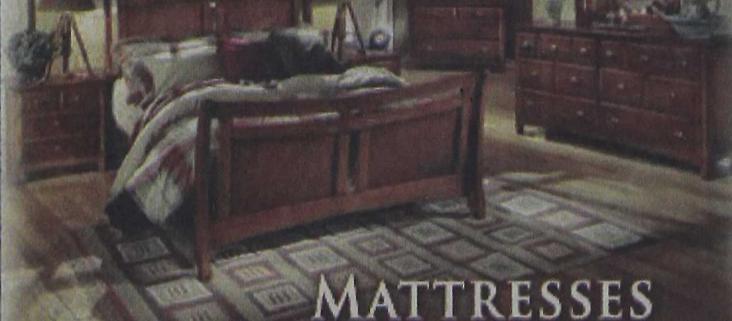
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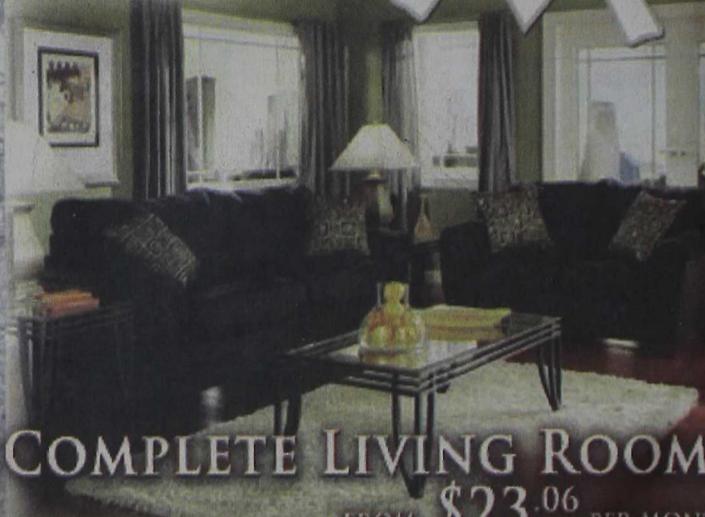
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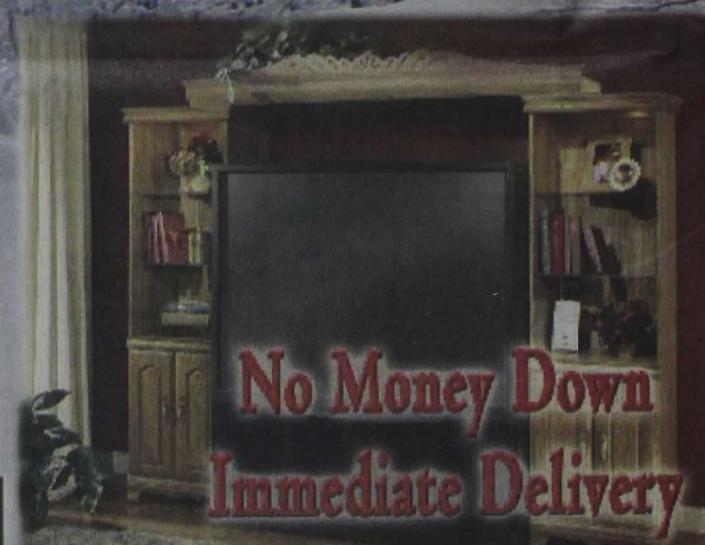


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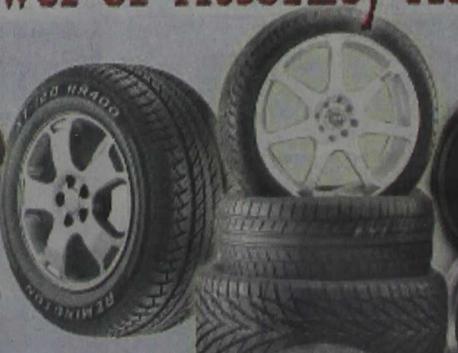
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Division matches heat up / 6B

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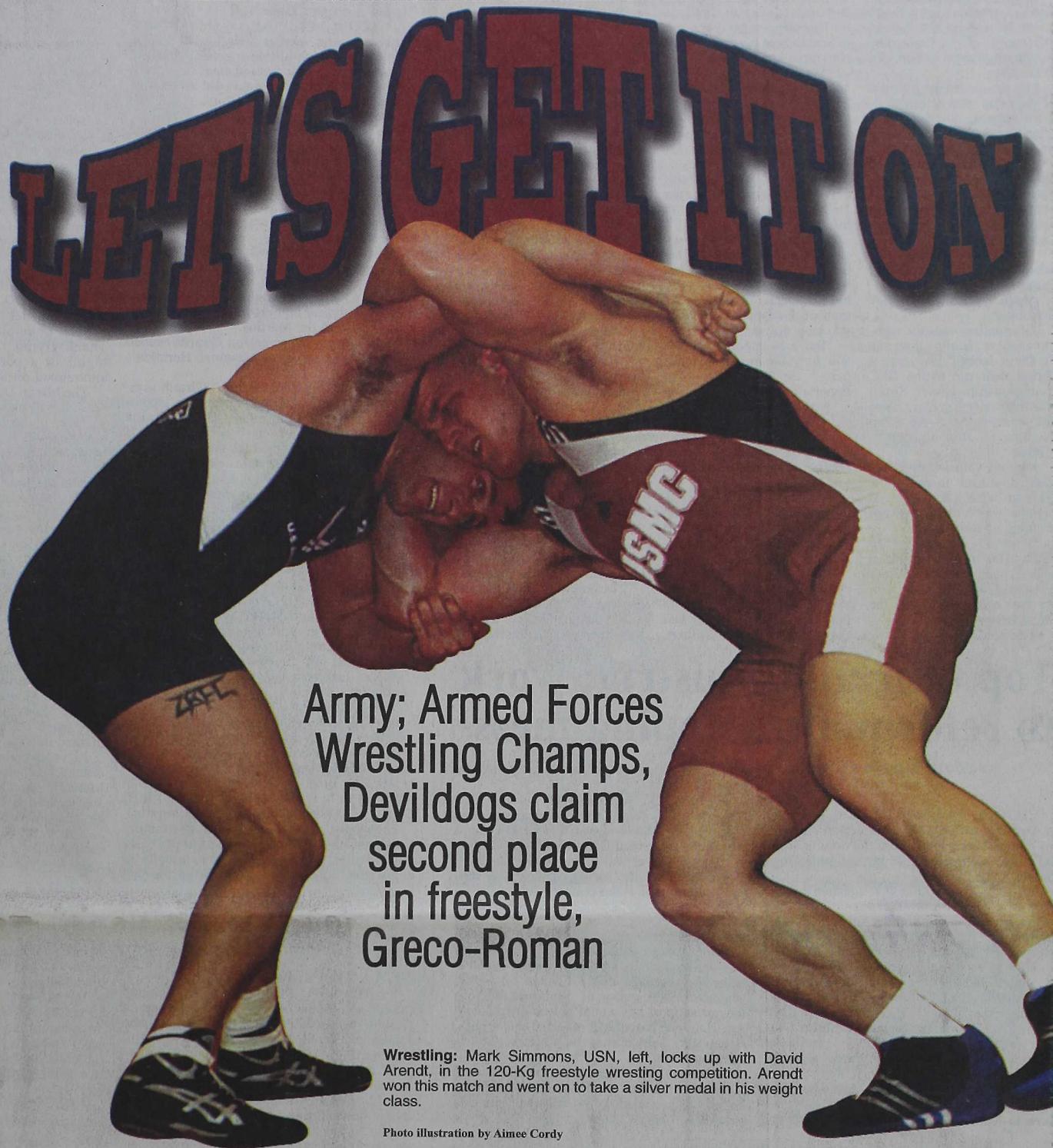
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Army; Armed Forces Wrestling Champs, Devildogs claim second place in freestyle, Greco-Roman

Wrestling: Mark Simmons, USN, left, locks up with David Arendt, in the 120-Kg freestyle wrestling competition. Arendt won this match and went on to take a silver medal in his weight class.

Photo illustration by Aimee Cordy

Story and photos by Jamie Cameron
Assistant managing editor

Wrestlers from the U.S. Army team overcame the Marine Corps' home field advantage aboard Camp Lejeune to win both the Greco-Roman and freestyle disciplines in the 2006 Armed Forces Wrestling Championship.

Army won its fifth-straight Armed Forces wrestling title by holding off a hard-charging Marine Corps squad that was anxious to put forth a strong showing at the station it will become its home base starting next spring. The

home team enjoyed a boisterous cheering section from fellow Marines and a gold medal performance in the 96-kilogram freestyle final from Sgt. Jacob Clark who is stationed in Okinawa, Japan.

U.S. Air Force and U.S. Navy wrestlers finished third and fourth respectively.

Retired Marine Maj. Ken Berger has served as the master of ceremonies at the Armed Forces Wrestling Championship for several years and played a vital role in keeping the enthusiastic crowd well-informed of the action on the mats and the impressive wrestling pedigrees many of the warrior-

athletes brought with them.

"This is such a competitive thing for these guys," he said. "They work together in unison on the battlefield, but when they get on the mat, they want to beat each other's brains in. It's just like you were when you competed against your best friends – you wanted to beat them more than anything."

Berger ought to know what he is talking about. The broad-shouldered emcee wrestled for three years on the All-Marine Corps wrestling team during the early 1970s at 125 pounds.

"It's one of those sports that gets in your blood," he said.

"My role is for those fans who walk in and see a Greco-Roman match going on with two guys pushing each other around. They have no idea what's going on, but I can tell them from the perspective of someone who knows what the wrestlers are doing and how they are feeling."

No one knows Greco-Roman wrestling, the oldest recognized version of the ancient sport, better than the Army team that won six gold medals out of the seven weight class competitions and no Army athlete comes with bigger credentials than Army's Dremiel Byers, duty stationed at Fort Carson,

Colo. Byers won the Greco-Roman 120-Kg weight class by going undefeated in the March 23 competition – an all too familiar result for the man who some consider as Armed Forces wrestling royalty.

Byers was the 1993 high school state champion in his home state of North Carolina, a five-time national champion and was crowned world champion in his class in 2002. The nearly immovable big man has set his sights on a medal in the 2008 Olympics in Beijing, China.

"I will never say that I have reached my pinnacle," Byers

See WRESTLING page 5B

Kinston Indians™

Minor league team is proud to support Marine Corps

Indians offer Military Appreciation Wednesdays, service member discounts

Jamie Cameron
Assistant managing editor

Sports fans who find themselves languishing in eastern North Carolina without easy access to professional teams need not feel sorry for themselves. There is big league baseball being played in "them there hills," just a modest car-ride away in the historic city of Kinston.

After hosting an exhibition game April 4 against the Class AAA Buffalo Bison, the Kinston Indians will have their 2006 Carolina League season home-opener April 10. The Kinston squad is a Class A affiliate of the Cleveland Indians, with a star-studded list of alumni players that includes Albert Belle, Bartolo Colon, Manny Ramirez and Jim Thome.

Minor league baseball has a

long history in Kinston. Different professional and semi-professional clubs have called the city home on an almost continuous basis since the 1920s. The Indians moved there in 1978 and have played under various ownerships and major league affiliations ever since. The current team has been a farm club for Cleveland since 1987 and has enjoyed an increasing fan base ever since.

Grainger Stadium, where the Indians play all of their home games, was renovated in 2004 to provide optimal amenities for 4,100 spectators.

With an emphasis on high-caliber baseball at an affordable price for the fans, the Indian's front office has made it a point this home season to be especially welcoming towards military personnel and their families. Reserved seat tickets for service

members and the families that support them are \$3 each as long as they are available. The cost represents half the regular price of reserved seat tickets. In addition, each Wednesday home game is designated as a Military Appreciation Night and all service members and their families get into Grainger

See INDIANS page 6B

Panthers sign 'Me-shawn' to four-year deal as compliment to All-Pro receiver Smith

Paul Nowell
Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) - Carolina receiver Steve Smith might have been the biggest influence in persuading Keyshawn Johnson to sign with the Panthers.

"He threatened me a couple of times to make this decision," Johnson quipped Friday after signing a four-year contract to play for the Panthers.

Johnson, who negotiated the contract himself while his agent serves a one-year suspension, got a \$19 million deal that includes a \$5 million signing bonus.

"Was I unreasonable?" he asked general manager Marty Hurney.

"Apparently not!" Hurney fired back.

Johnson becomes the complement to Smith that the Panthers lacked last season during their run to the NFC championship game. Smith was their only big playmaker, and teams could clamp down on him to stop Carolina's offense.

Johnson called Smith "the most dominant force in the NFL at wide receiver" and said he was looking forward to lining up next to him.

"I didn't come here to catch 100 balls," Johnson said. "I came here because I feel Carolina is the team with the best chance to get to the Super Bowl."

Released last week by the

Dallas Cowboys, Johnson rejected a bid from the New York Giants and also planned to meet with the Seahawks. But after coming to Charlotte on Thursday, he never made it to Seattle because the Panthers convinced him to stay.

"We have a wide receiver and a football player who is going to have a huge effect on this football team the next four years," Hurney said before handing Johnson his new No. 19 Panthers jersey.

Johnson said it doesn't bother him if quarterback Jake Delhomme considers Smith his No. 1 target.

"The only people who get caught up in No. 1 or No. 2 are the ones playing fantasy football," he said. "The only number that means anything is the number of (Super Bowl) rings you have on your finger."

"Steve is important to me and he's the reason I came here," he said. "And I'm important to him."

With Johnson on the field, defenses can't zero in on Smith because they'll know the Panthers have at least a second option. Carolina lacked that for most of the year because its running game took months to develop, and No. 2 receiver Keary Colbert had a big dropdown from his outstanding rookie season.

Now Johnson takes over that No. 2 role, where he can also be used as a blocker to open up DeShaun Foster and the running game. Colbert,

who had offseason ankle surgery to correct a problem that apparently bothered him most of last year, won't have as much pressure on him.

But the signing of Johnson is out of character for the Panthers, who have made a public effort to run a problem-free program since John Fox became head coach in 2002. After a series of off-the-field problems, including former wide receiver Rae Carruth's conviction in a murder-for-hire plot on his pregnant girlfriend, the team has avoided signing players with bad reputations.

Johnson left the New York Jets and Tampa Bay on bad terms. But his last two years with the Cowboys have been trouble-free under disciplinarian Bill Parcells. Still, he couldn't avoid the questions about his character.

"How come everyone keeps signing me if I'm such a problem?" Johnson said. "I know I wouldn't sign Keyshawn for all this money if I'm a problem."

But he also said he has an image that's hard to shake.

"I'm Me-Shawn," he said, smiling at the nickname he inherited over the last 10 years in the league. "I'm fine with that."

Panthers officials talked to some of Johnson's former clubs and got positive reports.

"We knew we had a good player," Hurney said. "Everyone we talked to had something very good to say." ■

roundup

Major League Baseball

JUPITER, Fla. (AP) - Only Jeremy Hermida knows what it feels like to step to the plate as a pinch-hitter for your first major league at-bat and hit a grand slam.

The Florida Marlins rookie did it last Aug. 31 in Miami against St. Louis Cardinals reliever Al Reyes.

"To start off that way was something I couldn't even dream about," Hermida says. "It was like I was floating around the bases."

