

THE PARRIS ISLAND BOOT



Marines aim artillery to perfection

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Commandant comes aboard



Photo by Lance Cpl. Rodion Zabolotniy

From right to left, Gen. James F. Amos, commandant of the Marine Corps, his wife, Bonnie Amos, Sgt. Maj Micheal P. Barrett, sergeant major of the Marine Corps, and his wife, Susan Barrett, renders honors and salute the national colors during a morning colors ceremony on Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C. on April 20, 2012.



Photo by Lance Cpl. F.J. Abundes

The Parris Island Marine Band perform at the ceremony for the USS Laffey's homecoming on April 15, aboard the Laffey. The ship was away getting repairs to its hull.

Parris Island Band performs at USS Laffey's 67 year anniversary

Lance Cpl. F.J. Abundes
Staff Writer

The Parris Island Marine Band performed at a homecoming for the most decorated World War II-era destroyer still in existence April 15 at Patriot's Point Naval & Maritime Museum in Mount Pleasant, S.C.

The USS Laffey, dubbed "The Ship That Would Not Die," finally returned to Patriot's Point after repairs were made to its hull.

"Being in the military, you think you know the history and stories behind ev-

everything," said Gunnery Sgt. Stephen Davis, enlisted conductor for the band. "Being at events like this, you realize the sacrifices of those before us."

The homecoming marked the 67th anniversary of the year Laffey operated off the coast of Okinawa, Japan, during World War II. The ship was attacked by 22 Japanese bombers and kamikaze aircrafts. Of the 336-man crew, 31 were killed and 71 were injured. The crew shot down 11 attacking aircrafts and saved the damaged vessel, thus

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DSTRESS CORPS OFFERS NEW COUNSELING SERVICE

Lance Cpl. F.J. Abundes
Staff Writer

The Marine Corps invites Marines dealing with stress to seek guidance from a newly operational and 100 percent anonymous hot line, especially when dealing with serious problems such as suicides, substance abuse or domestic violence.

The free service, named "DStress," gives Marines the opportunity to seek advice from those who have dealt with similar issues, like veteran Marines, former green-side corpsmen,

and Marine Corps spouses. Civilian counselors specially trained in the Corps' culture are also on staff to speak with those who need the help.

"The DStress line stands on two very significant pillars," said Col. Grant Olbrich, DStress line program manager, Marine and Family Programs Division, Headquarters Marine Corps. "It is anonymous, and it's by Marines, for Marines. Marines talk to other Marines. You're not going to talk to a soldier or a civilian who has no idea that there is a difference between Marines and other

service members." After nearly two years of testing, the program became Corpswide, giving Marines and their spouses stationed stateside, in Okinawa or Iwakuni, and embassies around the world, the opportunity to seek help for stress.

"It's there to talk to someone who's walked in your shoes and understands what kinds of stress we have in the Marine Corps," Olbrich said.

Olbrich said many Marines wish they could talk to their higher ups about

SEE DSTRESS PAGE 2

NEWS BRIEF

Laurel Bay School Elections

The Laurel Bay School Board is holding an election to fill three open seats May 3 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Elections will be held at Bolden, Galer and Elliott elementary schools, and parents may only vote where their child is enrolled.

For more information on the election and candidates, contact board president, Denise Stone, at 843-476-9119.

Red Cross is Seeking Volunteers

Those interested in becoming a Red Cross volunteer can register for the Red Cross new volunteer orientation, scheduled May 1 at 9 a.m. to noon.

To register, contact jeanne.carmichael@redcross.org or call 843-693-8441

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DSTRESS

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personal problems, but they do not because they are scared personal opinions will change.

"Now you can talk to the gunny," Olbrich continued. "I can call right now and ask for Ted, a retired first sergeant. Ted is a good guy to talk to and is more than happy to listen to me and help me see what my possibilities are."

Another key attraction to DStress is its anonymity.

"A lot of these other agencies are

confidential, which is great, but you still have to give your name," Olbrich said. "The DStress line is not going to try and find out who you are, but if these trained counselors sense a danger to someone's safety, then they have an obligation to find out who you are and report that."

