

# The Jet Stream

Friday,  
Nov. 4, 2011

Vol. 46, No. 42  
Marine Corps Air Station  
Beaufort, S.C.

"The First to Fight for 236 years."

#TJSSc

WHAT YOU NEED  
TO KNOW ABOUT  
THE BALL

PAGES 6 & 7



## Inside

## Abroad



Marine Corps  
Marathon  
■ Page 3

## Sports



Lowcountry  
shrimping  
■ Page 4

## Feature



Combined Federal  
Campaign  
■ Page 5

## Sports Opinion



Helmet tribute  
deserves salute  
■ Page 4

## Did you know...

Nov. 4, 1976,  
the first  
Marine Corps  
Marathon  
kicked off in  
Washington,  
D.C.

## Index

### Main

- Mess Hall Menu ■ 2
- News Briefs ■ 2
- Need to Know ■ 2
- Corps Shot ■ 3
- Feature ■ 7
- Classifieds ■ 8

## Woodland utilities take effect Sunday



Lance Cpl. Timothy Norris

Shovels stand in freshly turned dirt just after the groundbreaking ceremony for the new Physical Fitness Center on the Air Station Oct. 25. The facility will be twice the size of the current fitness center.

## First dirt turned for energy efficient fitness center

Lance Cpl. Timothy Norris  
Staff Writer

The Air Station and Hightower Construction Company hosted a groundbreaking ceremony for the new Air Station Physical Fitness Center Oct. 25.

The \$12.9 million project behind the Afterburners parking lot is scheduled to wrap up by May 2013 and replace the current 53-year-old facility.

"Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort is home to more than 4,000 Marines and sailors who must be ready to defend our Nation at a moment's notice," said Col. Brian C. Murtha, Air Station commanding officer. "To ensure they are properly prepared to support and defend our country, the Marines place great emphasis on physical fitness."

The new multi-level facility will house

SEE CENTER, PAGE 5

## Battalion Buddies keep children cuddly

Lance Cpl. R.J. Driver  
Staff Writer

When units deploy, there are a plenty of organizations throughout the world who are willing to send care packages to boost morale and leave an impression on each service member.

Operation Gratitude is different.

According to the organization's founder and Marine mom, Carolyn Blashek, Operation Gratitude sends 100,000 care packages and letters annually to deployed service members and wounded warriors in transition units, while special "Battalion Buddies" are sent to the children of deployed troops.

While that is a step in the right direction, children of Marines deployed as individual augments have not received Battalion Buddies, but Ted Crandall, Marine Aircraft Group 31 family readiness officer aims to change the oversight.

"I reached out to Operation Gratitude to get the Battalion Buddies here, and at first, it looked like it was not going to happen, but then, Blashek got involved, and we were able to get them here," Crandall explained.

SEE BUDDIES, PAGE 9

### Battalion Buddy's message

*Hi Brave Young Warrior: I am your Battalion Buddy! I am here to cuddle and play with you while Mommy or Daddy is away! And my friends at Operation Gratitude will be sending a little something to Mommy or Daddy, too!*

## Expectations surpassed



Lance Cpl. Ruben J. Tan

From left to right, Sgt. Robert Lark, Cpl. Clarence Canty and Lance Cpl. Matthew Hammel, stand on the catwalk of the Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron air traffic control tower, Tuesday. The three Marines from H&HS took a clean sweep of the Marine Corps Installations East board on October 20.

### H&HS Marines sweep MCI East competition

Lance Cpl. Ruben J. Tan  
Staff Writer

Palms moist with nervous sweat are closed tight and drawn close to the trouser seams, feet hold a 30 degree angle from the heels, accentuating the freshly pressed uniform that seems to announce

the Marine who stands before the members of the board with unbreakable bearing. Many Marines have been in this position, but few have been victorious at high levels.

Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron's Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year, Marine of the Year and Marine of the Quarter were all selected to represent the squadron at the Marine Corps Installations East board Oct. 20.

The expectations for participants at the H&HS board were raised in the beginning of October to not only increase competition, but to give Marines an edge over the competition.

"Our Marines sent to represent the Air Station were all selected through the rigorous H&HS board and had college education either prior to or while in

SEE SWEEP, PAGE 9

## Countdown to the ball

Get your tickets now...

[www.beaufortball.com](http://www.beaufortball.com)

Sale ends Nov. 6

6 days





### MESS HALL MENU

**Monday - Friday**  
Breakfast: 6 - 7:30 a.m.  
Lunch: 11 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.  
Dinner: 4 - 6 p.m.

**Saturday, Sunday and holidays**  
Brunch: 8 - 11 a.m.  
Dinner: 4 - 6 p.m.

**MIDRATS**

**Sunday - Thursday**  
11:30 p.m. - 1 a.m.

\* Take-out window: Monday - Friday 7:30 - 10 a.m.  
Sunday - Thursday 6 - 8:30 p.m.