The Marlins are confident the 22-year-old right fielder is no one-hit wonder. Next week, he'll be one of at least five rookies in the Florida lineup on opening day, and perhaps the best of the bunch.

A first-round draft pick in 2002, Hermida was touted last season as the organization's top prospect. He batted .290 with 18 home runs and 63 RBIs for Double-A Carolina, then hit .293 with four homers in 41 at-bats during his month with the Marlins.

New Florida manager Joe Girardi needed little time this spring to recognize Hermida's potential.

"He knows what he's doing," Girardi says. "He's not fazed by anything, and he's comfortable in this atmosphere. He knows he belongs in the big leagues."

Hermida was groomed for the majors from childhood. A natural right-hander, he hits lefty because his dad taught him to at a young age. He started using a wood bat at 13 because he wanted to avoid developing bad habits with aluminum.

Hermida grew up in the Atlanta area, where he competed in high school against Jeff Francoeur. Now he will try to replicate Francoeur's fine rookie season last year for the Braves.

The scouts and stats say Hermida hits for both power and average with discipline uncommon for someone so young. He walked 111 times in 118 games for Carolina last year, lifting his on-base percentage to .455.

And he possesses a flair for the dramatic. He homered in the ninth inning to help the Marlins win their season finale. And his first homer with Florida came six hours after he arrived at the stadium for his first big-league game.

The only other player to hit a grand slam in his first at-bat was William "Frosty Bill" Dugleby in 1898 - and he wasn't pinch-hitting.

Frosty Bill, a pitcher, hit only seven more home runs in his career. Hermida hopes to do much better, but regardless, he intends to enjoy the opportunity to play in the big leagues.

"Putting on this uniform is a special thing," he says. "It's something I don't take for granted. I'll work hard to keep it on."

— Associated Press

NCAA Men's Basketball

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) - The Orlando Magic on Monday extended the contracts of second-year standouts Dwight Howard and Jameer Nelson through the 2007-08 season.

The Magic will miss the playoffs for the third straight year, but the team is building around Howard. He has averaged 15 points and 12 rebounds this season and has started all but one game since joining the NBA.

The 20-year-old top draft pick in 2004 also averaged a double-double his rookie year, along with Emeka Okafor the first rookies to accomplish that feat since 1992-93.

Earlier this year, Howard, then 19, became the youngest player in history to get 20 points

and 20 rebounds in a game with 21 against Charlotte. He was also one of 10 named to the USA Mens Senior National Team program, providing a chance to the 2008 Beijing Olympic team.

"Dwight and Jameer are having sophomore seasons and they are only getting better," Assistant General Manager Smith said in a statement.

Nelson, picked 20th overall in the draft by Denver and dealt the same Orlando, is averaging nearly 11 points, four assists in 23 minutes per game. The consensus college basketball player of the year excelled at times while Steve struggled before being dealt to Nelson, shooting a team-best 42 percent from range.

The club did not disclose terms of the contract.

Nelson's agent Steve Mountain would not discuss terms, but said the 6-foot-6 was happy to stay in Orlando.

"They've treated Jameer great. We're doing something being built here as a part of it," Mountain said.

Howard's agent, Aaron Goodwin, immediately returned a telephone message seeking comment.

— Travis Reed, Associated Press

NFL Football

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — A Thanksgiving Day opener featuring Miami at Bowl champion Pittsburgh, Thanksgiving Day game at Kansas City, highlight a portion of the NFL schedule announced on Monday.

The Miami Dolphins, who finished the season, will play at the Steelers on Thanksgiving Day.

Three nights later, the first featured matchup will be a brotherly quarterback between the Mannings as Peyton beats Indianapolis Colts to the Meadowlands Eli and the New York Giants.

The league scheduled a doubleheader Sept. 11, when Minnesota will play Washington, followed by San Diego in an odd coupling.

While Washington sells out every year and has led the NFL in attendance straight years, Oakland rarely has a stadium. That raises the potential for blackout in the Bay Area for the game of the Chargers.

The Thanksgiving Day lineup on Thanksgiving Day features the Dolphins at Detroit, followed by Tampa Bay at Dallas, and the Denver visiting the Kansas City Chiefs.

The Chiefs used to host a Thanksgiving Day game when it was in the AFL before merging into the NFL in the mid-1960s.

"I've thought all those games should be rotated," Chiefs owner Lamar Hunt said Monday. "We have a history in the city that always hosted them before the merger we've wanted to do it again."

The entire schedule will be released early April.

— Barry Wilner, Associated Press

NHL Hockey

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) - Dynamic Alex Ovechkin scored his 47th goal, Matt Cullen added a short-handed score and the Hurricanes snapped an eight-game losing streak with a 4-2 victory over the Carolina Hurricanes Saturday night.

It was Pettinger's fifth with his team, tying him for the best in the NHL. Washington won for the first time since defeating Pittsburgh 2-1/2 weeks ago. Yet the eight losses since were by one goal, two going to a shootout and another in overtime.

"They work so hard every night, and eight games without a win is difficult," coach Glen Hanlon said of his players. "I want them to come out and to play that hard, and that well is a testament to the character of the team."

— Associated Press ■

Top official to Austria; work to reform after doping mess

Newsfinder
Associated Press

VIENNA, Austria (AP) - The president of Austria's national Olympic committee said his country must learn from the doping scandal it was embroiled in at last month's Turin Games.

Italian police raided the quarters of the Austrian biathlon and cross-country ski teams in search of doping substances and equipment, while Olympic doping control officers sprang surprise tests on 10 athletes.

The raids were triggered by the presence of coach Walter Mayer, who had been banned from the Olympics following a blood doping case at the 2002 Salt Lake City Games. While the 10 Austrian athletes tested negative, Italian police and the International Olympic Committee are still investigating.

"I didn't want any of this and what happened was completely unnecessary. Now we have to learn a lesson from it," Leo Wallner

said in an interview published Saturday in daily newspaper Kurier.

Wallner said Austria must accept that Mayer's appearance at the Games was seen as a provocation but stressed that he could not have been prevented from traveling to Turin.

"Walter Mayer was a free man," he said.

Wallner said the image of Austria's athletes rests on what the country does now.

"No one can say how far this is going to go. Let's put it this way, I hope there won't be a ban [from the next Olympics]," Wallner said.

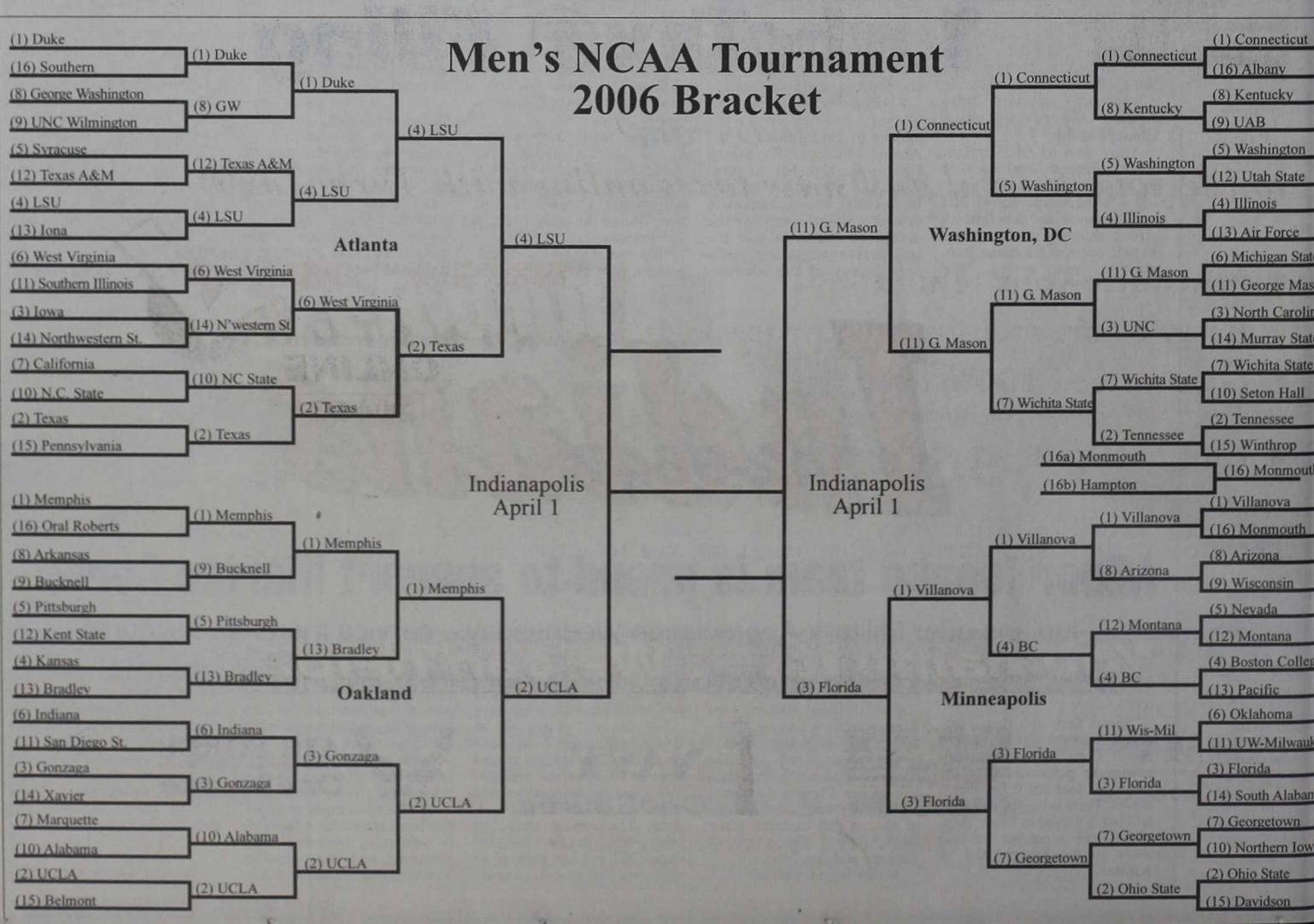
Austria's government is developing an anti-doping law. Under the proposal, which is being drafted and could be voted on within weeks, athletes guilty of doping could lose federal support but would not be prosecuted, Austrian television ORF reported this month, citing Karl Schweitzer, the country's sports state secretary.

"Athletes should not be criminalized," Schweitzer said at the time, adding that he hoped the proposal would be made law this year. ■

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Men's NCAA Tournament 2006 Bracket



Gymnastics phenom paying her dues at an early age

Jessica Bryant follows in older sister's footsteps with strength and determination

Jamie Cameron
Assistant managing editor



Jamie Cameron

even-year-old Jessica Bryant possesses amazement and talent for such a young athlete. She has

been at Cedar Point Gymnastics in Cedar Point

2-1/2 years old.

Across the nation, thousands of young girls toil in out-of-the-way gyms with their eyes on one goal — to become the next Mary-Lou Retton. The vast majority of them will never see an Olympic medal podium unless it is on television, but in spite of the odds, these tiny athletes dedicate a large portion of their early lives in an effort to achieve the dream.

Jessica Bryant, 11-year-old daughter of Kim Bryant and Maj. Greg Bryant, Marine Medium Tilt Rotor Training Squadron 204 maintenance officer at New River Air Station, is just such a girl except for the fact that she packs rare combination of strength and grace onto her waif-like frame — enough to at least allow the unspoken dream to flicker a little brighter than most.

At the recent North Raleigh

Gymnastics meet, Jessica cap-

tured first overall in her age group of the Level 8 competition. At the state meet, Jessica finished seventh overall; good enough to easily qualify her for the regional Level 8 squad, which will compete in Huntsville, Ala. next week.

Her success in the statewide competition came as no surprise to her longtime coach, April Wiles of Cedar Point Gymnastics in Cedar Point. In fact, a case of nerves probably kept Jessica from placing even higher. Wiles is quite used to watching her wiry little protégé take top all-around honors in most of the local and regional gymnastics competitions she enters.

"Her strength is unbelievable," said Wiles of Jessica. "She's tough and she has moments of brilliance. She really wants to make me, her teammates and her mom happy."

Gymnasts perform at levels of competition based upon their abilities to hit certain maneuvers and reach scoring bench-

marks. Wiles explained that the levels go from 1-10, with Level 10 the equivalent of collegiate competitors, to the Elite level gymnasts — those with the skills and real potential to compete at the Olympic level. With her recent results, Jessica will start competing at Level 9 after the regional competition.

A self-professed gym rat, Jessica got her start in the sport as a spectator of her older sister, 13-year-old Danielle. However, by the time she was 2-1/2, Jessica wanted to take to the floor herself.

"I got tired of just watching," she said. "I like gymnastics because you don't just focus on one thing all of the time. There are a lot of things to work on and if you're having a bad day in one area you can still have a good day in another."

Jessica has an excellent role model in Danielle, who three years ago was competing at Level 9 until a high ankle break during competition forced her to take a three-year hiatus from

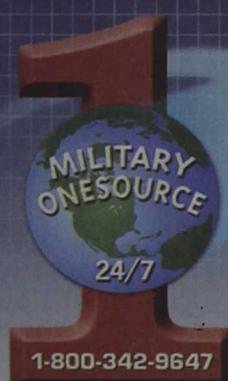
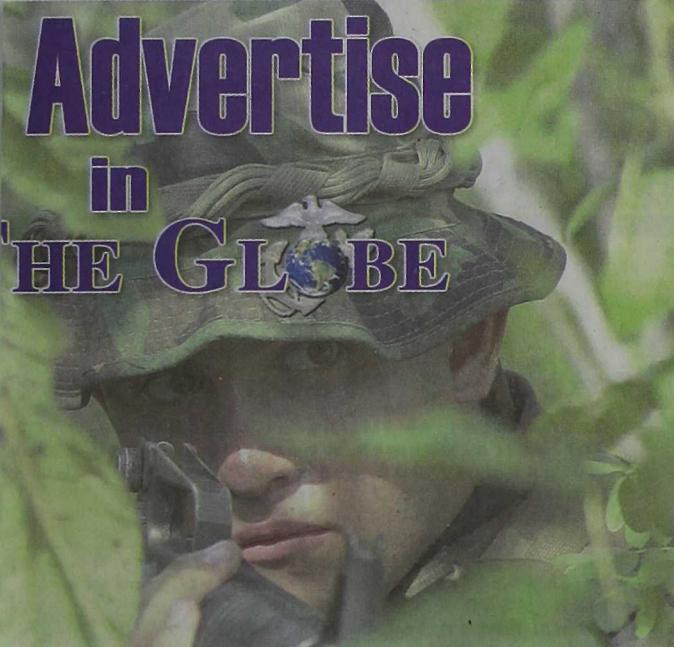
the sport to heal properly. Danielle recently returned to competition and has quickly moved up the ranks back to qualify for Level 9 again in just one year.

The commitment to compete with the best comes at a price. Jessica and her older sister spend 12-16 hours a week at the gym where their mother is also a coach.