Olbrich said people must not confuse the DStress line with therapy.

"You're not going to go to the stress line for long-term problems with long-term solutions," Olbrich said. "You're going to

talk to us a few times and we're going to help you identify what your next steps are."

Aside from the toll-free hot line, DStress also offers online chatting, which serves half of its contacts, and Skype video chat.

"Skype surprised me, because a large attraction to the DStress line is its anonymity," Olbrich said. "You lose that when you're face-to-face."

But Olbrich said once the callers get comfortable with their counselors, it helps them to speak face-to-face with someone.

"They trust them,"

he continued.

The program has already saved nine lives, he said.

It is operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

"You don't have to be a combat veteran," Olbrich said. "You don't have to be on deployment. Your spouse doesn't have to be a deployed Marine for you to call. It takes care of those every day stresses in life."

To reach the DStress line, call 1-877-476-7734 or visit www.dstressline.com for more information.



Photo by Lance Cpl. F.J. Abundes

Sgt. Kevin Willis, a trumpeteer for the Parris Island Marine Band, performs at the ceremony for the ship's homecoming on April 15, aboard the Laffey.

BAND

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earning its nickname.

Laffey was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation and five battle stars.

"We want to preserve her for history because people today don't hear enough about this kind of history," said Sonny Walker, president of the USS Laffey Association. "It's important for the kids of today to learn about the past and what sacrifices were made to save this country and preserve the freedoms they have today, the freedoms you are fighting for now."

"We just want people of the future to respect and understand what went on," he said. "This ship, to us, was our mother our father, our family. She took us to war and brought us home."

Members of the original World War II crew were present at the ceremony, along with other crew members who later served on her. Members currently serving in the Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps were also there.

Davis said being a part of the ceremony reaffirmed his dedication and pride to serving in the military.

"You guys are doing it now,

and we need people like you to continue on protecting our country," Walker said. "We're one crew."

Walker concluded the ceremony with a passage from Navy Adm. Julian Becton's book "The Ship That Would Not Die."

"White water no longer curls from our Laffey's high, proud bow. There are no men at her throttles or on her bridge, and her guns no longer speak. But she is alive with shades and memories of the brave deeds and the brave Americans that did them. They are still with her and will be always. It is my hope that those who visit her, most especially the young, will come to know and be inspired by them. If this happens, then what Laffey did will not have been in vain."

The passage embodied the moment.

At the end of the ceremony, attendees and veterans came up to the band members and other active-duty service members and thanked them for their presence and contribution to the ceremony.

"Even though you are Marines, you're still our favorites," Walker joked.

Walker served on the Laffey from 1960 through 1963.

THE PARRIS ISLAND BOOT

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DoD expands drug test

Corps to test for prescription meds May 1

Lance Cpl. F.J. Abundes
Staff Writer

The Department of Defense will expand its military drug testing to include commonly abused prescription medications beginning May 1.

Drugs like hydrocodone and benzodiazepines will be among some of the medication tested for. Although they alleviate suffering from injuries and anxiety, the drugs are potentially addictive.

"Their inappropriate use outside of medical supervision places Marines and their units at risk," according to Marine Administrative Message 154/12.

Most of the new drugs being tested for are painkillers, because those are the drugs Marines are misusing, said Staff Sgt. Olanza Frazier, substance abuse control officer for Headquarters and Service Battalion at Parris Island.

"If you're not supposed to be using it, don't take it," he said.

When Marines are prescribed painkillers for injuries, they sometimes give them to fellow Marines who are in pain, Frazier said. If it

shows up on a drug test, that is considered as misuse because the Marine in pain did not go to the doctor for that specific prescription.

"He could be dependent on it, like some Marines are dependent on alcohol," Frazier said. "If that's the case, then, we have to break that cycle."

If Marines voluntarily seek help from their unit SACOs before May 1, the Marine will not get in trouble, Frazier said. Instead, paperwork will be put together for the Marine to see a professional counselor.

The Marine will be detoxified for 30 days, and he will not have contact with the substance, Frazier continued.

Marines can sometimes abuse their own medication as well.