**Saturday**

**Lunch** Chicken and Spanish-style beans  
**Dinner** Swiss steak and buttered egg noodles

**Sunday**

**Lunch** Fried chicken and corn  
**Dinner** Meat loaf and okra melange

**Monday - Friday Breakfast**

Hot farina, hot hominy grits and oven fried bacon

**Monday**

**Lunch** Minestrone soup and roasted zucchini  
**Dinner** Bayou jerk pork loin and broccoli

**Tuesday**

**Lunch** Grilled steaks and baked lobster  
**Dinner** Roast beef and vegetable stir fry

**Wednesday**

**Lunch** Sante Fe glazed chicken and corn  
**Dinner** Swedish meatballs and rice pilaf

**Thursday**

**Lunch** Pasta Toscano and steamed rice  
**Dinner** Roasted chicken and dirty rice

**Friday**

**Lunch** Roasted turkey and green beans  
**Dinner** Cajun chicken and Southern-style greens



### CHAPEL SERVICES

**Roman Catholic**

- 9:30 a.m. - Sunday Mass
- 11:15 a.m. - Weekly Mass: Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday

**Protestant**

- 9:45 a.m. - Protestant Church School (Sunday School)
- 11 a.m. - Protestant Sunday Worship Service
- 11:30 a.m. - Wednesday Bible Study
- 5 p.m. - Protestant Bible Study

**Other Faith Groups**

- For Jewish, Mormon and Islamic support, contact the Chaplain's Office at 228-7775

## High Shooter

**Lieutenant Col. William Gray of Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron qualified with an expert score of 387 during the week of Nov. 2.**



# Fightertown News Briefs

- The Voluntary Protection Program needs your help to implement a base-wide slogan, which will create brand awareness for VPP. Submit your ideas at [www.mccs-sc.com/safety](http://www.mccs-sc.com/safety) by Nov 3. The top ten will be chosen by base safety and the winner will be voted on by Air Station personnel. For more information on VPP, visit [www.osha.gov/dcsp/vpp/](http://www.osha.gov/dcsp/vpp/)

- Marine Corps Community Services offers a social networking class from 10 a.m. to noon, Nov. 11 at the Marine Corps Family Team Building House on Laurel Bay to help families stay safe while using the computer to network with family and friends. Register in advance with Nicole Bright-Hardee at 228-7311 or [brighthardeend@usmc-mccs.org](mailto:brighthardeend@usmc-mccs.org)

- Marine Corps Community Services 1/2 Marathon is open to all eligible patrons at 8 a.m., Saturday at the Officers' Club. No pre-registration required. The route will be along the flightline road with fruit and water available. Awards will be handed out at the end of the race.

- Photocopying of military identification cards is a violation of Title 18, US Code Part I, Chapter 33, Section 701 and punishable by both fine and/or imprisonment. Note this does not apply to medical establishments and other government agencies in the performance of official government business.

## Volunteer opportunities

### On base:

**Event:** Air Station Christmas Concert  
**Date:** Practices are Tuesdays  
**Time:** 6 p.m.  
**Uniform:** Appropriate attire  
**Description:** Musicians to participate in the base Christmas concert  
**Location:** Base Chapel  
**POC:** Chaplain's office at 228-7200 or JoBeth Peterman at 644-5353

### In the community:

**Event:** Lowcountry Habitat for Humanity  
**Date:** Ongoing  
**Time:** Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., Saturday 8 a.m. to noon  
**More Information:** Main office at 522-3500 or weekend supervisor at 812-8956  
**Registration required:** [www.lowcountryhabitat.org](http://www.lowcountryhabitat.org)

**Event:** Child Abuse Prevention Association  
**Date:** Ongoing  
**Description:** Various volunteer opportunities  
**POC:** Katie Grindle at [capa714@earthlink.net](mailto:capa714@earthlink.net)  
**More information:** Main office at 524-4350 or 525-0070

**Event:** HELP of Beaufort  
**Date:** Ongoing  
**Description:** Various volunteer opportunities  
**Location:** 1910 Baggett Street, Beaufort  
**POC:** Main office at 524-1223

**Event:** Animal Control Shelter  
**Date:** Ongoing  
**Description:** Assist in the care and cleaning of animals housed in the shelter, foster animals, help educate the public, provide support for administrative functions and help with off site adoption programs.  
**Location:** 23 Shelter Church Road Hwy. 21  
**POC:** Main office at 255-5010



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## Things you need to know

### Fraud, Waste and Abuse

If you know of or suspect any fraud, waste or abuse aboard MCAS Beaufort, call 228-7777.  
If you know of or suspect any fraud, waste or abuse within MAG-31, call (252) 466-5038.  
The automated answering service on these lines are available 24 hours a day.

### Sexual Assault

The contact numbers for a Uniformed Victim Advocate are 228-4784 and 228-4110. The after hours number is 592-0646.

### Siren sound meanings

Upon notification from the weather office, Giant Voice pre-recorded messages will be broadcast. All destructive weather notifications begin and end with a 12 second wailing siren. Then follow on information is repeated twice between siren wails. The following are abbreviated examples of each warning that will be broadcast through Giant Voice.