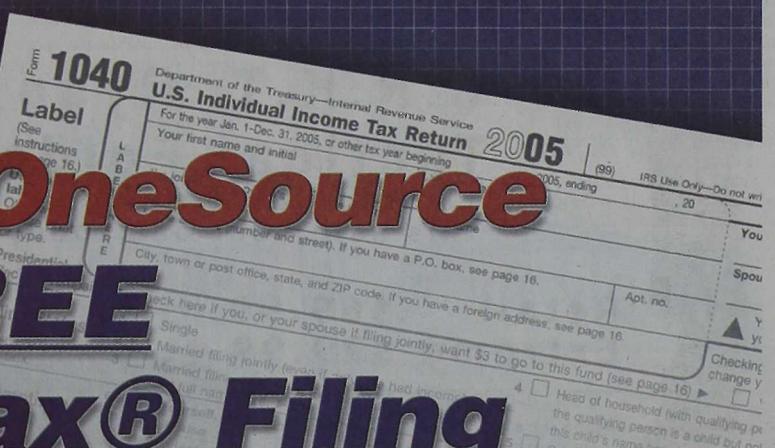
"It's a full-time commitment for the whole family," said Kim as she watched her talented daughters go through their routines. "They don't get a lot of free time like other kids because they spend so many hours in training."

It is a sacrifice the Bryant family is willing to make, with a list of pros that outweigh the cons.

"(Gymnastics) keeps them out of trouble and it teaches them discipline, self-confidence and self-motivation," said the proud mother and coach. "I love this sport just as much as they do."



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WRESTLING
CONT'D FROM 1B

promised my grandpa I'd get that gold medal so that's my goal. It's an obsession. I can't rest until I get it.

In the coming up a little against the powerful team, Dan Hicks, head of the Marine Corps was pleased with the results he got from his grapplers.

"I couldn't be more proud with my guys," said Hicks. "We wrestled tough but a couple of tight matches. All of my guys wrestled well."

He was obviously happy with the prospect of bringing his team to Camp Lejeune for the first time, especially when he looked up into the Goettge Memorial House and saw the dedicated Marine Corps cheering in spite of the two-day competition taking place in only hours.

"We can't wait to move to Camp Lejeune," he said. "We are here now. This is our home."

"The steady support helped us achieve a silver medal at 74-Kg in the Greco-Roman competition Friday. I have a lot of friends and that keeps the morale level up," said the Marine Corps team. "It's a great experience to be here, especially just got back from boot camp. It's like the feeling you get when you get to see your fellow Marines here, but this is the best thing."

A strong feeling of camaraderie between the service members and the team members across the nation is the purpose of Armed Forces competition. Organizers of the 2006 Armed Forces Wrestling Championship can consider this year's event a success.

2006 Armed Forces Wrestling
Championship results:

Freestyle competition

55-Kg:

Gold medal: Eric Albaracin, USA, Fort Carson, Colo.
Silver medal: Jared Moreland, USAF, Cannon AFB, N.M.

60-Kg:

Gold medal: Joshua Habeck, USA, Fort Carson, Colo.
Silver medal: Anthony Zender, USMC, 29 Palms, Calif.

66-Kg:

Gold medal: Aaron Holker, USA, Fort Carson, Colo.
Silver medal: Ryan Montanez, USAF, Pope AFB, N.C.

74-Kg:

Gold medal: Phillip Simpson, USA, Fort Carson, Colo.
Silver medal: Steven Forrest, USMC, Camp Lejeune

84-Kg:

Gold medal: Kevin Ahearn, USA, Fort Carson, Colo.
Silver medal: Ryan Cunningham, USMC, Quantico, Va.

96-Kg:

Gold medal: Jacob Clark, USMC, Okinawa, Japan.
Silver medal: Anton Talamantes, USA, Fort Lewis, Wash.

120-Kg:

Gold medal: Timothy Taylor, USA, Fort Carson, Colo.
Silver medal: David Arendt, USMC, Marine Barracks 8 & 1, D.C.

Team freestyle results

USA	.....	6
USMC	.....	4
USAF	.....	2
USN	.....	0

Greco-Roman competition

55-Kg:

Gold medal: Jermaine Hodge, USA, Fort Carson, Colo.
Silver medal: Jared Moreland, USAF, Cannon AFB, N.M.

60-Kg:

Gold medal: James Johnston, USA, Fort Carson, Colo.
Silver medal: Jeremy McLean, USMC, Quantico, Va.

66-Kg:

Gold medal: Glenn Garrison, USA, Fort Carson, Colo.
Silver medal: James Shillor, USMC, Camp Lejeune, N.C.

74-Kg:

Gold medal: Grant Whitmer, USN, Mobile Security Squad 3.
Silver medal: Brandon McNab, USA, Fort Carson, Colo.

84-Kg:

Gold medal: Aaron Sieracki, USA, Fort Carson, Colo.
Silver medal: Jeremy Pederson, USMC, Quantico, Va.

96-Kg:

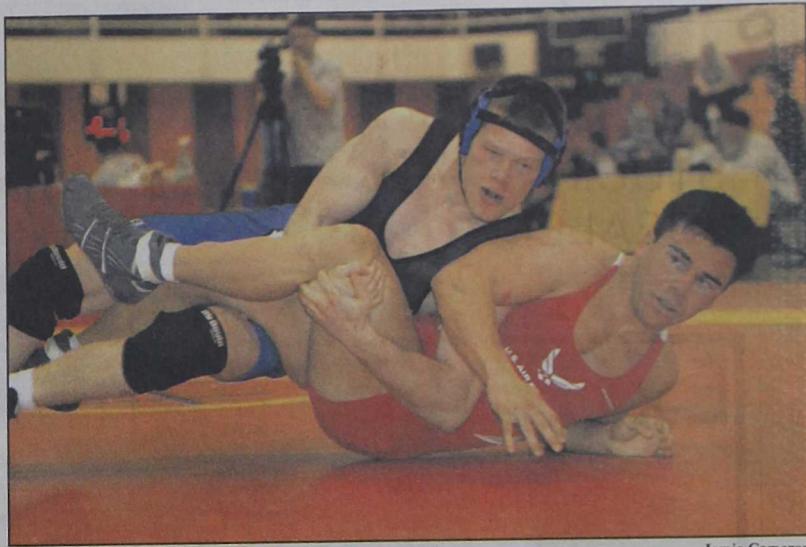
Gold medal: Phillip Johnston, USA, Fort Carson, Colo.
Silver medal: Jacob Clark, USMC, Okinawa, Japan.

120-Kg:

Gold medal: Dremiel Byers, USA, Fort Carson, Colo.
Silver medal: Frank Workman, USMC, Quantico, Va.

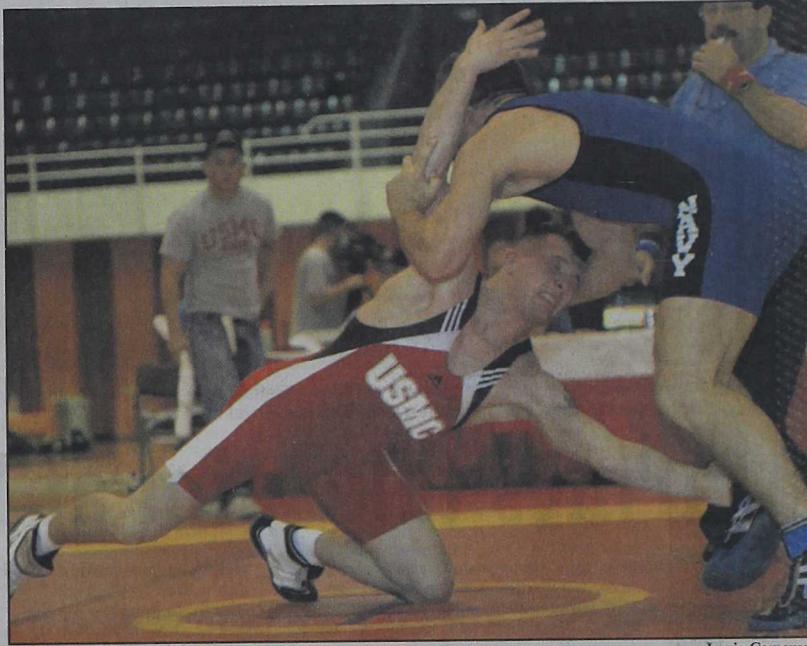
Team Greco-Roman results

USA	.....	6
USMC	.....	4
USAF	.....	2
USN	.....	0



Jamie Cameron

Wrestling: Aaron Holker, top, works a winning combination against Ryan Montanez in the freestyle 66-Kg final. Holker won the match to take a gold medal for the Army team that dominated much of the action during the two-day event.



Jamie Cameron

Wrestling: Steven Forrest, left, goes in fearlessly for the ankle of his Navy opponent, Grant Whitmer. Forrest won this match and later took a silver medal for the Marine Corps team in the freestyle 74-Kg competition. Grant also wrestled in the weight class in the Greco-Roman competition where he won the Navy team's only medal of the tournament - a gold.

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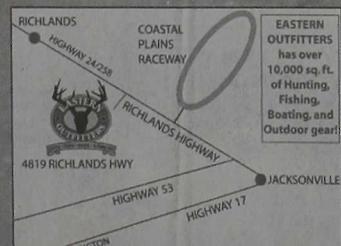
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Match shooting: Cpl. Luke Farley, Weapons and Training Battalion, is a picture of steady concentration as he takes aim at the firing line along with other competitors. Farley was on not only his fellow Marines, but marksmen from Britain's Royal Marines.

Marines take aim at Eastern Division title

Story and photos by
Jennifer Moore
Carolina Living editor

Marines from all over the Eastern Division have converged on Stone Bay to shoot for team glory and a spot on the Eastern Division team.

Eastern Division Matches preliminaries begin today and competition starts Monday. However, the nearly 120 participants have been at Stone Bay since March 13, brushing up on the basics and practicing their skills.

The top finishers in the Eastern Division Matches will go on to the Marine Corps Matches April 10-20.

Besides the bragging rights that go with a win at the Eastern Division Matches, the rifle and pistol competitions give Marines a chance to hone their skills.

Shooting in the competition is the best way to learn how to deal with pressure, other than combat, according to Chief Warrant Officer Billy Williamson, the commandant's representative.

INDIANS CONTINUED FROM 1B

Stadium for free.

"We are very excited about our partnerships with Camp Lejeune this year," said Jessie Hays, media manager for the team. "We hope that we can reach as

"It's a strict application of the fundamentals," he said. "This is a good tool to teach them how to enhance the fundamentals."

The matches put competitors in a different mindset and show them that only two things matter — sight alignment and trigger control.

Plus, Williamson said, it is "doing something every Marine likes to do — shooting."

But U.S. Marines are not the only participants in the matches. A group of Royal Marines also are shooting in the competition.

Using iron sights — as opposed to the optic sights the British Marines use at home — will help the competitors build confidence in their abilities, according to Mike Ball.

"When I go back, I will be smashing the target up," he said. "It's excellent for us, it builds that marksmanship base. To build up to a good state, you need a strong foundation."

Cpl. James White, a Royal Marine sniper, agreed with Ball.

"I can't overstate it," he

many military members and families as possible through these offers this season. We really want our attendance numbers to increase, especially among the military because that is a huge and important part of the population in this area."

In addition to weekly military

said. "I'm just soaking up the information ... I'm genuinely grateful to be able to do that."

The first three days of the matches are nothing but classroom instruction, according to Chief Warrant Officer Dave Dutton, chief range officer for Stone Bay.

Then, competitors practice what they will do in competition, with help from instructors.

All competitors participate in both the rifle and pistol competitions. The rifle competition includes slow and rapid fire rounds; sitting, standing and prone positions and multiple distances. The pistol competition includes slow, timed and rapid fire.

Unlike regular rifle qualification, Marines in the competition wear special shooting jackets and use weapons specifically designed for competition. The targets also are smaller.

To field a team, a command must have a shooting officer; a tyro, or first-time competitor; a sergeant or below and another competitor.

The top 10 percent of finish-

ers in the Eastern Division matches will go to the Marine Corps Matches, where they will compete against the top 10 percent from the Far East Division, the Pacific Division and the Western Division.

For some of the participants, the competition is a "whole new way of shooting, a different level," Williamson said.

And after the training, practice and competition, a partici-

pant will be able to apply the skills to his or her unit.

"He'll be able to go to any type of environment and know that only two things matter — sight alignment and trigger control."

right onto Vernon Avenue and onto East Street.

For further information, including the Kinston Indians' home schedule and ticket availability, call the Indians' front office (252) 527-9111 or go to the site at www.kinstonindians.com.



Match shooting: Sgt. Maj. Dave O'Conner, front, and Cpl. James White of the Marines act as spotters for their teammates at the line.

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Wilf pleased after free agency

Krawczynski
Associated Press

RAIRIE, Minn. - Incredibly busy free agency is winding to a close. Vikings coach Wilf couldn't be more pleased with how his newly bosses pulled it off.

"It's a lot of different things. ... It's a big deal in a recent Associated Press article because it's exciting because it's going to feel like our team. Now it's coming together."

They also parted ways with disenchanted quarterback Daunte Culpepper, sending him to Miami for a second-round pick, and re-signed receiver Koren Robinson.

When Wilf first unveiled the triangle of authority, it wasn't exactly clear how the three would work together. But it became evident that Childress is the lead dog, with significant input coming from Foley and Brzezinski.

"A new coaching staff has to learn to work with each other. And three of us, Rob and Fran and the coach, have to understand what the coaches' needs are," Wilf said. "And so far I have to say that what we've done in free agency, I'm very, very positive. I think we did great in free agency."

And Wilf hasn't just been an innocent bystander, sitting back and signing the checks that those three tell him to sign. In the middle of last season, he pledged to be more hands-on in the football business.

He admitted this week that the bulk of his time is spent with the Vikings now, with the rest of his trusted family doing the heavy lifting with his real estate development business back in New Jersey.

Wilf said Friday that he doesn't necessarily want to be a "hands-on" owner, but a "head-on" owner, meaning he chooses the people to run the show, then lets them do their jobs and directs the traffic when he needs to.

So far, he likes what he sees.

"We spent our money wisely and we were focused and I think we've grown the nucleus of our team to I think greater heights," Wilf said. "Then again, the next couple seasons will tell the story. We're looking long-term here. ... It takes time for a team, both the players and the coaching staff to really meld together, and that's something as a new owner I don't really know how long it will take."

Corrections

THE GLOBE regrets there were two errors in the March 18 Corrections section.

On page 1B, the caption under a photo of Lejeune High's Edwin Roman throwing the shot put incorrectly that Roman won that event. In fact, Roman's teammate, Joel Miller, had the furthest toss in the competition.

On page 3B, the Lejeune High School varsity baseball pictured is Alexander Seifert, not Tony Coia as he was only identified.

THE GLOBE apologizes for these mistakes and any confusion they may have caused.