If a medication indicates for the user to take it for a certain amount of time, and it is taken past that point, that is wrongful use, Frazier said. If it states, "Take as need for pain," then, the Marine will not get in trouble.

Frazier said the best thing to do for those taking prescribed medication is to take the med-



Photo by Sgt. Rodolfo E. Toro

Controlled substances, although prescribed to an individual, expire when the medication is no longer needed or the number of days supply listed on the bottle has passed. Prescription medication should be discarded properly by returning the remaining portion to the main pharmacy at the U.S. Naval Hospital, Okinawa. Ingesting expired, controlled substances is chargeable under Article 112a of the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

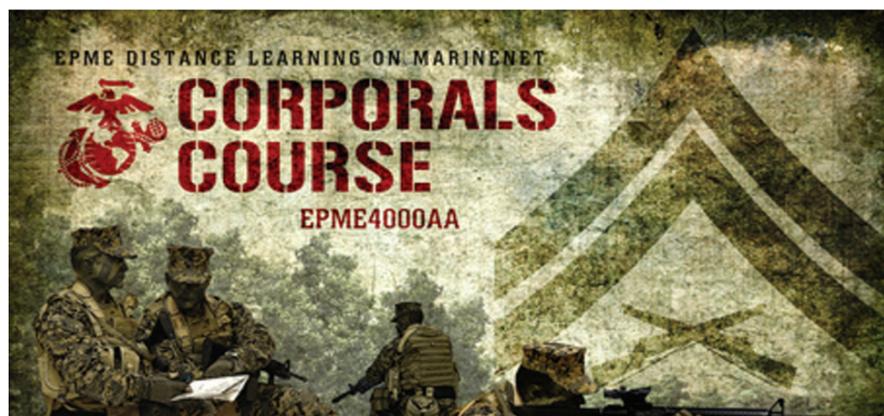
ication to the pharmacy once that prescription is over, so they can properly dispose of it.

"That way, the temptation's

not there for you or anyone around you to take the medication," he said.

Marines seeking substance abuse counseling can ob-

tain assistance through their chain of command, medical or self-referral to their unit substance abuse counseling center.



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for daily updates on
recruit training.

Saving lives one drop at a time

Marines of tomorrow donate blood to save lives of service members today



Photo by Lance Cpl. Javarre Glanton

A recruit squeezes a ball to help ease the flow of the blood from his arm into the bag at the All-Weather Training Facility on March 25.

Lance Cpl. Javarre Glanton

Staff Writer

Recruits from India Company, 3rd Recruit Training Battalion, spent much of March 25 giving blood to help injured service members worldwide.

Every Sunday, members from the Kendrick Memorial Blood Center on Fort Gordon, Ga., collect blood from Parris Island recruits who volunteer to donate.

Approximately 130 units of blood are collected during each weekly visit to the depot, said Army Maj. Warren Brown, officer-in-charge of the blood center.

"Whoever needs the blood will get it," said Brown, 41, of Tuscaloosa, Ala. "We try to

help out all the service members we can."

The blood is shipped overseas within four days of being drawn, said Brown. Each donor is able to help up to two recipients.

Each donor supplies one unit of blood, he said. Each unit contains a supply of plasma and red blood cells. About 30-35 percent of the blood center's supply is collected from Parris Island.

"We're always happy to be here, and we're always happy to have the opportunity to work with the recruits," Brown said. "The recipients are probably the most appreciative people in the world. Without the donors, they probably wouldn't be here today."

Many recruits are more

than willing to donate to help support the cause. Some feel they are supporting the fight before they get to it.

"It feels good," said Rct. Sammeri Boyer, a recruit with Platoon 3025 and a native of Akron, Ohio. "I feel like I'm doing a lot to help the fight already. Recruit training has been challenging, but there are some Marines out there who need my help right now, and I appreciate the opportunity to help them."

In order to donate, the recruits must not have received any tattoos or piercings within the previous year.

"It's one of those things only humans can produce," said Brown. "We don't have a lab somewhere where we can just make synthetic blood."