- Lightning within 5 nautical miles...
- Thunder storm Condition 1, winds up to 50 knots and/ or hail up to 3/4 of an inch...
- Tornado condition 1 a tornado is imminent...
- Tornado condition 2... observed within 60 nautical miles
- An all clear broadcast will be

announced sounding "all clear".  
Test tone - A steady tone will be broadcast for 10 seconds, followed by an alert stating "This is a test" and then another 10 second tone.  
For more information please call 228-7904, or for example warning tones, visit: [www.whelen.com/outdoor/warningtones.htm](http://www.whelen.com/outdoor/warningtones.htm).

# Fightertown deployed:



**VMFA-115 Silver Eagles**  
are currently deployed as part of the Unit Deployment Program to Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan.



**MWSS-273 Sweathogs**  
are currently deployed in support of Enhanced Mojave Viper to Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twenty-nine Palms, Calif.

## CORPS BIT



### Runners endure forward marathon

CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan — The sound of a 105mm howitzer thundered through the morning air on Camp Leatherneck, Helmand province as more than 300 coalition service members began the Marine Corps Marathon Forward, Oct. 30.

This year marks the third time the "Peoples' Marathon" has been held at Camp Leatherneck.

While the more than 30,000 participants in the main race in Washington D.C. enjoy running on paved roads and seeing the numerous memorials and monuments scattered throughout the nation's capital, service members at Leatherneck were provided with a radically different backdrop while enduring the 26.2-mile event. Participants ran five dusty laps on roads along the perimeter of the base, which were often crowded with armored vehicles either going to or returning from supporting combat operations. Machine gun fire was frequently heard on the course as service members conducted in-theater training.

Aid stations were scattered along the course where Marines handed out water, snacks and energy gels while encouraging the runners.

As participants passed the lap start checkpoint, they were given one of four colored bracelets to help them remember how far they had gone.

The first runner to cross the finish line was U.K. Army Capt. Frazer Alexander, a vehicle maintenance officer with 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards of The Royal Armoured Corps, and a native of Luxembourg. Alexander finished with a time of 2 hours and 49 minutes.

"I'm very happy with the results, albeit it's slightly slower than my [personal best], but it's a good test marathon," said Alexander.

In order to prepare himself for his seventh marathon, Alexander stuck with a strict and demanding training regimen.

"I'm always training," said Alexander. "I'll train for a marathon during the year and for this marathon for the last 7 to 8 weeks."

During those weeks of training, Alexander would rise at 5:30 a.m., run for an hour and go to work. Once the workday was over, he would run some more. Each week consisted of at least 50 to 75 miles of running.

"It's something I'm very good at doing," said Alexander. "It brings a lot of people together. It's also a goal I've worked toward and I can better myself throughout it. It's also the other things that it brings with it: the runner's high, the camaraderie and that sense of achievement."

"We're all here for one goal and the guys out there encourage you and do the old Marine Corps 'ooh-rah!' and it's really good to hear that and you put your thumb out to them and wish them luck as well."

First Lt. Angelica Valdez, an air officer with Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 363, and a native of Tucson, Ariz., was the first female and fourth overall participant to finish the race. She finished her third marathon with a time of 3 hours and 15 minutes.

For the next several hours, service members trickled past the finish line where they were given a medal for completing the marathon. Many of the runners fought through the last few miles, hobbling across the line with salt streaks from dried up sweat covering their faces and clothes. Several of the more worn out runners were carried to a nearby tent where medical personnel treated injuries sustained during the grueling run.

Many participants had a goal to reach. Some just wanted to achieve something significant while they were deployed. For Gunnery Sgt. Jaren R. Wright, the land acquisitions chief for Regional Command Southwest, it was not exactly his choice to run the marathon — a friend signed him up without asking.

Although he did not choose to run the marathon, he did choose to finish it.

"After about mile 20, that's when you've got to push yourself to keep going," said Wright. "I did it for all the fallen heroes. Every time that I wanted to quit, I thought about someone that we lost...it kept me going."



Sgt. Kuande Hall

Participants in the 36th annual Marine Corps Marathon kickoff the race through the nation's capital Oct. 30. Actor Drew Carey fired the starting shot and ran the race. There were a total of 30,000 participants from all walks of life who ran the 26.2 mile race.

## Marine Corps hosts 36th annual Marine Corps Marathon

Lance Cpl. Daniel A. Wetzel  
Headquarters Marine Corps

WASHINGTON — The District of Columbia provided the backdrop for the 36th annual Marine Corps Marathon Oct. 30. This year's "People's Marathon" hosted 30,000 runners and thousands of spectators who witnessed the historic 26.2 mile journey and the Marine Corps 10k.

The marathon began with two MV-22 Osprey flying from the Pentagon over the starting line, the roaring thunder of a 105mm Howitzer and a 21-gun rifle salute to mark the 10-year anniversary of the 9/11 attacks.

Prior reserve Marine Drew Carey, familiar comedian and host of "The Price is Right," fired the starting pistol to begin the race and then joined the runners on their voyage.

Army Reservist 1st Lt. Chad Ware was first to complete the 26.2 miles, posting a time of 2:19:16. Ware, who has run 12 other marathons in his lifetime, posted a personal best time.