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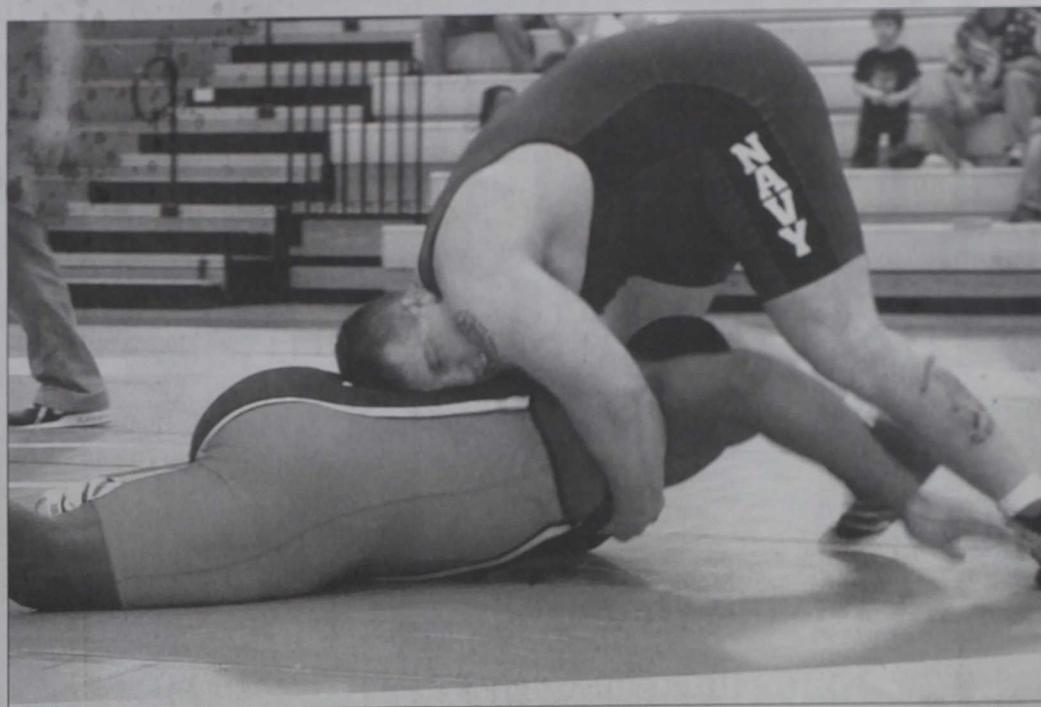


Photo by Jamie Cameron

CAMP LEJEUNE: For just a moment, DCFN Mark Simmonds, top, of the USS John F. Kennedy had his opponent right where he wanted him. It did not take long for Staff Sgt Dremiel Byers, USA, Fort Carson, Colo., to turn the tables and win the match. Byers was the 2002 world champion at 120-Kg. and plans to be on the medal podium in Beijing, China when the Olympics are there in 2008.

George Mason headlines unlikely cast at Final Four

Howard Fendrich
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) - As anyone who's ever participated in an NCAA pool at the office knows full well, there always are upsets at the men's college basketball tournament.

Still, it's been quite awhile since there were this many stunning results and so few favorites headed to the Final Four. The biggest surprise of all is George Mason, a commuter school in suburban Virginia that never had even won a single game in the event until this year.

Apparently, there was more than one pair of glass slippers lying around. This is the first time since the tournament expanded to 64 teams in 1985 that none of the four teams seeded No. 1 reached the Final Four.

The main culprit is George Mason, but joining it next weekend in Indianapolis will be two other schools seeking a first national title, LSU and Florida.

George Mason is the first team since 1986 and only the second in history to be seeded 11th and make it all the way to the Final Four. And it's the biggest outsider - no basketball tradition to speak of, not a member of a major conference, no superstar player - since Ivy League school Penn made it in 1979.

George Mason now faces third-seeded Florida, which knocked off No. 1 seed Villanova 75-62 in the Minneapolis Regional final.

In next Saturday's other Final Four game, No. 4 seed LSU will play second-seeded UCLA. Led by gregarious and 310-pound Glen "Big Baby" Davis, LSU won the Oakland Regional final by beating No. 2 seed Texas 70-60 in overtime Saturday. UCLA defeated yet another No. 1 seed, Memphis, 50-45 at the Atlanta Regional.

"Nobody could have predicted what we've seen - not just this afternoon, but this whole tournament," NCAA selection committee chairman Craig Littlepage said after watching George Mason cut the nets down to celebrate. "It's affirmation that this is a great game."

The Final Four has been dominated by college basketball's big boys for more than a quarter of a century, with powerful teams and tournament-tested conferences gathering at the end of the season to sort out the champion.

Now, for the first time since 1980, neither the Big East nor the Atlantic Coast Conference will be represented at the Final Four; those high-profile leagues combined to produce the past five national champions, including the ACC's North Carolina last year, and the Big East's Connecticut in 2004.

George Mason eliminated both of those schools, along with 2005 Final Four team Michigan State, despite having relatively small players not thought of as NBA prospects.

"They don't measure heart by inches, they don't measure courage, they don't

measure basketball instinct and intelligence," Calhoun said.

The Patriots, he added, "are not on a magic carpet ride because there's any myth there. They are good. They are really, really good."

Perhaps, but George Mason's basketball program is certainly unheralded: The team never has been ranked in The Associated Press poll, and it lost two of its last four games before the NCAA tournament.

Its players are unheralded. Asked this weekend to list some of the colleges that recruited him out of high school, Skinn joked: "George Mason, George Mason, George Mason. I'm glad I chose George Mason."

Its conference is unheralded, too. It had been 20 years since the Colonial Athletic Association received two invitations to the NCAA tournament, and some Connecticut players weren't able to name which league the Patriots play in.

All of the above are among the reasons that some questioned whether George Mason deserved to go to the tournament at all.

When Lamar Butler hit a 3-pointer to give George Mason only its second lead of the game, at 52-51 about halfway through the second half, Connecticut called a timeout. While Patriots coach Jim Larranaga stood with his arms crossed, smiling, Butler and a couple of teammates looked up at the scoreboard, mouths open.

Perhaps they were wondering, "Can this really be happening?"

It sure was. ■

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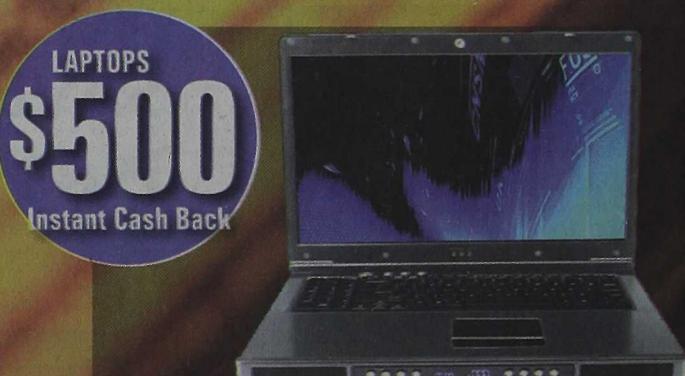
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Globe | Thursday, March 30, 2006 | www.militarynews.com/globe



Courts Martial / 2C

Quick Notes

1 Warrior Support

Founded Warrior Support Group will be held April 10, 2006, in the II Expeditionary Force. Guest speaker is the Physical Board Process. Information: email wwsg@hotmail.com or call Shannon or Becky at 0.

Wives' Club Hop
Non-commissioned Officers' Club Thrift Shop is a military clothing active-duty store. On April 3 - 7, clothing will be available at the active-duty store. Hours of operation are Monday, Tuesday and Friday, 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. from 5 - 8 p.m. Thrift Shop number is 451-0000. It is located in Room 0 on the corner of West Street.

Scholarships
Non-commissioned Wives' Club is offering college scholarships for eligible spouses living within the county.

Applications are due at the Non-commissioned Officers' Club Thrift Shop on base business hours, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Applications are submitted by April 10, 2006. For more information, call 451-5591.

Brakes on
10 things we all put the brakes on before you put them behind the wheel: your vehicle is make sure it's properly maintained.

yourself enough to drive safely. Physically sound and sharp.

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For members with disabilities, service members may qualify for assistance.

service members are injured or chronically disabled during their service may qualify for assistance from the Department of Defense.

After 80 days of separation, those members who are injured or permanently disabled during their service are entitled to a medical examination with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Two teams of masked women piled into mini-vans and headed out for what seemed to be a night of mayhem. Their mission... to "flock" someone's yard.

Field day: A custom Marines love to loathe



Camp Lejeune: Lance Cpl. Marco Martinez, Pfc. Craig Mittendorf and Lance Cpl. Bernard Simmons, three legal service specialists with Company A, Headquarters and Support Battalion, Marine Corps Base, were the first Marines ever to be awarded Mr. Ducky.

Lance Cpl. Adam Johnston

Lance Cpl. Adam Johnston
Marine Corps Base

Since its inception more than 230 years ago, the Marine Corps has prided itself on a rich heritage of customs and traditions. During a birthday ball, it's customary for the oldest Marine present to receive the first piece of cake and pass it on to the youngest Marine present, signifying the transfer of experience and knowledge from the old to the young of the Corps. During the playing of the Marines' Hymn, it's customary for Marines to stand at attention and render honors to the oldest official song in the U.S. military.

As for Marines living in the barracks, they participate in one of the most important, and quite possibly the most unpopular, traditions in the history of the Corps. Though it is carried out neither in a field nor during the day, field day is the one night out of each week that Marines drop whatever it is they are doing and focus on cleaning their rooms.

"Throughout the history of the Marine Corps, more men and women have fallen to disease and sickness in combat than actual bullets," said 1st Sgt. Michael Kagle, the first sergeant for Company A, Headquarters and Support Battalion, Marine Corps Base. "It's my responsibility to make sure these Marines are living in as close to a disease and germ-free environment as humanly possible."

Kagle, who has been the Company A first sergeant since Feb. 10, stepped on the yellow footprints at Parris Island Nov. 22, 1983. In his more than 22 years as a Marine, Kagle has learned one or two things about the importance of field day.

"From what I've found through talking to health officials, mold and mildew, which primarily build up in showers and air vents, is the number one cause of sickness in the barracks," said Kagle. "field day

See MARINES page 2C

After seven months of battling insurgents, restoring security, local Marines near end of tour in Iraq

Sgt. Jerad W. Alexander
1st Marine Division

CAMP AL QA'IM, Iraq — After spending seven months of routing out insurgents and stabilizing the Al Qa'im region in western Al Anbar province, Marines from 3rd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment say they're leaving the region in better shape than when they arrived last year.

The Twenty-nine Palms, Calif., based 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment will replace the Camp Lejeune-based unit, commonly referred to as "three, six," in the region as part of a regularly scheduled rotation of U.S. forces in Al Anbar province.

Known as the "Teufelhund Battalion," 3rd Bn., 6th Marines have spent more than half a year providing stability to the people of western Iraq by training Iraqi Army soldiers and ridding the region of anti-Iraqi forces,

thanks to an aggressive counterinsurgency campaign.

The Marines' battle space here encompasses the Al Qa'im region — a once insurgent stronghold in the northwest region of Al Anbar. The region buttresses the Syrian Border at the Euphrates River, starting with the city of Husaybah and moving east to encompass Karabilah, Sa'dah and Ubaydi among other smaller towns.

The key to the Marines' success in the region has been counterinsurgency operations and an increased presence of Coalition Forces, according to 35-year-old Maj. Christopher P. O'Connor, operations officer.

"We needed to go after the enemy; we needed to take back the terrain," said O'Connor, a native of Johnstown, Pa.

The results: a severe

See TOUR page 3C



Camp Lejeune: A Marine with 3rd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment is greeted by loved ones after returning from a seven-month deployment to Al Qa'im, Al Anbar province, Iraq.

Focus on driving, minimizing risks

Trafford Taylor
Traffic Safety Technician MCB

Cell phone usage is on the rise. Unfortunately, the instances of drivers using a cell phone without a hands-free device is also on the rise. The National Highway Safety Administration estimates that cell phones contribute to 25 percent of all crashes involving some kind of driver distraction.

To prevent these types of mishaps, the Naval Safety Center recommends the following tips while driving:

- For cell phone conversations, pull over to the side of the road or wait until you reach your destination. The safest time to use a cell phone is when parked.

- Never answer or dial a cell phone in hazardous conditions like heavy traffic, higher speeds or bad weather.

The cell phone prohibition on base began during the summer of 2004, according to officials at Base Traffic Court. This restriction follows a Department of Defense regulation banning

the use of non-hands-free cell phones on military installations unless the vehicle is safely parked.

Armed forces traffic tickets are given to those pulled over for using their cell phone. A maximum of four points and 30 days suspension of base driving privileges could be added to a motorist's driving record if cited for using a cell phone while driving.

Anything that can keep a driver from being distracted can prevent accidents and save lives, and the safety of our Marines and sailors is important.

One of the greatest privileges of our membership in a free society is driving, but with that privilege comes responsibility. Here are some tips to think about:

- Know the local rules about wireless phones and driving. View Base Order P5560.2L.
- Use a hands-free device.
- Keep your wireless phone where you can easily reach it, so that you can get it without

See RISKS page 2C

Ladies of Lejeune say, 'Flock cancer'

Lance Cpl. Ryan M. Blaich
II Marine Expeditionary Force

Stealing through the night, nine highly-trained individuals slipped into the front yards of unsuspecting families. In the early morning light, the evidence of their mission was clear, as Camp Lejeune families poured out into their yards and spied ... pink flamingos?

Okay, so it wasn't a covert military operation. Members of the Officers' Wives' Club Relay 4 Life team spent hours planting pink flamingos in front yards, while collecting donations for the American Cancer Society March 23. The tradition that started many years ago by wives of generals, continues this month, raising thousands of dollars to help find a cure and build awareness for cancer.

Two teams of masked women piled into mini-vans and headed out for what seemed to be a night of mayhem. Their mission... to "flock" someone's yard.



Camp Lejeune: Officers' Wives' Club Relay 4 Life team, "Give Cancer the Boot," participate in a "flocking" March 23.

Armed with donation slips, "thank you" cards and more than 20 pink flamingos, teams separated and infiltrated communities of Camp Lejeune. Their goal is to generate as much money and awareness as possible for ACS and have a good time. Placing flamingos in a yard gives the house's owner a chance to donate to the charity and nominate someone else to get "flocked." While part of the team placed as many pink birds in the front yard as possible, one brave soul sneaked up to the front door and taped a note stating the nature of the occurrence. The letter explained the project, how to make a donation and offered the recipient the chance to

See CANCER page 3C

Headquarters and Service Battalion stresses consequences of stupidity during stand-down

Cpl. Matthew K. Hacker
2nd Marine Logistics Group

National statistics show that alcohol involvement is the leading factor in motor vehicle deaths in the United States, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety administration. In 2004, 16,694 people were killed in alcohol-related accidents. This number accounted for 49 percent of all traffic deaths in the United States. Fortunately, the number has decreased 2.4 percent since 2003, but there is room for improvement.

Headquarters and Service Battalion, 2nd Marine Logistics Group, conducted a safety stand-down at the base theater March 23, where military and civilian police officers spoke and alcohol-related demonstrations were held to further the Marines' knowledge on consequences of alcohol abuse and drunk driving.

During the brief, Officer Robert E.

Davis, a former military policeman, currently with the North Topsail Beach Police Department, addressed the battalion and discussed the consequences of drinking and driving in North Carolina.

He briefed the Marines on subjects involving the effects alcohol has on the body, how dangerous consumption can be before driving and the repercussions both can have on the user and everyone else affected.

Davis presented a slide show displaying several photographs depicting the consequences of driving an automobile while impaired and concluded with an experiment.

At the conclusion of the presentation, two Marines were pulled from the crowd to participate in a field sobriety test wearing a pair of "Beer Goggles."

The Marines were brought in front of the battalion and asked to perform different sobriety tests to see if they were too impaired to operate a vehicle,

while wearing the glasses.

While only one of them failed the sobriety test, both agreed they would not be competent enough to drive an automobile.

For further impact, a Marine now serving a four-year sentence at the military correctional facility here, voluntarily related his personal tragedy, furthering the anti-drink and drive message.

The prisoner, identified only by the last name Fletcher, was a former corporal charged and convicted when he reached 100 miles-per-hour and struck another vehicle, killing a 33-year-old, single mother of two.