"The recipients are probably the most appreciative people in the world. Without the donors, they probably wouldn't be here today."

Army Maj. Warren Brown, officer-in-charge of the Kendrick Memorial Blood Center on Fort Gordon, Ga.

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[facebook.com/ParrisIsland](https://www.facebook.com/ParrisIsland) for daily updates on recruit training.

RECYCLE

Marines wrap jungle training with four-hour endurance course

Cpl. Jonathan G. Wright
24th Marine Expeditionary Unit

CAMP GONSALVES, Okinawa — While Marines are unlikely to find themselves deep in the heart of a jungle during current combat operations in the Middle East, they must always maintain their ability to fight in any clime and any place.

Marines with Company B., Battalion Landing Team 1st Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, 31st Expeditionary Unit, completed a two-week training evolution at the Jungle Warfare Training Center by running the Jungle Endurance Course at Okinawa, Japan, April 20.

“Everything they’ve learned over the past two weeks is put into play here, one after another,” said Cpl. Blake Cameron, an instructor with the center. “They must navigate the route through the jungle and over the various obstacles in their way.”

Spanning nearly four miles of winding jungle terrain, three platoons from the company rappelled down sheer rock faces, pulled themselves over ropes suspended above a creek, crawled under concertina wire and carried on stretchers through slippery ravines.

“Last time we did a course like this, it was in a cold-weather training environment, completely different from this,” said Lance Cpl. Asael Cornejo, a rifleman with the company. “We may not be in jungles in Afghanistan, but this gets us used to different environments we may need to operate in.”

Adding to the value of the training was pulling away the officers to place the burden of leadership on squad leaders. Sergeants and corporals led their Marines through the course, using every element of small-unit leadership to accomplish the mission.

The jungle warfare course serves as one of the culminating training events for Company B., BLT 1/4 as they near the end of their tour with the 31st MEU.

Amphibious training from ship to shore, and trudging through the dense, wet jungle of Okinawa has



Photo by Cpl. Jonathan G. Wright

Marines with Company B., 1st Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, carry a simulated casualty on an improvised stretcher using branches and their uniform blouses during the Jungle Endurance Course at Okinawa, Japan, April 20. After completing a two-week training evolution at the Jungle Warfare Training Center, the Marines underwent the four-mile-long course through the Okinawan jungle, using the rappelling, rope-crossing, improvised stretcher carry and other skills they learned.

helped to broaden the experience of the infantry battalion’s small-unit leaders.

“The Marines need to be ready to engage the enemy in any climb and place, because war does not discriminate against certain types of environments,” said 1st Lt. Zachary Duncan, platoon commander for 1st Platoon. “This

is some of the best training these Marines have gotten in a long time, and it all goes toward preparing us for tomorrow’s war, whenever and wherever it may be.”

The 31st MEU is the only continuously forward-deployed MEU and remains the nation’s force in readiness in the Asia-Pacific region.

TACTICS – A UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE OF MARINES WORLDWIDE

Sgt. Richard Blumenstein
24th Marine Expeditionary Unit

SIERRA DEL RETIN, Spain — Marines with the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit joined the Spanish marine corps, the Infanteria DeMarina, for two days of tactics sharing during training, April 16-17.

During that time, the Marines worked hand-in-hand to show each other various tactics and standard operating procedures. Both militaries also temporarily swapped equipment and weapons, as well as chow.

“They wanted to do integrated training with us, so it was an opportunity to get with them and learn from each other,” said Staff Sgt. Benjamin Dible, the platoon sergeant for 2nd Platoon, Charlie Company, Battalion Landing Team 1st Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, 24th MEU.

On the first day of training, Marines from C Company and a company of Spanish marines divided into four groups and rotated through stations centered on improvised explosive devices training, patrolling, entry control points and weapon systems.

“At the beginning of the day, working with them was a little different. The language barrier is the biggest thing,” said Dible, a Grand Junction, Colo., native. “As the day carried on, you could see both the United States Marines and the Spaniards warming up to each other, swapping weapons and trying on each other’s gear.”