"I wasn't planning on running a fall marathon because I was sick of chasing a time and having the problems I was having," Ware said. "I wanted to run for place with the all Army Team. The time was there, so I went for it in the end."

Over 11,000 of the participants were first time marathoners. First Lt. Bill Prom, a basic field artillery officer with 5th Battalion, 11th Marines, 1st Marine Division, and a member of the Marine Corps Racing Team, completed his first Marathon on Sunday.

"I'm happy to finish," Prom said, who completed the race at 2:29:46 and was the first Marine to cross the finish line. "I felt pretty lousy most of it."

Prom said he had a large blister pop around mile 17 and ran the last nine miles with a bleeding foot.

The MCM course featured two time hurdles, which runners must complete for them to officially continue on the course. Participants needed to maintain a 14 minute-per-mile pace to bypass hurdle one, the National Mall Gauntlet, at mile at 17.5. Runners then must cross the 14th Street Bridge, aptly named, "Beat the Bridge," at mile 20 before the bridge is reopened to downtown traffic. A total of 20,895 runners officially Beat the Bridge and completed the marathon.

Many Marines and runners were running in honor of wounded or fallen service member.

Darrell General, a 37-time marathon runner and two-time MCM champion, ran for his brother, James R. General, who passed away in 2009. General posted a finishing time of 2:48:06.

Capt. Jason W. Dequenne, an active duty Marine who completed 236 miles from the Tun Tavern marker in Pennsylvania to the marathon's finish, dedicated each mile of his journey to a fallen Marine or Sailor.

The spectators motivated the participants with constant cheers of encouragement and held signs honoring those who were running and those who were being remembered.

"[The MCM] is not about a bunch of professionals getting money, it's about everyone," Prom said. "I don't know how many times I heard my mom screaming. She's pretty loud."

The Marine Corps Marathon was voted the best marathon for families. Runners from all walks of life participate annually in the largest marathon not to offer prize money. It is the fifth largest marathon in the nation and ninth largest in the world.

It is great for first time runners and all branches of services to run in, Ware said.



Sgt. Kuande Hall

Participants in the 36th annual Marine Corps Marathon wheeled portion begin the event 15 minutes prior to the runners for the National Capital Region race Oct. 30. There were a total of 30,000 participants from all walks of life who ran the 26.2 mile race.

### 236th Marine Corps Marathon top finishers

#### Men

Charles "Chad" Ware 2:19:16  
Michael Wardian 2:23:46  
Patrick Fernandez 2:26:37

#### Women

Tezata Dengersa 2:45:28  
Emily Shertzer 2:45:55  
Getacher Shiferaw 2:47:39

#### Notable

Drew Carey posted a time of 4:37:11



Lance Cpl. Daniel A. Wetzel

Anna Bernal receives water from a Marine at the 36th annual Marine Corps Marathon Oct. 30. Bernal finished with a time of 3:11:12 and was among 30,000 participants. Marines set up water and Gatorade stations along the route to refresh the runners.



## Corps Shot

Gunnery Sgt. Guadalupe M. Deanda III

**Staff Sergeant Mike Simpson, jump master assigned to the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, hand salutes while executing a free-fall sky jump from a C-130 Hercules aircraft aboard Basa Air Base, Republic of the Philippines, Oct. 25.**

# Phoenix goaltender sports militant mask

Lance Cpl. Kevin T. Ferguson  
Editor

In the entire sports world, goalies seem to have the most unique personalities. Of all the goalies, those who stand between the pipes on ice have the best outlet to express that uniqueness.

Hockey goalie masks have been donned with a range of designs from the keeper's favorite band to iconic hometown images to skulls and brick walls, as a way of instilling fear and intimidation into opponents.

Phoenix Coyotes goalie Jason LaBarbera is using his canvas this season to pay tribute to the troops.

LaBarbera's mask mixes Coyotes' colors in a digital camouflage with a soldier and a military aircraft on one side, and images me-

morializing Pat Tillman on the other.

LaBarbera was inspired by Tillman's decision to put an NFL career, he worked his entire life for, on hold to do what he felt was right and enlist in the Army after the 9/11 attacks. Tillman's sacrifice became ultimate in 2004 when he was killed in action while serving with the Army's 75th Ranger Regiment.

Since his death, his family and friends established the Pat Tillman Foundation to aid veterans and their families.

In conjunction with his mask, the Coyotes keeper will donate \$420 – Tillman wore the number 42 – to the foundation for every win he gets this season.

While LaBarbera has said

in interviews, it is important to him to pay tribute to the local, and national, hero – Tillman was a star football player at both Arizona State University and in the NFL for the Arizona Cardinals – the mask is meant to highlight the efforts of all North American troops, both home and around the world.

A mix of stars and maple leaves was integrated into

the design to represent both American and Canadian flags.

These days, troops are paid tribute at most every sporting event. Whether it is after the National Anthem or in the form of standing for a moment of silence for men and women serving our country around the world, military salutes have become a

sporting event staple.

However, as it has been a decade since 9/11, the tributes can become somewhat of an oversight – a check in the box before kickoff or the drop of the puck.