After a night of heavy drinking with three friends to celebrate Fletcher's promotion to corporal and several accomplishments in his Marines Corps career, he woke up in a hospital bed not knowing why he was there.

He asked a nurse what happened and she told him he had been in a terrible car accident, but he should be

fine. He was somewhat relieved, when his father walked in with an expression on his face Fletcher will never forget, according to Fletcher.

"I could tell my dad had a bad look on his face, but I kept telling him it was just a car and that I was going to be fine," said Fletcher. "I just remember him saying that I hit someone and that they died."

Suddenly, Fletcher's entire sense of accomplishment he had felt the night before had vanished and was immediately replaced with guilt and remorse.

He concluded by stating that not a day goes by he does not think about that night and how easily the woman's death could have been avoided. He stressed to the Marines that drinking and driving was not worth the risk.

"Prisoner Fletcher influenced me the most because he was one of us, and he proved it could happen to anyone," said Lance Cpl. Matthew P. Anderson of Syracuse, N.Y., a fiscal budget tech-

nian with Headquarters and Service Battalion's comptroller. "The prominent thing I learned from him is that he talked about was to make sure you have a concrete plan before going for a night of drinking. Make sure you have a trustworthy, designated driver who can guarantee your ride home."

Overall, every scenario tally during the brief could be prey people would think before Consuming alcohol, if over 21 age, is a legal way to pass time with friends, but drinking planning who will drive home acceptable.

"If we can get the Marines and reach at least one with them we've made a difference," said 1st Lt. Sarah Pezzat, the logistician with Headquarters and Service Battalion's S-4. "Hopefully that a Marine from killing a mom or kids or from killing themselves that's what's important."

Safety regulations everyone should know

Dave Huffman
MCB Safety Office

Reading and understanding orders and regulations are a part of life as a Marine or Sailor stationed aboard Camp Lejeune. But did you know that Base Orders are even more stringent than Marine Corps Orders? Did you know that Base Orders apply to all personnel that live or work aboard the base or installation regardless of rank or branch of service?

Well now you do, and just to provide some insight into the world of Safety, we have listed some key requirements pertaining to Traffic and Recreational Safety aboard Camp Lejeune.

1. Private Motor Vehicles

- Cell phones can only be used with hands-free device
- Headlights must be on during precipitation, fog or periods of reduced visibility.
- Seat belts are required by all vehicle occupants on base as well as off
- Driver Improvement Course training is required for all military personnel under the age of 26.
- Observe posted speed limits.
- Vehicle operators must not be impaired or under the influence of

alcohol or other substance.

• Private Motor Vehicles must have valid state safety inspection (as required by state).

2. Motorcycles

- Motorcycle license or learner's permit
- Attend Motorcycle Safety Foundation course
- DOT or SNELL approved helmet
- Impact or shatter resistant goggles or full-face shield
- Reflective Vest -International orange, bright yellow, lime green, minimum two one-inch reflective stripes (black vests will no longer be allowed per upcoming change to Base Order)
- Hard sole boots or shoes with heels
- Full-fingered gloves

3. Bicycles

- ANSI or SNELL approved helmets
- Equipped with a white headlight
- Front white reflector & rear red reflector
- Light colored clothing during the day
- Reflective gear at night

4. Physical training

occupants are required to do field day on the weekend. Their staff noncommissioned officers must also be present to supervise and inspect the room upon completion.

"In my entire Marine Corps career, I never failed field day inspection once; I loved my weekends too much," said Kagle. "I figured from the start that the more time I invested in doing it right the first time, the more liberty I would have. 'Give me liberty or give me death.'

But for some, the consequences of failing are not enough of a deterrent. Kagle had to figure out another way to get his Marines motivated for field day. Enter: Mr. Ducky.

"We live in a generation of young people who ask the question 'Why? What's in it for me?'" said Kagle. "After watching the show Survivor a few times, I got the idea for an immunity idol, an incentive program for the Marines."

Mr. Ducky, an inflatable duck given to Armstrong by a former inhabitant of HP 55, is awarded to the cleanest room each Friday. The winners of Mr. Ducky are given a free passing grade for the next week's field day inspection.

"If we walk by a room and see Mr. Ducky sitting on a rack, we just keep on

• Remain further than six feet from any roadway

• Must wear reflective gear from evening to morning colors and during periods of reduced visibility

• At least 30 inches of reflective surface (15 square inches in front and 15 square inches in back)

• Jog facing traffic and follow all traffic rules and regulations

• No portable headphones, earphones that cover both ears

5. Skateboards

- ANSI helmets
- Elbow pads, kneepads and wrist guards
- Light colored clothing during the day
- Reflective gear at night

• No portable headphones, earphones that cover both ears

These topics cover just a few of the Safety issues you as a Marine or Sailor need to be aware of. While preventing mishaps has a lot to do with common sense, knowing the "Rules of the Road" makes your experience a lot safer! Please ask any questions you may have about the above article, or any other traffic safety questions, to the Base Traffic Safety Division at 451-2776/5903/9668. ■

Courts-Martial

Sgt. Dekoras D. Caffie, Headquarters and Support Battalion, School of Infantry, was convicted at a general court-martial of one count of disobeying a lawful order, one count of maltreatment, one count of false official statement, two counts of adultery, two counts of indecent acts and two counts of indecent language. He was sentenced to a bad-conduct discharge, confinement for 18 months and reduction to private.

Lance Cpl. Martin A. McClung, 2nd Tank Battalion, 2nd Marine Division, was convicted at a special court-martial of one count of hazing and one count of communicating a threat. He was sentenced to confinement for 60 days, reduction to private first class and a letter of reprimand.

Lance Cpl. Marlon W. McMillan, Marine Aircraft Group 29, 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing, Marine Corps Air Station New River, was convicted at a special court-martial of one count of false official statement and two counts of larceny. He was sentenced to a bad-conduct discharge, confinement for six months, forfeiture of \$4,800 and reduction to private.

Hospitalman Joseph F. Kaye, 2nd Military Police Battalion, 2nd Marine Logistics Group, was convicted at a general court-martial of one count of violating a lawful general order, one count of carnal knowledge, one count of sodomy, two counts of production of child pornography, two counts of transporting child pornography, one count of traveling with intent to commit a sex act. He was sentenced to a dishonorable discharge, confinement for 25 years, forfeiture of pay and allowances and reduction to seaman recruit.

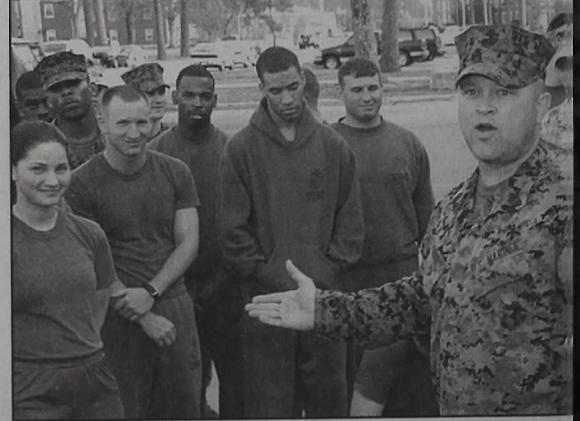
Pfc. Raniel F. Mangahas, Headquarters and Support Battalion, School of Infantry, was convicted at a special court-martial of two counts of unauthorized absence. He was sentenced to confinement for 120 days, forfeiture of \$2,547 and reduction to private.

Pfc. Nicholas L. Rabbitt, Marine Engineer School, Training Command, Camp Lejeune, 2nd Marine Division, was convicted at a special court-martial of two counts of unauthorized absence. He was sentenced to a bad-conduct discharge, confinement for 60 days and reduction to private.

Pvt. Trace T. Render, Headquarters and Support Battalion, School of Infantry, was convicted at a special court-martial of two counts of unauthorized absence and two counts of wrongful use of marijuana. He was sentenced to a bad-conduct discharge, confinement for 150 days and forfeiture of \$5,094.

Pvt. Randall J. Sederdahl, Headquarters and Support Battalion, School of Infantry, was convicted at a special court-martial of one count of unauthorized absence, one count of wrongful use of marijuana, one count of wrongful use of amphetamine and one count of wrongful use of cocaine. He was sentenced to a bad-conduct discharge, confinement for six months and forfeiture of \$4,000.

Pvt. Michael T. Aliff, Headquarters and Support Battalion, Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, was convicted at a special court-martial of one count of unauthorized absence and one count of disrespect towards a staff noncommissioned officer. He was sentenced to confinement for 45 days and forfeitures of \$1,000.



Camp Lejeune: 1st Sgt. Michael Kagle, the first sergeant of Company A, Headquarters and Support Battalion, Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, speaks to Marines who live in the barracks about the importance of safety.

attention to detail and take care of the little things, you shouldn't have to worry about failing."

Though field day may not be one of the most popular traditions among Marines, it is something that will surely be around for

years and years to come.

"The barracks isn't a comfortable house," said Kagle. "You work with me or work again one way or another, the job is get done. Mission accomplishment foremost."

Health Services Center phone option changes

The phone option menu for the Naval Hospital Health Services Center (450-HELP) has recently changed. The new options are:

Press 1 to make or change an appointment

Press 2 to speak to an advice nurse

Press 3 for assistance with referral management

Press 4 for the command assistance team

SNCO Wives' Club Thrift Shop

SNCO Wives' Club Thrift Shop is having a military clothing sale for active-duty military from April 3rd - April 7th.

ALL military clothing will be half off when you present your active-duty military ID card. Hours of operation are Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9 a.m. - 1 p.m., and Monday nights from 5 p.m. - 8 p.m. Thrift Shop phone number is 451-5591

and we are bldg. 1200 on the corner of Birch and West Street.

RISKS

CONTINUED FROM

taking your eyes off the road.

• If you are tired or the traffic or weather is bad, end the call and take a break later.

• Don't take notes or update phone numbers while driving.

• If you must make a call while driving, you are not more than 10 seconds.

Conversations that involve emotional issues can produce stress, which is most distracting when you're driving.

For more information, contact the Information Security and Privacy Section, Traffic Control Center, 451-5903 or email taylor@usmc.mil.

served as the battalion's foundation for future security operations.

The Emerald Wadi

Following the completion of Operation Iron Fist, the battalion positioned itself along the 'Emerald Wadi,' which is about 1,400 meters long and 600 meters wide. The Wadi became, in sorts, a "no-man's land" reminiscent of World War I, where U.S. Marines were positioned on one side and insurgents on the other, with an open area in between.

Nearly daily, insurgents fired upon the Marines, who responded with the combined arms of tanks, amphibious assault vehicles, snipers, dismounted infantry and airpower to eliminate scores of enemy.

Sgt. Scott M. Royal, one of the battalion's scout-snipers, recalled the daily exchange of sniper fire between coalition and insurgent forces across the Wadi.

"It seemed like every morning the insurgents would start off their attacks across the wadi with rockets, then snipers would shoot at us off-and-on all day whenever they saw movement," said Royal, a native of Rochester, N.Y.

Operation Steel Curtain

Due to the Marines' consistent presence across the Wadi, insurgent forces reinforced their position along the Wadi. The move was a feint by the Marines – they wanted the insurgents to believe they would simply move across the Wadi and into the enemy's path.

"We made them think we were coming across the wadi. Instead we moved through the desert, coming in behind them without them knowing it all," said O'Connor.

On Nov. 5, 2005, with more than 150 insurgents dead as a result of their first major offensive, the battalion launched Operation Steel Curtain – perhaps the Marines' largest offensive to date in the region. The Marines cleared the cities of Husaybah and Karabilah during the 18-day operation, working with several other Marine and U.S. Army units to

sweep the cities clear of anti-Iraqi forces. Approximately 2,500 Marines, sailors, soldiers and Iraqi Army soldiers swept into the city, fighting insurgents house-to-house.

"[Steel Curtain] was the coolest thing I ever did," said Hanenkratt. "It was like a tidal wave," he added, referring to the numbers of Coalition personnel who overwhelmed insurgent forces.

"We saw a lot of sniper and [rocket-propelled grenade] fire, especially on the first day," said Chardon, Ohio, native Lance Cpl. Shane M. Cocchi, a 20-year-old rifleman with Company I, 3rd Bn., 6th Marines. "It was fast, intense ... we kicked down a lot of doors. It was just awesome."

The operation saw an additional 250 suspected enemy dead and provided the Iraqi populous in the region an insurgent-free place to live and work, according to the Marines.

"We're able to progress now with getting consistent [electrical] power, free and clean running water for all the villages up there, as well as starting to rebuild the hospitals and the school houses that have suffered over the last three years," said Col. Stephen W. Davis, who commanded all Marine forces in western Al Anbar province for the past year, during a Pentagon press briefing last month.

Bringing in the Security, Reconstruction

Upon clearing the major cities in the Al Qa'im region and Ubaydi – a town about 15 miles east of the Syrian Border – last spring by the Camp Pendleton, Calif.-based 2nd Bn., 1st Marines, the Marines and sailors of 3/6, along with their Iraqi Army counterparts, were able to integrate themselves into the towns, to interact with the local populous in order to keep insurgents from reentering the region, according to O'Connor.

With the enemy removed from the cities in the region, key democracy-building events occurred, namely two elections that occurred in mid-October and

again in mid-December.

The local elections contributed 500 votes in the first election and a larger 23,000 votes in the second, something that was not possible in the past. In addition to a democratic voting process, introductory humanitarian assistance and government infrastructure rebuilding has been possible with the help of the 6th Civil Affairs Group.

The 6th Civil Affairs Group was able, as a result of the towns being cleared, to come into the cities here and begin reconstruction efforts – buildings damaged during fighting were repaired, basic utilities such as water and power were restored, and key government municipal buildings built. Schools were opened after nearly a year of inactivity.

Afghanistan experience paid off in Iraq

The battalion's senior enlisted member, Sgt. Maj. Scott L. Theakston, summarized the Marines' and Iraqi soldiers' success in this region in one word: "Professionalism."

"Everything we've done over here we've prepared for," said Theakston, a 40-year-old Pittsburgh native. "We trained for what we wanted to accomplish."

The Marines' success in this western Al Anbar province region stems from the lessons they learned during combat operations in Afghanistan, said O'Connor. Many of the unit's serving in Iraq deployed in 2004 during Operation Enduring Freedom. The battalion spent roughly seven months in Afghanistan, where they conducted operations against Taliban and Al Qaida forces, which gave the Marines an understanding of operating in a combat environment.

"Our [noncommissioned officers] are smart and mature. They've seen operations in Afghanistan, they understood coming in overly aggressive [here would] have a detriment on success," said O'Connor.

Nearly half of the battalion's Marines – about 500 – are Enduring Freedom veterans.

programs of the American Cancer Society, according to its Web site, www.cancer.org.

For more information on upcoming and related events contact the local Relay 4 Life web site at www.relayonslow.com or the Officer Wives Club team, "Give Cancer the boot," at TTTDPTKIDS@aol.com.



Sgt. Jerad W. Alexander

At Anbar province: Marines and sailors from 3rd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, unload sea bags from the back of a CH-53 Super Stallion helicopter upon arriving to Camp Al Qa'im in western Al Anbar province, Iraq.

"The insurgents in Afghanistan were tougher fighters than those here," said Hanenkratt, a veteran of Afghanistan combat operations. "Out here it's all [Military Operations in Urban Terrain] whereas in Afghanistan it wasn't. Out here, you have to beat the IED."