After sunset, the Marines took their Spanish counterparts on a night patrol to demonstrate the 24th MEU’s various night vision optics and discuss the tactical advantages associated with being able to see in the dark.

On the second day of training, Marines from Combat Logistics Battalion 24 demonstrated the operation of an evacuation control center.

Marines use ECCs to process and screen individuals who need to be transported out of a country in turmoil. The Marines escorted the Spanish marines through each section of the ECC to explain its intricacies, answer questions and discuss the differences and similarities in how each Marine Corps operates them, according to Chief Warrant Officer 2 James O’Brien, the ECC officer in charge.

“I went through and explained everything to them, and their procedures are almost the same

as ours,” said the Thermopolis, Wyo., native.

The 24th MEU also showcased its rapid response medical team during the second day. The role of an RRMT is response to a mass casualty site, whether it is a group of Marines or civilians who don’t have organic medical capabilities, or their capabilities are overwhelmed, according to Lt. j.g. Matthew Colton, the battalion surgeon for CLB-24.

The Spaniards watched as the Marines’ RRMT treated simulated casualties and transported them to safety.

“They had a few questions,” said Colton, a Tampa, Fla., native. “They were interested in the capabilities of our corpsman and what kind of training they get.”

While many of the tactics and standard operating procedures seemed very similar in nature, many of the Marines said the little differences between the ways they do things made the training unique.

“This is some of the better training we’ve had because it’s not us just doing the same thing,” said Lance Cpl. Robert Rausch, an assaultman with the company and native of Orlando, Fla. “It opens your eyes to different things because when you do the same thing over and over again you stop thinking outside the box. Once you see how other people work, you start thinking outside the box again.”

“The training, the way we’re doing it is really good,” said 2nd Lt. L.F. Ros, a Spanish marine infantry officer, through a translator. “I will see things from the Marines that we don’t know and take them.”

The 24th MEU, partnered with the Navy’s Iwo Jima Amphibious Ready Group, is currently deployed as a theater reserve and crisis response force capable of a variety of missions from full-scale combat operations to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.



Photo by Sgt. Richard Blumenstein

Chief Warrant Officer 2 James O’Brien, the evacuation control center officer in charge with Combat Logistics Battalion 24, 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit, explains how they operate an ECC to Marines with the Spanish marine corps April 17 at Sierra Del Retin, Spain.

Guides of artillery train to perfection for upcoming deployments

Lance Cpl. James Frazer

2nd Marine Division

CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C. — Mortar fire, an artillery gun line and close air support all came into play during 3rd Battalion, 10th Marine Regiment's recent Fire Support Team Exercise, also known as a FiSTEX.

Fire support Marines with the 2nd Marine Division unit worked during the event to hone the skills they'll be using in their upcoming deployments to Afghanistan and future deployments with the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit as they coordinated strikes against dozens of simulated enemies.

The Marines trained to perfectly



Cpl. Mason Robertson, a fire support man with Headquarters Battery, 3rd Battalion, 10th Marine Regiment, watches for the strike of the artillery fire order he just called in during a recent battalion training exercise at Camp Lejeune, N.C. The Mt. Airy, Md., native with 2nd Marine Division and his fellow fire support Marines spent the week practicing fire orders for everything from artillery and mortars to close air support and even naval gun fire as they prepare for upcoming deployments to Afghanistan and future deployments with the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit.

memorize the procedures for calling in fire orders. Making it almost a muscle memory helps keep the Marines focused when they needed to perform their job while actively fighting with an enemy.

"When we're doing our jobs during a deployment, there is an insane amount of information that we have to keep track of," said Cpl. Mason Robertson, a fire support man with Headquarters Battery. "During a deployment, each infantry unit only gets one fire support man for a patrol, and it'll be my responsibility to make sure that artillery strikes are hitting the enemy. I need to know what everyone's movements are going to be, ours, the enemies' and other Marine units, to ensure accuracy and avoid friendly fire, and I have to know what sort of strikes and rounds would be the most appropriate for a given situation."

The Mt. Airy, Md., native talked about his seven-month deployment to Afghanistan that started in September 2010 where he served as a fire support man with 1st Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, an infantry unit with 2nd Marine Division.