For one athlete to step up with such a creatively unique way to remember a veteran special to the sporting community, as well as the entire nation, while backing it up

with money from his own pocket deserves a salute in its own right.

LaBarbera has witnessed tributes to the troops game-in and game-out, but personally felt he could do more. And with a constant rotation of Marines deployed in support of world-wide operations, Fightertown knows first-hand that every little bit helps.



Photos special to The Jet Stream

## Catching Beaufort's fruit of the sea

Lance Cpl. Rubin J. Tan  
Staff Writer

Lowcountry shrimping provides families with peaceful scenery throughout the day. However, in order to take advantage of it aboard Fightertown, various rules must be followed.

Gary Hernden, Air Station game warden, can be found around Fightertown ensuring the preservation and safety of wildlife is upheld.

"Salt-water fishing licenses are required to shrimp on base and the consequences can be fines ranging from \$100 to \$500," said Hernden, adding that requirements apply off base as well.

Shrimping within 50 yards of fixed structures such as buildings and piers are not allowed on base. Baiting, a shrimping technique, is also not allowed.

There are limits to how much shrimp fisherman can keep, for instance, no more than 48 quarts of shrimp with heads or 29 quarts without.

"There are two spots for shrimping on the Air Station," said Gary Hernden, a Ruffin, S.C., native. "One can be found by proceeding down Geiger Boulevard

past [Marine Wing Support Squadron] 273 and the second spot is past the Auto Hobby Shop while traveling down Gordon Street towards the Sportsman Club."

Sergeant Robert Wikes, Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 251 airframe mechanic, can sometimes be found throwing his net near the Sportsman Club during his lunch break.

"I like shrimping because it is quiet and there are not a lot of people around, which makes the experience very relaxing," said Wikes, a Beaufort native. "It is something I would always do with my dad when I was younger."

The cost of a net, bucket and fishing license can be as little as \$50.

"Shrimping is a great way to spend time with your co-workers," said Sgt. Marcus Banks, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron licensing department non-commissioned officer in charge.

"Shrimping is fun because it is very primal to feed a family by fishing," Banks, a Gilbertown, Ala., native concluded.

For fishing and hunting rules, regulations and licensing in South Carolina visit [www.dnr.sc.gov](http://www.dnr.sc.gov) or contact Gary Hernden at 228-7017.

# Air Station aims high for CFC

Lance Cpl. R.J. Driver  
Staff Writer

The Air Station's commanding officer, Col. Brian Murtha, set a \$40,000 goal for Fightertown Marines to donate to this year's Combined Federal Campaign fund drive, which ends Dec. 15.

In 1961, President John F. Kennedy began the CFC to alleviate the burden placed upon service members during pay periods, said Chief Warrant Officer Frederick Gant, IPAC customer service chief who is leading the Air Station CFC drive.

"Before the combined federal campaign, charities would line up outside when service members got their pay checks," explained the Montgomery, Ala., native. "That led to service members giving a lot more money because they felt obligated to donate - Kennedy aimed to change that."

Aboard the Air Station, each unit has their own representative, who coordinates with their units to meet the lofty goal.

"Although we got a late start, we are on a good pace," Gant said. "Surprisingly, young Marines are donating more than expected and make up a major amount of the Air Station's contributions."

Through the campaign,



1) Each Marine gets a booklet and donation slip. 2) After selecting the charity of their choice, Marines fill out the donation slip specifying dollar amounts for each individual charity. Multiple charities may be covered by using the same donation slip. 3) The slips are then returned to Chief Warrant Officer Frederick Gant. 4) Gant will make sure the donations end up in the right hands.



Marines have a vast selection of charities to give back to. From cancer research to youth sport activities, Marines have the

choice to donate to the charity of their choice.

Refer to the photo time line to view the donation process from start to finish.



Lance Cpl. Timothy Norris

The first shovels of dirt are tossed during the ground breaking ceremony for the new Physical Fitness Center, Oct. 25. The new gym will be twice the size of the current Air Station gym, more environmentally friendly.

## CENTER

continued from page 1

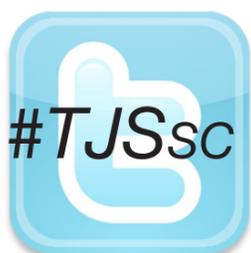
a basketball and volleyball court, weight room, cardio area, aerobic area, a tactical training room, 3 racketball courts and large locker rooms with separate saunas.

To be energy efficient, the center will be fitted with a rain water harvester for grey water use and a solar water heater system to supplement domestic hot water. These applications in conjunction with other conservative energy methods like natural lighting will make the everyday cost of the facility low.

Although the process will take almost two years, the project is designed to be minimally intrusive into the day-to-day workings of the Air Station.

"The noise from construction will be minimal because we will be pre-casting concrete off base," said Larry Hofmann, Public Works project manager for the physical fitness center.

He added that Afterburners will not be affected by the construction except that 75 percent of the parking area will be reserved for construction equipment.



# HAPPY BIRTHDAY MARINES

## 236

### A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS

For ten years now, our Corps has been engaged in continuous combat operations against those who threaten the security of America and our allies. We turned the tide in the Anbar province of Iraq and continue to see success today in southwest Afghanistan. While it has come at a cost... we have much to be proud of.