As the Marines prepare to redeploy to Camp Lejeune, they're beginning to look back on their tour in Iraq and are realizing the impact they made here.

"I feel a lot better about myself," said Cocchi, who is

looking forward to visiting with family in Ohio after he returns to Camp Lejeune. "I feel I've done something important. I have a lot more pride in my country and in myself since coming here. But I'm glad to be heading home soon. Oh yeah!"

The battalion's redeployment to the U.S. is part of a regularly scheduled rotation of forces in A Anbar province. More than 25,000 Marine and sailors from the Camp Pendleton, Calif.-based 1st Marine Expeditionary Force are replacing the Camp Lejeune-based 2nd MEF. ■

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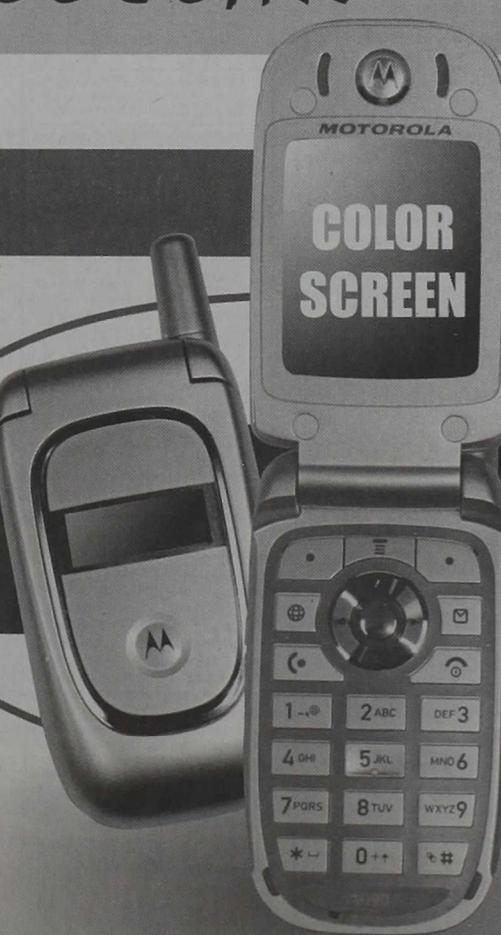
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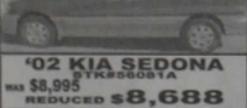
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Tires -Used, set of 4. Michelin Cross Terrain P275 60R 17, \$120/obo. Michelin MX V4 P205 60R 16, \$200/obo. 252-393-2723.		
TONNEAU COVER -Used ARE LSII series, long bed, black w/sports wing/break lights. Lock w/ latch, good cond. Hydraulics work great! \$1200/obo. 382-0504.		
TRAILER -5x8 w/drop down ramp. Set up to carry motorcycle, ATV, etc. 455-1066.		
TRUCK FOR PARTS -98 Nissan Frontier. \$1800/obo. 910-238-0793 after 4PM.		
TUBE STEP -for Toyota Tundra ext cab. New, never mounted. \$130. 17" GT-R rims w/3 tires, \$400. 545-7179.		
1956 FORD TRUCK -6 cyl, 3 spd stick transmission. Make offer. 934-3422.		
1963 MERCURY COMET -Restored. New In & out. Asking \$9500/obo. 340-6504.		
1972 CHEVY CORVETTE -Red, 4 spd, all power. Asking \$23K/obo. 382-9560.		
1972 STINGRAY CORVETTE -4 spd. Asking \$23K/obo. 382-9560.		
1975 CHEVY CORVETTE -Too many parts to list. \$10,000/obo. 545-1206.		
1978 JEEP CJ5-V8 304, 4x4, 35" tires, 7" lift, rally lights, soft top, loud exhaust, sweet condition, good for wheeling! 539-7810.		
1983 CHEVY CAMARO -Body in great shape. Runs good, 5 speed. Forest green. New clutch, batteries & many more. Must sell. \$750. 330-212-6224.		
1983 PONTIAC BONNEVILLE -Good condition, only has a little over 100,000 mi. Needs new brakes. \$500/obo. 526-7801.		
1985 MERCURY CAPRI -Runs, in good cond, \$2300/obo. Break line needs fixed. 614-226-7821.		
1986 280ZX -Good project, t-tops no interior except seats. Ran great & was daily driven. Needs water pump. \$700. 526-2417.		
1987 CHEVROLET VAN-V8 350, handicapped lift equipped, high raised top, blue/white, a/c, pw, pl, & ps. Good cond. 90,984 mi. \$5,795. 330-1454.		
1987 CHEVY S10-2.5 , 4 speed. Runs great, no rust, looks good. Well maintained. Must sell. \$1050. 330-212-6224.		
1987 JEEP WRANGLER -4.2L, V6, 5 spd manual, runs good, \$2,700. 546-8002.		
1988 HONDA CRX HF-DOHC zc turbocharged engine, blitz SS BOV, complete bushing kit, HX rims, + much more. \$4200. 554-8666.		
1989 DODGE RAM PICK UP TRUCK-150 series, good cond., 318 V-8, \$2000. 324-1001.		
1989 NISSAN SENTRA -Runs good, \$595. 353-3689.		
1989 NISSAN -Hard body truck. 5 speed, new tires, fair condition, runs great. Great 2nd vehicle or small work truck. Very dependable. \$900/obo. 455-9467.		
1991 CHEVY CAVALIER -New tires. Has a/c, cd player, runs good. \$900. 326-3070.		
1991 CHEVY LUMINA Z34 -\$2100 bright red w/spoiler. Great transmission. 153,000 mi. Lots of power. 346-4370.		
1991 NISSAN SENTRA -4 doors, runs great. Only had 3 owners. CC, a/c, heat, & am/fm/cass. 5 spd. \$3000.00/obo. 355-1729/1/m.		
1992 CHEVY BLAZER TAHOE -4wd, air, tow pkg, good tires & paint, runs good, asking \$2500. 743-0244.		
1992 VW JETTA CARAT -Clean car, new tires, a/c recharge last summer, 5spd manual tranny. Pwr windows, sun roof, \$1800. 389-2545.		
1993 HONDA ACCORD LX -\$3200. 1993 Civic Hatchback. \$2800. 910-381-0554.		
1993 HONDA CIVIC -4dr, loaded, \$3100. More Honda Man. 910-381-0554.		
1993 JEEP WRANGLER -Lots of extras, Asking \$3200/obo. 376-0914.		
1993 PONTIAC BONNEVILLE -Runs well, use for parts as is, no title. \$300/obo. 455-6298 between 6-10 pm m-f.		
1994 NISSAN XE KINGCAB -Black, 4x4 truck, V6, manual transmission. 170,000 miles. Maint. utd. fluids have been changed, tires like new, clean. Asking \$5,500. 219-0559.		
1995 CADILLAC DEVILLE -Cream, mint condition, lthr power hdts seats, keyless entry, am/fm/cass, cruise, auto, V-8/4.9 ltr. Nice rims/tires. Garage kept. \$7500. 546-1319.		
1995 NEON -Only 86,460 mi. red, in excellent condition, some extras, clean, oil & safety inspec done, stick shift, a/c.		
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Saint James AME Zion Church
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Mayville, NC 28555

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127 St. Pauls Loop
Hubert, NC 28539

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601 Hadley Colley Rd.
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608 Main St. Ext.
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Union Chapel AME Zion Church
801 Freedom Way
Midway Park, NC 28544

APOSTOLIC

Church of the Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith
655 Smith Rd.
Mayville, NC 28555

Hebron Ministries Praise Center
115 Moosehart Ave.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

Crossroads Christian Fellowship
128 Center St.
Jacksonville, NC 2854

BAPTIST

Amazing Grace Baptist Church
307 Center St.
Jacksonville, NC 28546

Davis Chapel Mission Baptist Church
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Mayville, NC 28555

Evening View Baptist Church
502 Georgetown Rd.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

First Baptist Church
153 Broadhurst Rd.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

First Baptist Church of Belgrade
561 Springfield Rd.
Mayville, NC 28555

First Baptist Church of Kellumtown
117 Kellumtown Rd.
Hubert, NC 28539

Hartsville Primitive Baptist Church
507 County Club Rd.
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Jenkins Chapel Missionary Baptist Church
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JT Kern Memorial Baptist Church
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Jacksonville, NC 28540

Man Hollow Missionary Baptist Church
55 Marshallow Church Rd.
Hamptons, NC

New Life Baptist Church
104 Drummer Kellum Rd.
Jacksonville, NC 28546

Providence Baptist Church
Church 406 E. Ocean Rd.
Holly Ridge, NC 28445

St. Louis Missionary Baptist Church
188 Quaker Bridge Rd.
Jacksonville, NC 28546

Truth Fellowship Church of Jacksonville
1830 Wilmington Hwy.
Hans Run Rd.
Jacksonville, NC

Victory Baptist Church
188 Quaker Bridge Rd.
Jacksonville, NC 28546

Washington Chapel Missionary Baptist Church
347 Bell Fork Rd.
Jacksonville, NC 2854

BIBLE CHURCHES

Jacksonville Bible Church
501 Anne St.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

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200 W. Hause St.
Richlands, NC 28574

Jacksonville Christian Church
2429 Commerce Rd.
Jacksonville, NC 28546

Mount Olive UCC
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Mayville, NC 28555

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Infant of Prague Catholic Church
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Jacksonville, NC 28540

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Church of God
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223 A Taylor Rd.
Richlands, NC 28574

Holly Ridge Church of God
1021 E. Ocean Rd.
Holly Ridge, NC 28445

Jacksonville Church of God
210 South Shore Dr.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

New Covenant Ministry
1611 Murry Hill Rd.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

Chapel of Peace Church of God In Christ
414 Sound Rd.
Holly Ridge, NC 28445

Faith Outreach Church
703 Arizona Blvd.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

Whaley's Chapel Free Will Baptist Church
1515 Hwy. 41 W.
Richlands, NC 28574

St. Paul Free Will Baptist Church
7176 Gum Branch Rd.
Richlands, NC 28574

Folkstone Free Will Baptist Church
133 Old Folkstone Rd.
Holly Ridge, NC 28445

Mount Zion Free Will Baptist Church
367 Cedar Fork Rd.
Beaufort, NC 28518

First Free Will Baptist Church
207 Queen St.
Hubert, NC 28539

Sneads Ferry Free Will Baptist
420 N. Topsail Dr.
Surf City, NC 28445

Faith Chapel Free Will Baptist Church
304 Barbee Rd. Richlands, NC 28574

Saint Malinda Free Will Baptist Church
6525 Hwy. 41 W.
Trenton, NC 28585

St. Paul Free Will Baptist Church
7176 Gum Branch Rd.
Richlands, NC 28574

Faith Chapel Free Will Baptist Church
705 Hause St.
Mayville, NC 28555

Faith Outreach Church
703 Arizona Blvd.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

New Covenant Ministry
1611 Murry Hill Rd.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

Chapel of Peace Church of God In Christ
414 Sound Rd.
Holly Ridge, NC 28445

Faith Outreach Church
703 Arizona Blvd.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

Abundance of Love and Learning Center
1516 Gum Branch Rd.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

Gospel Temple Holiness Church
Gum Branch Rd.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

FULL GOSPEL

River of Life Foursquare Gospel Church
231 Zack Cir.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

Christian Community Church
732 Nine Mile Rd.
Richlands, NC 28574

House of God Belgrade
Spring Hill Rd.
Mayville, NC 28555

Gospel Temple Holiness Church
Gum Branch Rd.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

INDEPENDENT BAPTIST

Amazing Grace Baptist Church
307 Center St.
Jacksonville, NC 28546

Bible Baptist Church
402 Timothy Rd.
Jacksonville, NC 28546

Bethel's Fellowship
614 Richlands Hwy.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

Born Again Baptist Church
1204 Hwy. 210.
Sneads Ferry, NC 28460

Chapel By the Bay
216 Michigan ave.
Holly Ridge, NC 28445

Comfort Christian Church
4222 Hwy. 41 W.
Trenton, NC 28585

Christian Tabernacle
221 S. Marine Blvd.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

The Lighthouse International Christian Church
401 Court St.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

Emmanuel Independent Baptist Church
120 Bell St.
Cedar Point, NC 28584

Fellowship Baptist Church
7 East Dr.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

Jacobson Well Christian Fellowship
6661 Hwy. 58 S.
Mayville, NC 28555

Living Word Full Gospel Ministries
100 Maypaltch Rd.
Jacksonville, NC 28546

Mt. Sinai Holy Church
315 - Ford St.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

New Beginnings Christian Center
699 Bell Fork Rd.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

New Life Christian Center
1033 E. Ocean Rd.
Holly Ridge, NC 28445

Temple Baptist Church
121 Chaney Ave.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

TOTAL CHURCHES

FREE WILL BAPTIST

Angola Free Will Baptist Church
216 Nine Mile Rd.
Maple Hill, NC 28454

Bayden Chapel PWFB Church
832-A Taylor Rd.
Richlands, NC 28574

Blooming Hill Free Will Baptist Church
784 Franktown Rd.
Richlands, NC 28574

Calvary Free Will Baptist Church
1022 Haws Run Rd.
Maple Hill, NC 28454

Cardinal Village Free Will Baptist Church
225 Indian Dr.
Jacksonville, NC 28546

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

Jehovah's Witnesses - Swansboro Congregation
42 Hammock Rd.
Swansboro, NC 28584

Ascension Lutheran Church
103 Fall Dr.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses
1268 Old Maplehurst Rd.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

Shiloh Pentecostal Holiness Church
130 Bell Fork Rd.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

Praise Gospel Assembly

150 Sybil St.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

Prayer Tabernacle

111 Kinston Hwy.
Richlands, NC 28574

Project Assembly Ministries

136 Richards Dr.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

Richlands Community Outreach Ministry

9103 Richlands Hwy.
Richlands, NC 28574

Richlands Pentecostal Assembly Church

8403 Richlands Hwy.
Richlands, NC 28574

St. Phillips Episcopal church

651 Tar Landing Rd.
Holly Ridge, NC 28445

The Bible Church Ministries

266 Bannerman Mill Rd.
Richlands, NC 28574

Trent River OGMB

465 Georgetown Rd.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

United Kingdom Ministries

4781 Gum Branch Rd.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

Victory Deliverance Temple Church

183 Ander Moore Rd.
Maple Hill, NC 28454

Victory Faith of Jacksonville

6021 Richlands Hwy.
Richlands, NC 28574

Victory in the Word Worship Center

4367 Gum Branch Rd.
Jacksonville, NC 28546

White Oak Community

6181 New Bern Hwy.
Maysville, NC 28555

Word of Life Christian Fellowship

900 Bell Fork Rd.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

Christians United Fellowship

117 Henderson Dr.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

Deliverance Evangelistic Temple

120 Country Club Rd.
Jacksonville, NC 28546

Community Prayer House

4827 Hwy. 41
Trenton, NC 28585

Cornerstone Church

117 McGowan Rd.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

Faith Body of Christ Assembly

124 Poplar St.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

The Ecclesia Ministries

303 E. Francis St.
Richlands, NC 28574

Emma Anderson Memorial Chapel

110 S. Anderson Blvd.
Topless Beach, NC 28540

First Baptist Church Youth Annex

1925 Gum Branch Rd.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

Faith Prayer House

683 Hunter Creek Rd.
Maysville, NC 28555

Faith Tabernacle

4480 Richlands Hwy.
Jacksonville, NC 28574

PENTECOSTAL

Christian Life fellowship

111 Summersill School Rd.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

Freedom PWFB Church

2311 Blue Creek Rd.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

Good News Ministries

102 Doris Ave. E.
Jacksonville, NC 28540

Galilee Missionary Baptist Church

Boats & Recreation

2006 Specialized Mountain. 2 mos. old. Asking \$800/obo.

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2005 (2)-26", almost new, just sell! \$50 for both.