"With all of the things we have to keep track of, there is a ton of pressure on us that can have some deadly consequences if we mess up," said Robertson. "The

thing I love most about my job is the level of responsibility that even the newest fire support Marines have. When we're on patrol, we're not just forward observers for artillery, we're also another rifleman that the other Marines are relying on to have their back and help protect everyone on the patrol."

While Robertson and his fellow fire support Marines were only practicing calling in and coordinating strikes during FiSTEX, they have also spent several weeks studying infantry tactics and procedures to prepare themselves in every way possible.

"Fire support Marines are absolutely essential for us in artillery and for the infantrymen they're on patrol with," said Gunnery Sgt. Mark Kamenszky, the battery gunnery sergeant for K Battery. "We could teach infantryman how to call a fire order and many of them know the basics of it, but the fire support guys and forward observers are masters of their trade. They have the experience and knowledge that infantrymen don't have time to learn because they're busy mastering their own jobs."

The Deland, Fla., native praised the fire support Marines of the battalion for their ability to call in a variety of fire orders, from artillery to air support and naval gun fire, while under the same

intense pressure of an infantryman in enemy territory.

"We're constantly reminded of just how much responsibility we have every day," said Cpl. Glen Phillips Jr., a fire support man with the battalion. "For me, it gives me a lot of confidence to know that I've been trusted with the mission to help provide the artillery and air support that infantrymen need on patrols and in combat."

The Oxford, N.C., native is getting ready to go on his first deployment as a fire support man but says he's not worried about having to perform under pressure at all thanks to the training he's received.

"We all develop a way to stay focused when we're doing our jobs," said Robertson. "For me, when I start to call in a fire order it's almost like I go into my own personal bubble and everything around me is just background noise. I'm still aware of everything going on but my main concern becomes making sure that the strike lands where it needs to. When the bullets start to fly in a firefight, that's when the Marines we're with need us to be at our best, and training events like the one we're doing today are what help us make it all second nature and keep our heads in the game at those critical moments."



Photos by Cpl. James Frazer

Marines from Battery K, 3rd Battalion, 10th Marine Regiment, begin to load a round weighing nearly 100 pounds into their howitzer seconds after receiving a fire order from a fire support man several miles away during the fire support team exercise. Even though the training event's main purpose was to give the fire support Marines a chance to refine their craft, the artillery Marines took advantage of the opportunity to work on the speed, efficiency and accuracy of their drills with every new fire order they received.

Marines make water better than bottled kind at training exercise in Morocco

Sgt. Richard Blumenstein

24th Marine Expeditionary Unit

MOROCCO — Water purification specialists with Combat Logistics Battalion 24, 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit, put their water purification systems to the test on a Moroccan beach April 10, during exercise African Lion 2012.

The Marines assembled a Tactical Water Purification System and Lightweight Water Purification System on the beach to turn ocean water into a sustainable, potable water source for the Marines training with the royal Moroccan armed forces, and test the systems on a foreign water source.

"Instead of bringing thousands of pallets of water ashore, this is what we use," said Cpl. Kyle Slusher, a water purification specialist with CLB-24. "This is what's going to sustain our force, and we can use it wherever there is a water source."

Marines use water purification systems to provide water for a number of operations such as disaster relief and humanitarian assistance, said Cpl. Cody Sorrell, a water purification specialist.

"We can use this capability for any sort of mission where Marines are going to be there a long period of time," Sorrell said. "You can't conduct operations without a sustainable water source."

The current mission is to provide a clean water source for Marines training ashore in the deserts of Morocco. The water these Marines are sustaining the training units ashore who are working with members of the Moroccan military.

Without this capability, the logistics problem of supplying clean water to the shores of Morocco would use time and money that would distract from the mission of training between the Marines and Moroccans.

The TWPS is 10,000 pounds and able to purify approximately 10,000 gallons of water a day by pumping it through a series of filters, which reduce the "total dissolved solids" rating to a level

more than fit for human consumption.

Pound for pound for Marines on the ground, it is more than worth its weight in water.

"It's better than bottled water," said Slusher.