This past year in operations around the world including humanitarian disaster relief, counter-piracy, theater security cooperation, special operations, counter-insurgency and many more, you continued to solidify our place as America's Expeditionary Force in Readiness. Since the Continental Congress created two battalions of Marines 236 years ago, our legacy as an ever-ready, ever capable, victory producing organization remains intact.

Our rich heritage of selfless service and fidelity to Nation and to one another lives on in all who currently wear the Eagle, Globe and Anchor - those who have answered the clarion call to duty with remarkable courage, dedication and unshakable resolve that Marines are so well known for. To all Marines - past and present - and especially to our families ... I extend my deep gratitude for all



Gen. James Amos

you have done and all you continue to do.

As we celebrate our 236th birthday, let us look forward to future challenges whatever they may be - and reaffirm our pledge to be America's premier crisis response force; to be the first to fight... Always ready for the toughest and most challenging assignments.

**Happy 236th Birthday, Marines!**

## Guest of Honor

### Sergeant Major Robert C. Hollings

A native of Florida, Sgt. Maj. Robert Hollings enlisted in the Marine Corps in July 1979. He has completed all resident and non-resident professional military education required for enlisted Marines.

As a junior Marine, he picked up lance corporal and corporal meritoriously. Hollings reported to Drill Instructor School, Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego, as a non-commissioned officer in October 1987. Upon completion of Drill Instructor School, Hollings was assigned to 1st Recruit Training Battalion where he served as drill instructor, senior drill instructor, and series chief drill instructor. While serving aboard MCRD, San Diego, he was promoted to the rank of staff sergeant and was subsequently promoted meritoriously to the rank of gunnery sergeant.

In 1991, Hollings was deployed in support of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. In March 1993, Hollings reported to Headquarters, United States Marine Corps Manpower Management Support Branch 83B, where he served as a supply monitor. Upon promotion to first Sergeant, Hollings was assigned to 3d Force Service Support Group

and deployed with Combat Service Support Detachment 33 and 44 in support of Operations Freedom Banner and Cobra Gold. He was then reassigned to the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, where during his tour with the MEU, was promoted to Sergeant Major.

Hollings was subsequently assigned to 3rd Supply Battalion, 3d Force Service Support Group, as the battalion sergeant major. Upon his return from Okinawa, Japan, Hollings was assigned to Recruiting Station Jacksonville, Fla. In April 2002, he was then transferred to assume the duties of Sergeant Major, Marine Helicopter Squadron One, Quantico, where he executed missions in Amman, Jordan; Krakow, Poland; Senegal, Africa; Abuja, Nigeria and countless missions throughout the Continental United States in support of the President.

In June 2004, Hollings was assigned to the position of sergeant major, Eastern Recruiting Region Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C. During Jan 2007, he was assigned to his final position as sergeant major, for "The Fightin' Third" 3d Marine Division.

Hollings retired on May 21



2010 in Kane'ohe Bay, Hawaii after 31 years of service.

The Sergeant Major's decorations include the Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal (fourth award), the Navy Marine Corps Commendation Medal, the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (second award), Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, National Defense Service Medal (second award), Korean Defense Service Medal, Kuwait Liberation Medal (Kuwait), Kuwait Liberation Medal (Saudi Arabia), Southwest Asia Service Medal, the Humanitarian Service Medal, Navy Meritorious Unit Commendation, Navy Unit Commendation, and the Joint Meritorious Unit Award.

Sergeant Major Hollings is married, has eight children, and three grandchildren.

# Marine Corps Birthday

The first "formal" Birthday Ball took place in Philadelphia in 1925. Guests included the Commandant, the Secretary of War and a host of statesmen and elected officials. Prior to the Ball, Gen. Lejeune unveiled a memorial plaque at Tun Tavern. Then the entourage headed for the Benjamin Franklin Hotel

and an evening of festivities and frolicking. Over the years the annual Birthday Ball grew and grew, taking on a life of its own. In 1952 the Commandant, Gen. Lemuel C. Shepherd Jr., formalized the cake-cutting ceremony and other traditional observances. For example, Marine Corps policy now mandates that

the first piece of cake must be presented to the oldest U.S. Marine present. The second piece goes to the youngest Marine. Among the many such mandates is a solemn reading of the Commandant's birthday message to the Corps. Like the U.S. Marine Corps itself, the annual Birthday Ball has evolved from simple origins to the polished and professional functions

of today. Nonetheless, one thing remains constant, the tenth day of November! This unique holiday for warriors is a day of camaraderie, a day to honor Corps and Country. Throughout the world Nov. 10, U.S. Marines celebrate the birth of their Corps -- the most loyal, most feared, most revered, and most professional fighting force the world has ever known.

## Location

### Address:

One International Drive, Savannah 31402

### Phone:

912-447-4000

### Web Site:

www.savtcc.com

## Child Care

Free childcare will be provided at the Air Station Child Development Centers on a first come first serve basis. The CDC will be open from 4 p.m. to 2 a.m. Please register as soon as possible by calling the CDC at 228-7290.