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ipri Omega w/trailer, 2 or, & misc accessories. 346-9227.

Yancy Spencer fun technology, incl. board p, barely used, great 00. 467-5855.

2002 Thor Industries.

Motorcycles

Motorcycles

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Motorcycles

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1990 HD FXRS LOWRIDER-Custom paint, drag bars, pipes, lowered, 1st place winner twice, 40K mi., garaged kept. Many extras. Excellent cond. \$11,500/obo. 353-1873.

2002 KAWASAKI ZR-7S-Sport/tour class, low miles, great for 1st time rider, 50-60 mpg, protective cover incl. \$4,900/obo. 358-1975 1/m.

2002 YAMAHA YZF-R6-In immaculate condition, only 3k mi., full micron exhaust, & too many accessories to list. \$6,500/obo. 324-9928.

2003 HARLEY DAVIDSON SOFTAIL-Arriv. ed., garage kept, Sampson

exhaust. Less than 2K mi. Very clean, \$13,800/obo. (252)637-9890.

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MOTORCYCLE HELMETS (2)-AFX, sz. medium, Yamaha blue. Excellent condition. \$120. 577-3983.

SUZUKI 2000 GS500E-black, has 9241 miles, new tires, \$1700. 554-9068.

Yard Sale

CHURCH YARD SALE-March 31 & April 1, 910 Pine Valley Rd., Pine Valley Methodist Church. Something for everyone.

GARAGE SALE-Apr. 1 8-12pm. 502 Raintree Rd. off Gum Branch Rd. Items incl. clothing, household items, fish tank, electronics, USMC uniforms, etc.

MOVING SALE-Open house every weekend through May. Still have dining set, entertainment center & bedroom furniture. 346-6146.

MULTI-FAMILY GARAGE SALE-Sat. April 1st 7 am-7? 500 Sunrell Way, Foxtail Area across from Foxtail in Hubert. Electronics, furniture, clothes, tools, etc.

MULTI-FAMILY YARD SALE-April 1st, 5526 Virginia St. Camp Lejeune. 8am-? No early birds please.

NEIGHBORHOOD YARD SALE-Hall's Creek in Swansboro. April 1 at 8AM. Follow signs from route 24, look for balloons on mailboxes.

YARD SALE-Sat. 1st. 3335 Tulagi Pl. TT2 off of Hagar Dr. Lots of baby strollers, high chair, clothes, toys, adult clothing, etc.

Auto Miscellaneous

Yard Sale

YARD SALE-Apr. 1, 2, 422 Singletree Ct., off Blue Creek School Road. Microwave, household items, bar, toys, bathroom items, lots of stuff CHICAP!

YARD SALE-April 1st & 2nd. 10am-2pm in front of Holiday Mobile Home City office on Corbin St.

YARD SALE-April 1st. 7am-5pm. Two bedroom suits, antiques, & more. 205 Riverbend Rd. 346-4131.

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Individual forms must be filled out for each "category" of items (automobiles, pets, etc.) and written legibly.

No more than 25 words per form.

Trader ad submissions cannot be accepted by phone, guard mail, or fax, as these means are reserved for official business only.

Turn in your ad by dropping it off at the Public Affairs Office or visit www.militarynews.com/globe.

Trader Form

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(25 Words Per Form - Write Legibly.)

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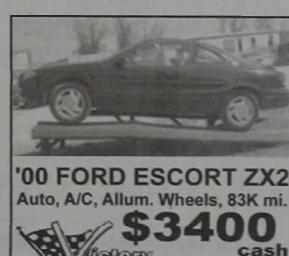
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\$2800 cash
938-AUTO



1993 CONVERSION VAN
Ford Econoline, Step Rails, Automatic
Victory AUTO SALES
1 Corinthians 15:57
\$4600 938-AUTO



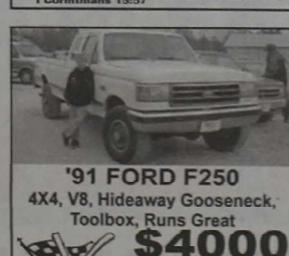
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Carolina Living

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Habitat for Humanity / 4D

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e registration is
For more information
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3212, ext. 213.

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Community
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t branch of Marine
Community Services.
ation deadline is April
information, call
12 or e-mail
kenan@usmc.mil.



Onslow Beach: A mixed flock of terns takes in the sun and wind as waves crash nearby. The beach is open 365 days a year.

Onslow Beach heats up

Story and photos by
Jennifer Moore
Carolina Living editor

As the weather warms up, the smell of salt air begins to beckon. The beach offers a way to escape from the daily grind, to lounge in the sun with only the crash of the surf as background music.

But there is no need to drive to the Outer Banks or fly to a tropical island to find a tranquil shore. Onslow Beach offers all the comforts of more popular beaches, at a fraction of the cost.

Hurricane Ophelia caused substantial damage to Rousey Fishing Pier and other beach areas, but officials and contractors have been hard at work all year to get Onslow Beach ready for summer. They paved the dirt basketball courts, re-stained the rentable lodges, upgraded the power capacity for 27 of the 43 available RV camp sites, pushed more sand up to start rebuilding dunes and completely renovated the "sea shells," rentable covered picnic areas.

The sea shells got new hot water heaters, showers and picnic tables and will receive new coats of Caribbean-inspired paint to replace the institutional green of the past.

Workers also spent time cleaning up discarded cigarette butts, and officials hope new cigarette butt cans will mean a cleaner beach.

"There's a lot of changes. It's going to be a fun summer," said Staff Sgt. Jose Maldonado, staff non-commissioned officer in charge for the beach detachment.

There are three beach areas — one each for enlisted personnel, staff non-commissioned officers and officers. Each has a pavilion with bathroom and shower facilities, vending machines, picnic areas and parking. The officer and staff NCO areas also include rentable activity rooms.

In addition, the beach has a number of recreation areas, including playgrounds,

basketball courts, beach volleyball courts, horseshoes and a mini-golf course.

"It's a great place to have family picnics or beach outings," said Sam O'Leary, general manager of Onslow Beach. "It's a very natural beach with some recreation areas."

Since O'Leary arrived in 1989, the water quality has "dramatically improved," he said.

"There is a ton of sea life," including dolphins, otters and all manner of birds.

For those who want to stay more than a day, the beach offers a variety of rental options for all levels of active-duty and retired military.

Rental options include two- and three-bedroom trailers, beach-front cabanas and lodges. Packages are available for three-, four- or seven-night stays. Pricing is based on rank.

All lodging units are fully furnished and include linens and kitchenware; however, the beach staff can recommend some items to bring that are not included, such as dish detergent and bath soap.

No pets are allowed in the rental units or on the recreational beaches and smoking is prohibited in all Marine Corps Community Services facilities.

Patrons with pets can use the beach south of the Staff NCO beach.

Campground sites are available for \$15 per day.

Active-duty military assigned to Camp Lejeune, Marine Corps Air Station New River or Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point may reserve lodging facilities and campsites at Onslow Beach 20 weeks in advance.

Retired military, active-duty military, or reservists from any duty station of any Armed Forces and authorized Department of Defense civilian employees may reserve eight weeks in advance.

Onslow Beach is open 365 days a year, and lifeguards are on duty from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. from May 27 to Sept. 4.

For more information, call 450-7502. ■



Onslow Beach: The enlisted, staff NCO and officer lodges have been re-stained to ready them for summer. Lodges packages are available starting at \$81 for three nights for E1-E5 and \$108 for three nights for E6-E6. Four-night and seven-night packages also are available.



Onslow Beach: The seashells have been completely renovated and will be painted in bright colors for summer rentals.



Onslow Beach: A gull spends a moment alone.



Onslow Beach: A family takes a peaceful beach stroll on a recent sunny day.

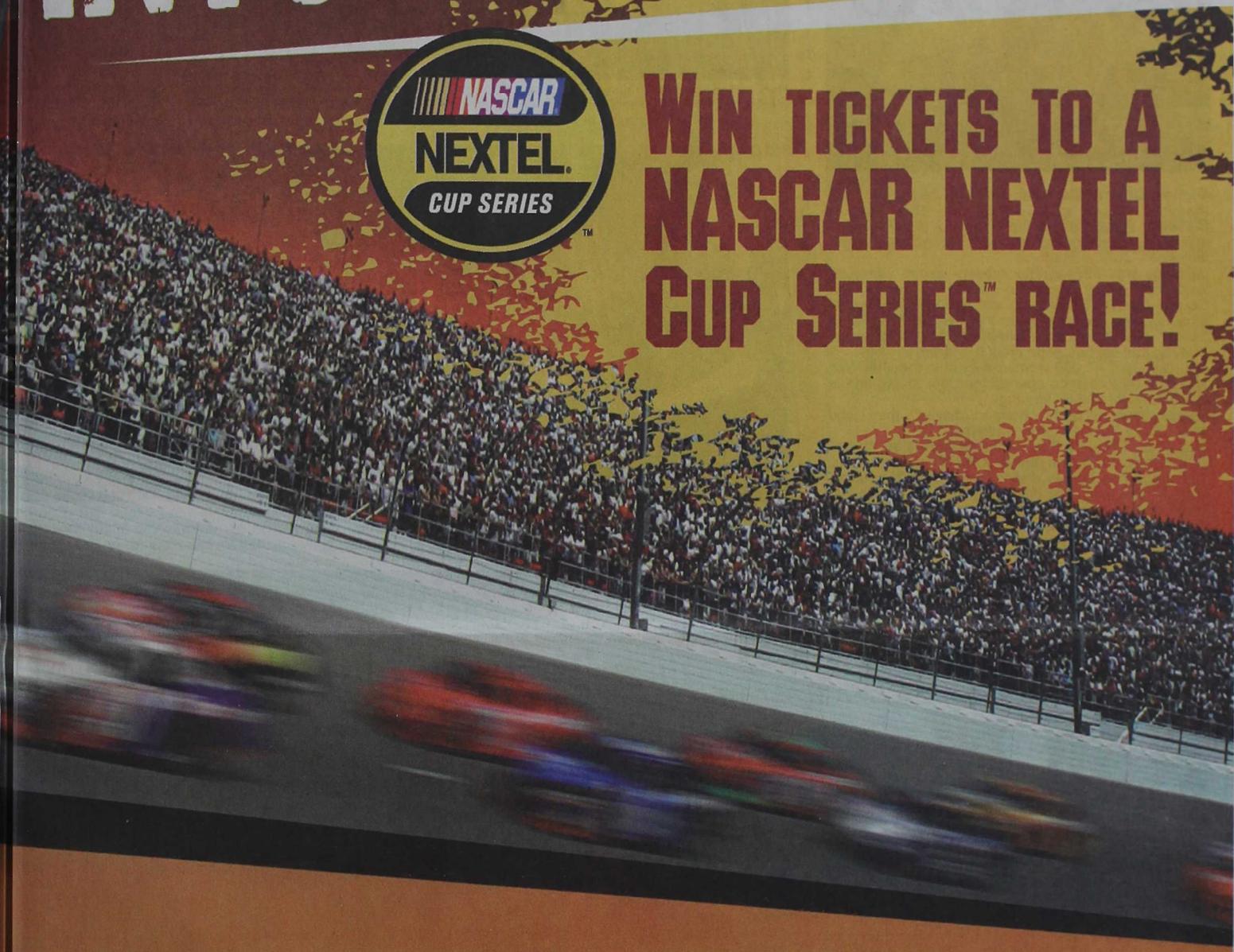


Onslow Beach: Two little girls and their dog make a mad dash for the water on a sunny but windy Monday.

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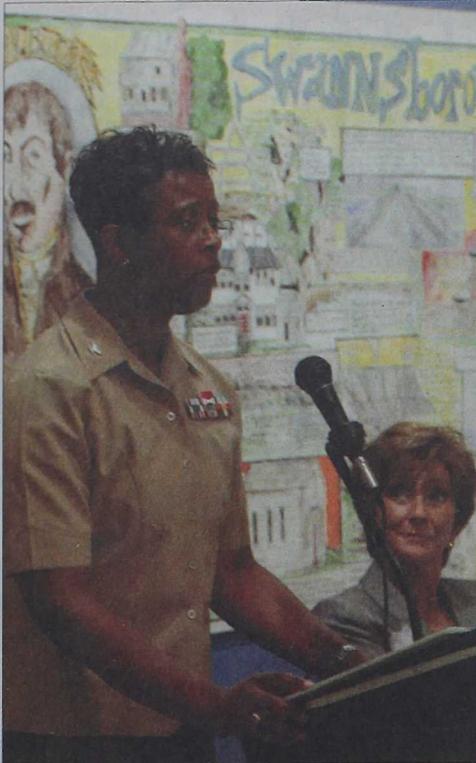
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Luncheon celebrates Women's history



Jennifer Moore

Onslow County Museum: Col. Gail Jennings, commanding officer of Headquarters and Support Battalion, speaks about the history of women in the military as Jacksonville Mayor Jan Bean Slagle, right, looks on.

Jennings was the keynote speaker at the inaugural Women's History Luncheon hosted by the Onslow County Council for Women and the Onslow County Museum. She said that while there was a "long list of 'no-can-dos' for women when she first entered the military, that list has gotten much shorter.

Approximately 41,000 women served in the Gulf War, and their performance opened the door for women in combat, according to Jennings.

"Times have certainly changed, haven't they," she said. "Every Marine is truly a rifleman."

The Onslow County Council for Women is an organization dedicated to the needs of women in the county. The group has hosted distinguished women's luncheons in the past, but decided to team up with the museum this year to host a luncheon in honor of Women's History Month.



Habitat for Humanity: Lance Cpl. Owen Manygoats eyes a notch he made in a support beam for the roof of a house the Marines were helping renovate.



Habitat for Humanity: Cpl. Jeff Radke nails a sheet of wood onto support beams on the roof of a house on DeWitt Street in Jacksonville.

Marines lend helping hand

Story and photos by
Jennifer Moore
Carolina Living editor

A Jacksonville family is one step closer to owning their own home, thanks to the efforts of 16 Marines from 8th Engineer Support Battalion.

The work was part of Jacksonville- Onslow Habitat for Humanity's efforts to renovate a 1950s-era house on DeWitt Street in Jacksonville for Laurie Reed and her son Christopher, who were chosen through a search and selection process.

When Habitat for Humanity needed volunteers to remove and replace the house's roof, the Marines of 8th Engineer Support Battalion were more than willing to help.

"It gets us doing something we were trained [to do] and love to do," said Lt. Adorian Ferenczy, officer in charge.

"It's a good thing. It's a good cause," said Sgt. Chris Wilbanks. "There's people out there that need more help than we do."

The roof replacement is one of the first steps in renovating the house—and it turned out to be slightly more work than the volunteers had anticipated. When the Marines pulled the old roof off, they found a number of rotten support beams that needed replacing.