According to the Marion, Ohio, native, the average bottle of water has a TDS rating between 400 and 500. Using the TWPS, water purification specialist can reduce the TDS rating to 20.

"A bottle of water from the TWPS is more pure than what you would get from a factory," he said. "It's because the only thing we have to add back into the water is chlorine to preserve it."

The TWPS has the ability to purify water ranging from lake

water to nuclear contaminated water, he said.

"If a nuclear bomb went off behind me, we would be able to provide contaminate free water in an hour," he said.

The LWPS is a smaller version of the TWPS. While not able to boast the same range of capabilities as the TWPS, its use is focused on supplying a small force. Weighing 3,580 pounds the system is able to provide around 2,000 gallons of water a day.

"Right now, we're showing we can get in, set up and operate it anywhere," Slusher said.

CMC shows way ahead for females in Corps' combat jobs

Gen. James F. Amos

Commandant of the Marine Corps

As Marines, we are all justifiably proud of the valuable contributions our Marines make daily and want to ensure that equal opportunities to excel exist for all Marines across the Corps.

For the past year, we have been participating in a congressionally directed, Department of Defense-led review of the laws, policies and regulations that may restrict the service of female service members in all military occupational specialties.

Based on congressional direction in this year's National Defense Authorization Act, the secretary of defense provided further guidance in February 2012 to the services to assess the impact of newly opened positions in previously closed units and to continue evaluating additional positions that may be opened to our female Marines across the Corps.

Accordingly, I have directed that measured and responsible research be conducted to provide me with the information and data necessary to make an informed and educated recommendation on potential policy changes. The cumulative research effort will include an exception to the ground assignment policy, quantitative research and a total force survey.

Current ground assignment policies restrict the assignment of women serving in an open primary MOS to certain units in the ground combat element. The

exception to policy will allow us to begin assigning active duty, unrestricted, female company grade officers, gunnery sergeants and staff sergeants in their current primary MOSs to artillery, tank, assault amphibian, combat engineer, combat assault and low-altitude, air-defense battalion staffs in order to facilitate our research effort.

Female Marines possessing an administration, logistics, communications, supply or motor transport MOS may be assigned to the above units as part of the normal assignment process during 2012.

Female Navy medical officers, chaplains, and corpsmen ranked petty officer first class or chief petty officer may also be assigned to these battalions. Female Marines and sailors will be assigned to battalion staffs in their primary MOS. The deputy commandant for manpower and reserve affairs will direct and monitor all assignments under this exception to policy.

Training and Education Command will conduct quantitative research to gather physical performance data.

Beginning this spring, male and female Marines in entry-level training and male Marines from a ground combat element battalion will be solicited to volunteer to conduct three tests: heavy machine gun lift, casualty evacuation and march under load. These tests are based on existing training and readiness standards and will serve to provide analytical data to inform my recommendations.

Additionally, female graduates of the [Basic Officer Course] will be given the opportunity to volunteer to

attend the Infantry Officer Course prior to attending their previously assigned primary MOS school.

Following in trace, we will take measured and responsible steps to provide our female enlisted Marines with future opportunities to volunteer to train within the Infantry Training Battalion.

The infantry MOS will not be awarded for volunteers that attend infantry officer course or Infantry Training Battalion during the research phase.

The data and information collected will provide the fact-based analytical data necessary to formulate my recommendations regarding the potential assignment of female Marines to the ground combat element and other closed MOSs.

Also, I have directed that a total force survey be conducted this spring to gather your input regarding potential changes to the current assignment policies related to female Marines. Your experiences and opinions will be invaluable as we continue to evaluate changes to existing policies.

I expect all leaders to be fully committed to providing every Marine the opportunity to compete and excel, while sustaining unit effectiveness, readiness and cohesion, and maintaining good order and discipline. I will consider the results and impact of the exception to the ground assignment policy, the quantitative research and the total force survey as we make future recommendations regarding the potential assignment of women to ground combat element units.

Semper fidelis.