**NO intoxicated person(s) will be able to pick up their child.**

## Nov. 10, 2011 Sequence of events

### 5-6:16 p.m. Social Hour

(Marines and guests arrive, receive wrist bands, take photos, and find seats)

### 6:15-6:30 p.m. 15 minute announcement for ceremony

### 6:30-7:15 p.m. 236th Marine Corps Birthday Ball Ceremony

### 7:15-7:30 p.m. Guest Speaker

### 7:30-8 p.m. Dinner

### 8 p.m.-midnight. 236th Marine Corps Birthday Ball Celebration

### 11 p.m. Last call announced

### 11:15 p.m. Bar closes

### Midnight Center closes

## Tickets

Tickets can be purchased at [beaufortball.com](http://beaufortball.com)

**Sale ends Sunday at midnight**

## Menu

Seasonal Mixed Green Salad with Tomato, Cucumber, Shredded Carrots and Choice of Chef Reid's Raspberry Vinaigrette Dressing or Ranch Dressing (Italian Dressing available upon request)

Grilled 5 oz. Marinated Sirloin Steak with Herb Butter and a 6 oz. Breast of Chicken with a Light Chasseur Sauce Served with: Roasted Red Potatoes, Green Beans with Carrots, Freshly Baked Rolls with Butter

Chocolate Cake with Raspberry Sauce

## Transportation

Bus transportation to and from the Savannah International Trade and Convention Center will be provided. Buses will transport personnel from Laurel Bay Youth and Teen Center and the Air Station parking lots at 4 p.m. and again at 4:30 p.m.

Buses will begin return trips to Beaufort starting at 9 p.m. and will do one hour interval pick-up. The last bus will leave Savannah at midnight.

Information provided by [beaufortball.com](http://beaufortball.com)



# Finally; Boots in the sand

*This is a first person guide to the tips and tricks for other Marines from Fightertown with a deep interest to deploy. If the experience and information shared is helpful feel free to utilize it.*

Cpl. Justin M. Boling  
2nd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward)

*Journal entry 7: Nov. 1, 2011*

## Staying in contact with my family

The hardest part of being in Afghanistan is not seeing Chel, my wife, and knowing that she worries. Though we are thousands of miles apart our shared communication has transformed my deployment.

I have loved my wife since the first day we met nearly four years ago. Sometimes I feel like my life is on pause without her around, but being able to talk through phone and email makes her seem closer. Staying in contact lets us know how the other is doing and keeps us involved in each other's lives.

I try to stay in touch through emails or Facebook. Both outlets provide comfort, but it is still not easy. The eight and half-hour time difference and our work schedules are obstacles to

our communication.

If you want something bad enough you will always find a way to make it possible. I wake up extra early in the mornings to get ready, so I can find a few minutes to send a message to my wife. It makes a world of difference to me, just being able to let her know that I love her.

I prefer to write. Email helps me to compose my thoughts better, so I can let my wife and other loved ones know exactly how I feel and the important work I am doing. Obviously, there is a lot that I cannot talk about due to operational security concerns.

It is hard not being able to tell my wife everything, but she has grown to understand. It is important to be aware of the information you are sending. When I call my wife,

I never mention time, dates or the missions I will be a part of.

Another important part of communication, is finding a balance between comfort and reliance. I cannot rely on communication with my wife to keep me grounded. At any moment, I may not be able to talk to her for days or weeks at a time. I also did not want my wife to get accustomed to getting calls from me every night and then worrying when I could not call.

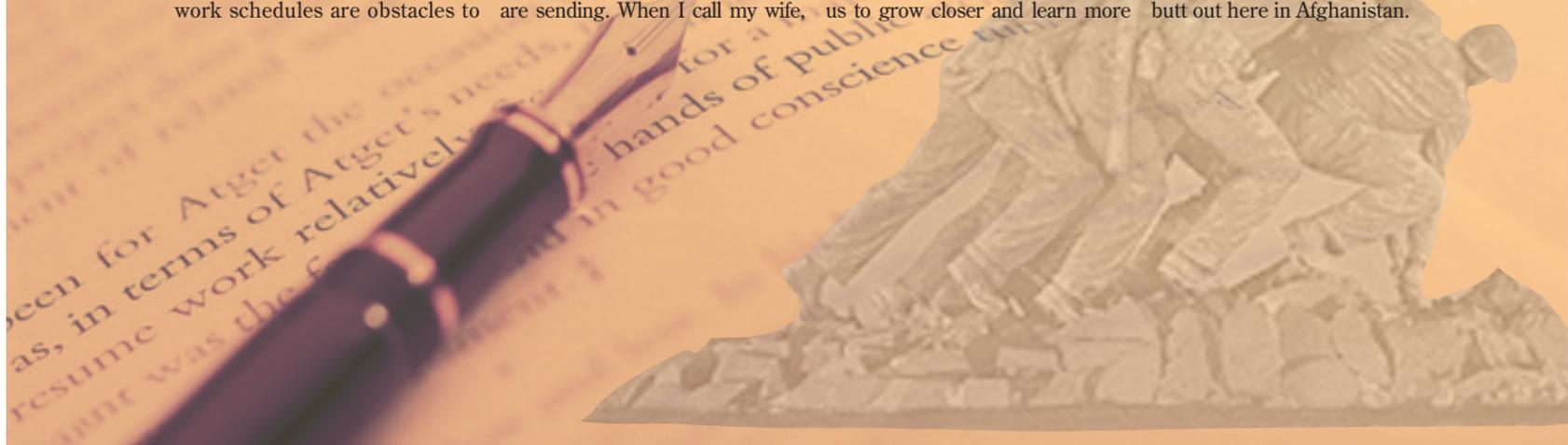
I only call my wife on our important dates and holidays. I called on her birthday, and it meant the world to us both. Since I don't call home often, hearing her every word is a gift. I cannot wait to call her on our anniversary.