Once the roof is finished, the family moves in, nearly everything from the roof to the wiring to Christopher Blankenship for Humanity volunteer and 2nd class in the Navy.

Blankenship asked for a base and found the 8th Support Battalion ready to be.

"They have a construction ground, so it is good for them to roof," as opposed to using volunteers, Blankenship said.

The three-bedroom house is donated to Jacksonville- Onslow Habitat for Humanity by a dozen volunteers. They hope the house is ready for the Reed family before school starts in August.

Habitat for Humanity is a national non-profit organization to building and renovating homes for families in need. Families must meet a number of requirements and the construction of their home.

The houses are not free, but pay a no-interest mortgage of building the house.

For more information, Jacksonville- Onslow Habitat for Humanity, call 347-9400 or johjh@earthlink.net. ■



Habitat for Humanity: Marines from 8th Engineer Battalion volunteered to replace the ailing roof on a house for Jacksonville- Onslow Habitat for Humanity.

Pets of the Week Adopt a Pet

Save a life; take home a new friend today



Gunner is a 4-year-old male German Shepherd. He is housebroken and good with children.

ID# 103383



Meet Heidi, a female Tabby. She is curious, playful and looking for a new family to love.

ID# 103337

Photos by Ena Bravo

The Onslow County Animal Shelter is open Monday through Thursday from noon to 7 p.m.

Friday from noon to 3 p.m.

Saturday from 10 a.m. to noon, 1 to 3 p.m.

To see more pictures of pets available for adoption, visit www.co.onslow.nc.us/animal_control/main/pet_of_the_week.htm

For more information, call the Onslow County Animal Shelter at 455-0182.

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Classic Rock And Country
Free Dance Lesson 8-11 / Swing Contest

THURSDAY
Karaoke Contest With "N TAC"

FRIDAY
DJ Playing Country
2 Shows w/ JR's Coyotes

SATURDAY
Ladies FREE 8 - 10
2 Shows w/ JR's Coyotes

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February, March Service Members of the Month



Courtesy photos
Jacksonville-Onslow Chamber of Commerce Service Members of the Month: Left: Sheila Pierce, Marine Affairs Committee vice chairwoman and Bob Dupuis, committee chairman, stand with Sgt. Albert Davenport Jr., who was named the March Service Member of the Month. Davenport joined the Marine Corps in 1997 and is currently attached to 2nd Combat Engineer Battalion, 2nd Marine Division, as the motor transport platoon sergeant and truck master. Above: Petty Officer 3rd Class Earl Thomas was named February Service Member of the Month. The corpsman is assigned to 2nd Supply Battalion, 2nd Marine Logistics Group, and was named 2nd Supply Battalion Sailor of the Year for 2005.



Downtown Alive! Spring Concert Series

All concerts at Jacksonville's Riverwalk Park from 5:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. unless otherwise noted

Tonight: Opening band: Starting Tuesday
Main act: Saving Jane

Friday: The Main Event Band

April 14: Trainwreck

April 15: Sounds of Spring Easter Festival with live Celtic music from Jennifer Licko, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

April 28: Waterline

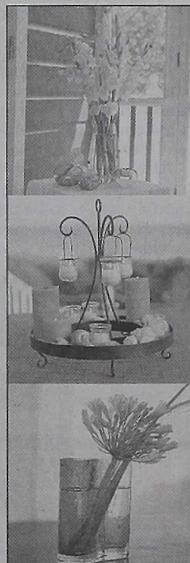
May 12: The Conductors

May 13: Marine Corps Band, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

May 26: Country Jamboree with various artists

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Register Now for the MARINE FEDERAL CREDIT UNION INTERCOLLEGIATE GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP

Mar 30 - Apr 2

Paradise Point Golf Course

SCHEDULE:

MAR 30
 MAR 31
 APR 1
 APR 2

Practice Round
 1st Round
 2nd Round
 Final Round
 (Collegiates Only)

Military Registration Deadline: COB on Mar 27

Cost: \$100 (Does Not Include Cart Fee)

Sponsorship does not imply Federal or USMC endorsement.

FUTURE STARS Baseball & Softball Camp 2006

Mon, Apr 10 - Fri, Apr 14

5-8 year olds 8:30-11:00 a.m.

9-15 year olds 12:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Participants must be age 5-15 as of Jun 10, 2006.
 Proof of age is required.

\$50 per person

(\$45 per additional person)

For information, call 451-2177/2159.

Registration Deadline:

Apr 7, 4:30 p.m.

at the Camp Lejeune Youth Sports Office
 (across from Berkeley Manor 7-Day Store
 on Stone Street).



Open the Door to Tomorrow



Camp Lejeune Job Fair

Open to Active Duty Personnel,
 Retired Military,
 Military Family Members,
 Camp Lejeune & New River
 Civilian Employees,
 and CCCC Students.

DUE TO SAFETY CONCERN, NO CHILDREN
 WILL BE GRANTED ENTRANCE.

LIMITED CHILDCARE IS AVAILABLE
 Call 451-1315 for Registration.

Co-Sponsored by:
 New River Air Station and
 Coastal Carolina Community College.

**Mar 30, '06
 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.**

**Goettge Memorial
 Field House
 FREE!**

INFORMATION:

451-3212, Ext. 213

Sponsorship does not imply Federal or USMC endorsement.

Family Member Employment Assistance Program Presents

Teen Job Fair



Workshop

**LEARN HOW TO:
 INTERVIEW
 EFFECTIVELY
 MARKET
 YOUR SKILLS
 WRITE
 RESUMES**



**Thursday, April 13
 10 a.m.-Noon ♦ FMEAP Center
 Bldg. 2475 Tarawa Terrace**

For more information and to register, call 450-1676.

Exceptional Family Member Program helps minimize stress for military families

Kelley
L.I.N.K.S.

it really like to have an family member in a mil- hold? What is out there to with this situation? I have no personal ex- p. in having an exceptional member myself, I have had the pleasure of being a neighbor with an exceptional member. The past three years, I have the daily joys and con- cernfulness this child

asian though, a sudden eat can come without the household's priority is about what they are going dinner that evening, but to get the medical needs



L.I.N.K.S.
Camp Lejeune / New River

in order to maintain 100 percent military family readiness and make sure her child has sufficient care at all times.

This program is elite. It has many facets that intertwine to help execute the maze that exceptional family members are challenged with.

Once you start to look at the program as a whole, you quickly see that this program is like a tight web that stretches into health care, housing, childcare, schooling, and many other functions, benefits, and resources to best accommodate an exceptional military family, both professionally and personally.

To enroll in the program, you can ask for the paperwork from your exceptional family member coordinator, primary care manager or get it online.

There are two Web sites that offer a significant amount of information about the program.

The first is the site that pertains to the Marine Corps as a whole [this program is mandated through all service branches] and has all the forms to download: www.usmc-mccs.org/efmp/coordinators.cfm. The second site is Camp Lejeune's local site: www.mccslejeune.com.

Once you arrive at the site, click on "Marine and Family Services," then "Marine Corps Family Team Building" and finally EFMP.

This site lists the local functions, support groups, benefits and resources available. The enrollment form consists of two parts — medical and educational.

The medical includes a health assessment and the educational is for childhood intervention programs. Once the enrollment application is completed, give it to the EFMP coordinator.

The Camp Lejeune EFMP coordinator is Kathryn Smith. She is located in Bldg. 84, behind Subway. Her phone number is 451-9372. The office hours are from 8 a.m. to 4:30

p.m. At New River, the EFMP coordinator is Thomas Gonsalves. His contact number is 449-5251.

Once the enrollment form is received, the coordinator will ensure it is processed at the Portsmouth Medical Center where they will assign your exceptional family member a category.

These categories are the basis of the program. The category that your family member receives will depend on the condition and medical attention required to keep their quality of life as positive as possible.

The services you are eligible for depend on this category.

Category 1: Needs do not generally limit assignments.

Category 2: Pinpoint assignments INCONUS (Continental U.S.) or OCONUS (overseas).

Category 3: No overseas assignment for your family member is authorized unless appropriate medical and/or educational services are available. This does not mean EFM sponsors cannot receive an unaccompanied assignment overseas.

Category 4: Major medical areas INCONUS only. However, this does not mean EFM sponsors cannot receive unaccompanied assignments overseas. Category 4 families are given priority-housing assignment, which is the first available house that meets the needs of the Category 4 Exceptional Family Member.

Category P: Exceptional Family Members who have submitted their application and are awaiting a category. This information is entered into the EFMP registry at the local level and is changed by the EFMP Manager at Headquarters when the category is assigned.

Category T: The sponsor currently has no assignment restrictions. An EFM sponsor who has joint custody of the EFM, but does not have physical custody of the EFM, will be placed in this category.

There is a Category 5 for Navy sponsors only.

As you can see, these categories simply define the level of care needed for the exceptional family member, they do not limit the active-duty member in any way from any type of career move, orders, or promotion.

This is a serious misconception of the program. All billets and opportunities are available to the active-duty member while a sponsor participates in this program.

In fact, priority is given to the active-duty member and family when orders are due, to ensure that sufficient care is accessible in the new area.

If you are in the program and are anticipating orders, it is a good idea to inform your coordinator six to nine months prior to moving.

He or she will need to research what specialists are appropriate and accepting of your EFM health needs and insurance, housing (if applicable), functions and support groups, and finally, what resources will be available to you at the new duty station.

If you have been in the program for some time, remember to re-enroll every two years. This is required because oftentimes a need may change over time, which means the category may change.

At Camp Lejeune, EFMP has several resources that help to address my original question on what it is like to have an exceptional family member in a military household.

The support groups for the family members to attend are ongoing and often provide guest speakers, special training and presentations. Currently, a Down syndrome and autism group are very active.

Also, something unique to Camp Lejeune is Camp Special Time. This is a camp designed to give the parents a well-deserved overnight break and the children get to enjoy a comprehensive overnight experience!

It welcomes all four categories, from birth to 18 years old. An immense amount of skilled and educated personnel participate in the design and execution of the program three times a year.

The camps are in February, April, and October. There is an application process and campers are chosen on a first come, first served basis, so apply early!

The next Camp Special Time is April 22 and 23 at Stone Street Youth Pavilion. The theme is "Color Me Spring."

You can download the forms on the local Web site mentioned previously.

Although this camp is designed for children, please note that the EFM program is open to all ages, including adults.

I have only scratched the surface in writing about what this program has to offer.

If you have a friend, a neighbor, a relative in another military branch, or you have an exceptional family member in your household, please pass on this information or take a look at the Web sites.

The old saying "What we don't know won't hurt us" is not true in this case.

This program is crucial for an EFM household to thrive in a military environment.

As for my neighbor and all other spouses who gracefully manage an EFM household and life, you inspire me every day!

Kelley is a mentor for Marine Corps Community Service's L.I.N.K.S., which was designed to educate Marine wives about the Marine Corps in a fun, interactive, non-rank environment. Email her and other L.I.N.K.S. mentors at mccslejeune@usmc-mccs.org with questions about military life.

Remembering Iwo Jima, 61 years later

Jennifer Moore
Carolina Living editor

he early morning of February 19, 1945, than 70,000 Marines rushed onto the sand beaches of Iwo Jima.

the battle had no front lines, and there was

nowhere for the Marines to dig foxholes in

high volcanic rock.

Japanese, hidden from view in below-ground strongholds, could easily set their on the Marines on the beach. But the

Marines rarely saw a live enemy soldier.

more than 500 Americans died and more

,700 more were wounded in the first day

fighting alone.

The battle continued, inch by inch, until

by March 26, all Japanese resistance

eased.

was the one of the deadliest battles in his-

with nearly 7,000 Americans killed and

than 18,000 wounded.

more than 23,000 of the casualties were

Marines, with a third of all Marines killed

World War II action falling at Iwo Jima.

the battle had the highest number of casu-

in Marine Corps history, and more

earned the Medal of Honor than

any other campaign in U.S. history.

early all of the 22,000 Japanese garde-

on the island were killed.

Berry Kenneth Lewis, a former Marine who

in Apex, remembers some of the details

at bloody battle.

Lewis, an Oklahoma native, joined the

Marine Corps in 1940 after a friend told him

it "and I didn't have nothing else to do," he said.

He went through recruit training at Marine

Recruit Depot San Diego, and said that

"They was a-shelling and bombing and shooting at us, and they hit our ammunition dump and set it on fire."

Berry K. Lewis

Iwo Jima veteran and Silver Star recipient

after the war, "I was glad we had all that training."

He served in numerous battles in the Pacific, starting in the Marshall Islands and also fighting in Saipan as part of the 4th Division, 20th Marines.

On the beach in Iwo Jima, "they was a-shelling and bombing and shooting at us, and they hit our ammunition dump and set it on fire," Lewis remembers.

He got on a bulldozer and pushed sand over the fire to put it out. It exploded, but he was not injured.

Afterwards, he was standing next to the bulldozer when the Japanese started shelling again. Shrapnel hit his left hip and hand and "knocked [him] out" of the battle.

After he recovered from his wounds, Lewis returned to duty for a short time before leaving the Marine Corps as a gunnery sergeant. He lived in the Jacksonville area for awhile and now resides in Apex, near Raleigh.

Lewis is one of less than 500,000 living

World War II veterans, and like most, he is humble about his service.

He earned a Silver Star for his actions at

Iwo Jima, but mentions this almost as an after-

thought.

"I was kinda surprised that I got it," he said.

"I just did what I was supposed to do." ■

Semper Fit seeks resumes for All-Marine Chess team

Press Release
Marine Corps Community Services

MCB QUANTICO, Va. — Do you have what it takes to go head-to-head with the best minds in America's armed forces?

Semper Fit is seeking resumes for the All-Marine Chess Team to represent the Corps at the Inter-Service Chess Championship June 11-17 at Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Fla. and at the NATO Chess Championship August 19-26 at Wellington College, England.

Marines interested in being considered for selection to the All-Marine team must submit their resumes no later than April 21.

Resumes must include the player's United States Chess Federation membership card identification number, state

of registration, USCF rating, date of rating and record of significant chess activity during the past two years — including date, place, event and standing.

All resume packages must contain a command endorsement stating that the Marine will be made available to attend all events if selected, and resume should be sent through the local Marine Corps Community Services Semper Fit athletic director for coordination.

Marines stationed at locations without a local MCCS may submit their resumes directly to the commandant of the Marine Corps (MRS) along with their command endorsement.

The All-Marine Team will consist of six players selected from submitted resumes.

The U.S. National Team

will consist of six players and a team captain formed from the top finishers from each service and the top remaining finishers overall.

Resume forms are available on the MCCS Web site at www.usmc-mccs.org/chess, or forms can be picked up from your local MCCS Semper Fit athletic director.

Completed resumes should be sent to: Commandant of the Marine Corps (MRS), ATTN: Donna Seabreeze, 3280 Russell Road, Quantico, VA 22134, or via fax to (703) 784-9522 or DSN: 278-9822.

For more information call your local MCCS Semper Fit athletic director or Donna Seabreeze, HQMC, Semper Fit at (703) 784-9542, DSN 278-9542, or e-mail donna.seabreeze@usmc.mil. ■

Lejeune Community Centers



The facilities are open to all active duty, retired, and reserve military members, their families, civilian personnel, and civilians who are sponsored by authorized patrons.

Visit www.mccslejeune.com/rec_center.htm.



For the latest news logon to
www.militarynews.com/globe

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SATURDAY 8AM - 4PM