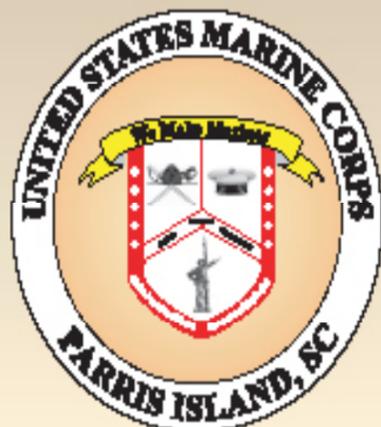
Photo by Lance Cpl. Michael Rogers

Marines, sailors and family members took part in a 5-kilometer run to create interaction and discussion about sexual assault awareness and prevention month at Parris Island on April 25.

Did you
know you
can
visit our
Facebook
page for
daily updates
on recruit
training at
facebook.
com/
ParrisIsland

MCRD PARRIS ISLAND EXPANDED FAMILY DAY SCHEDULE

MCRD Parris Island has expanded the events and activities available to families who are coming aboard the Depot to see their son or daughter graduate and become a Marine. The adjacent schedule outlines the events that are now offered to our new Marines' families and loved ones. The times and locations of these events are subject to change. For the most current information, please visit <http://www.mccs-sc.com/recruitfamilies>.



Wednesday

Welcome to Family Orientation Day at Parris Island

- 6AM-10PMMarine Corps Exchange (MCX) Open
- 6AM-6PMMarine Corps Exchange (MCX) Food Court Open
- 7AM-5PMEngraving Shop open
- 7:30AM-4PMDouglas Visitors' Center open - please register upon arrival
Java Café (9AM-11:30AM)
Graduation Station (8AM-4PM)
- 9AM-4PMFamily Check-in at the Douglas Visitors' Center; Java Café open 9AM-12PM
- 10AM-12:30PM.....Marine Corps 101, including a "Behind the Scenes" tour, at Douglas Visitors' Center
- LUNCH.....Traditions (Officer/SNCO Club), Food Court, Subway, Golf Course, Back Yard Burgers
- 1:30PM-3:30PMFamily Orientation Brief at the Lyceum
- 5PM-8PM.....Steak Night at Traditions (Officer/SNCO Club).
Reservations required

Thursday

Welcome to Family Liberty Day at Parris Island

- 6AM-4PMDouglas Visitors' Center open - please register upon arrival
Java Café (6AM-2PM)
Graduation Station (6AM-4PM)
- 6AM-10PMMarine Corps Exchange (MCX) Open
- 6AM-6PMMarine Corps Exchange (MCX) Food Court Open
- 7AM-5PMEngraving Shop open
- 7AMMot/National Run - Peatross Parade Deck
- 8AM.....Depot Museum Opens
- 8:15AMAll Weather Training Facility (AWTF) Opens
- 9:30AM-10AM.....Battalion Commander's Brief to Families & Liberty Ceremony (AWTF)
- 10AM-2PMMarksmanship Training Unit Open House
- 10AM.....Liberty Begins
- 10:30AM-1PM.....Family Day Buffet at the Lyceum - new Marines eat for free!
- 2PMWarrior's Prayer at the Recruit Chapel
- 3PMLiberty Ends
- 3PM-4PM.....Marine Corps 101 at Douglas Visitors' Center
- 5PMMeet & Greet with Depot Command at Traditions Lounge
- 5:30PM.....Welcome from the Command
- 5:45PM.....Family Day Dinner with Depot Command at Traditions (Officer/SNCO Club)
Advance reservations guarantee admittance

Friday

Welcome to Graduation Day at Parris Island

- 6AM-2PMDouglas Visitors' Center open
Java Café (6AM-12PM)
Graduation Station (6AM-12PM)
- 6AM-10PMMarine Corps Exchange (MCX) Open
- 6AM-6PMMarine Corps Exchange (MCX) Food Court Open
- 7AM-5PMEngraving Shop open
- 7:45AMMorning Colors at Barrow Hall
- 9AM-10AM.....Graduation at Peatross Parade Deck (weather permitting)
- 11AM-1PMLunch Buffet at Traditions (Officer/SNCO Club)