I think that the space has allowed us to grow closer and learn more

about ourselves. I noticed that we find it easier to speak our minds to each other and open up. When I am at home we are too wrapped up in our own schedules.

I enjoy conversing about our future. Those thoughts help me stay positive. Keeping a good outlook makes everything easier here. If you stay positive you can keep your eyes forward on the mission at hand.

Regardless of how motivated and driven you are, we're all still human. My wife is my purpose. The sacrifice makes me not want to waste the opportunities I have out here. I want to do the best work I have ever done to justify the time I have lost. Just like every other Marine busting their butt out here in Afghanistan.



## BUDDIES

continued from page 1

For Blashek, sending Battalion Buddies to Marine children hit home. She is a Marine mother and has a deeply rooted connection with a currently deployed soldier.

She recalled her experience in 2003 when a soldier broke down at her desk while she was volunteering at a military lounge in a Los Angeles airport.

He was on leave from a war zone for his mother's funeral, she said. His wife had left him and his only child had died as an infant - he had no one else in his life.

"I'm going back over there; I know I won't make it back this time, but it really doesn't matter because no one would even care" he told her.

Blashek never forgot.

"Nearly ten years ago, I

met a soldier who made as much of an impact on my life as I made on his," Blashek said. "I had come across his name in a chain of emails in which Crandall was asking for Battalion Buddies. I was compelled to assist; I know how important it is for the troops to know that someone cares."

Until the Spring of 2011, Operation Gratitude exclusively sent care packages and letters to troops, but this all changed when a corporate sponsor had a bright idea.

"The McKesson Corporation wanted to create a large volunteer opportunity for their employees," Blashek said. "Each employee was to sew a stuffed animal to send overseas, but there was one problem - the stuffed animals were too big for the care packages."

Blashek and her fellow volunteers were stuck with 28,000 handmade, stuffed

animals with nowhere to go, but a fellow volunteer proposed they send them to the children of troops who are stateside, "in hopes of the gifts offering some degree of comfort while their moms or dads are deployed."

Thus Battalion Buddies was born and soon began arriving at doorsteps nationwide bearing the message:

*Hi Brave Young Warrior: I am your Battalion Buddy! I am here to cuddle and play with you while Mommy or Daddy is away! And my friends at Operation Gratitude will be sending a little something to Mommy or Daddy, too!*

Individual augments checking into MAG-31 for a deployment can pick up their child's buddy at the MAG-31 FRO's office in the MAG-31 headquarters building or spouses can call Ted Crandall at 228-7230.



Lance Cpl. R.J. Driver

**Battalion Buddies fill a corner of Ted Crandall's, Marine Aircraft Group 31 family readiness officer, office waiting for individual augments to take them home to meet their children.**

## SWEEP

continued from page 1

the Corps, making a clean sweep possible, no questions asked," said Gunnery Sgt. Maurice Bease, H&HS squadron gunnery sergeant.

Lance Cpl. Matthew Hammel, the MCI East and H&HS Marine of the Year, is the most junior of the three who went to the board and he was also the last to sit in front of eight sergeants major for the question and answer portion.

"I really felt the pressure knowing everyone else won the board and was even more nervous as I knocked on the door to go see the sergeants major," said Hammel, a Boston native. "Once I reported in and sat down, I had tunnel vision and all my nervousness left because I knew what needed to be done."

Each Marine who appeared at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejuene for the region board, had the skill and confidence needed to represent their commands, but only three Marines were selected.

"For H&HS to sweep the board, it says so much about the command philosophy and the work ethic," said Sgt. Robert Lark, the MCI East and H&HS NCO of the Year and Orlando, Fla., native. "It really shows the desire to lead."

With changes in the H&HS board process, Swamp Fox Marines will now need to work harder, thus becoming tougher competition.

The MCI East and H&HS Marine of the Quarter, Cpl. Clarence Canty, a District of Columbia native, was also recognized and will be promoted to sergeant for his performance during the MCI East board.

"There is always that top ten percent of Marines in everything we do, even if it's ten Marines during [physical training]," Lark concluded.



Lance Cpl. Rubin J. Tan

**Various meritorious boards up to meritorious gunnery sergeant are available for Marines. During the boards a non-commissioned officer of the year, Marine of the year and a Marine of the quarter is selected.**



