



THE PACESSETTER

6th Marine Corps District, Parris Island, S.C.

October 2004

Vol. 3, No. 10



Jax Marines storm half marathon

Inaugural event provides showcase for the Corps



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RS Marketing & Public Affairs Staff

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On The Covers

FRONT: Col. John Winkler (Ret.), steps off with his daughter, Christy Winkler-Rogers, as the Inaugural Jacksonville Marine Corps Half Marathon gets underway, Oct. 2. Winkler and a team of local Marines spent the better part of a year organizing the race, which helped raise \$15,000 for the Freedom Alliance Scholarship Fund.
 Photo by Staff Sgt. Will Price

BACK: For the first time three RSs were awarded the APR banner for September. Two of the three, RS Columbia and RS New Orleans are pictured. Above: Maj. James Christmas, and Sgt. Maj. Michael Watkins, promote RS New Orleans' best recruiter, Staff Sgt. Wesley Alexander, a canvassing recruiter from RSS Jackson to his current rank. Below: Maj. Charles Dunne, commanding officer RS Columbia, talks to a group of teachers about the Marine Corps.
 Photos by Staff Sgt. K. R. Murphy and Sgt. Eric R. Lucero

6th Marine Corps District

P.O. Box 19201
 Parris Island, S.C. 29905 - 9201
 (843) 228-2614, 2085

If you have a comment or a story idea for *The Pacesetter*, please contact us. If you would like to submit a story about recruiting, professional wisdom, military families or any other topic, please send us the story and related pictures.
 For email submissions, send to: silwanusjf@6mcd.usmc.mil

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From the Command

Worst to First

Congratulations Marines! We did what we said we were going to do when we started together at the beginning of this fiscal year. We said we were going to go from the being the worst district in both the region and the nation to being the best. We said we would have the highest APR in the nation and a combined attrition of 11 percent – and we did.

In the next issue we will publish the hard numbers, once operations has completed their year-end scrub. Additionally, yet again, your efforts allowed ERR to make mission, as the other two districts failed to make theirs.

I cannot say enough for all the recruiting stations affected by the four “wind and rain storms,” Frances, Charlie, Ivan and Jeanne. Trust me when I tell you that your Marines’ efforts in those adverse conditions were noticed in the highest echelons of the Marine Corps.

This past month (only because I am king), the net APR banner was awarded for the first time to three equally impressive performers: RS Atlanta, RS Columbia and RS New Orleans, co-winners of the prized monthly award. In the future, starting with this month, I will be choosing an NCOIC of the month at the District level, who will be awarded appropriately. This award will showcase successful NCOICs who exemplify Marine Corps values and leadership.

These values are evident as NCOICs Staff Sgt. Ham, RSS Shreveport (10 for 10) and Staff Sgt. Nelson, RSS McComb (8 for 7), led RS New Orleans to a 1.52 Net APR. NCOIC Gunnery Sgt. Sawyer, RSS Kennesaw (12 for 10), kept RS Atlanta, 1.46, hot on New Orleans’ heels as NCOICs Master Sgt. Dillard, RSS Asheville (11 for 11) and Gunnery Sgt. Lacour, RSS Anderson (7 for 7) kept RS Columbia, 1.42, in the fight. Not to be outdone by Columbia, RS Orlando, 1.42, was led by NCOIC Gunnery Sgt. McDaniel, RSS St. Petersburg (11 for 8).

Rounding out the race were RS Nashville, 1.35; RS Jacksonville, 1.25; RS Ft. Lauderdale, 1.14 and RS Montgomery, 1.02. They were led by NCOICs Gunnery Sgt. Richardson, RSS Memphis (8 for 7); Gunnery Sgt. Reid, RSS Jacksonville Beach (9 for 7) and Gunnery Sgt. Villafane, RSS Savannah (10 for 8); Staff Sgt. Wagner, RSS Fort Pierce (9 for 5); Gunnery Sgt. McKenney, RSS Pensacola (10 for 10) and Gunnery Sgt. Deal, RSS Anniston (5 for 5), respectively.

Now, what does all this past and future success mean to you? I’ll tell you what it means to you: more meritorious promotions (11 submissions vice 4), stability for my career recruiters, increased quality of life for all, and good fitness reports which will lead to future promotions in the operational forces.

I’m looking forward to leading this district in what will be remembered as the finest 12-month recruiting run any group of Marines has accomplished in the annals of recruiting history.

Now, talk is cheap and remember, IT’S ALL GOOD!



W. P. Leek
Colonel of Marines

Montgomery recruiters withstand Ivan

Sgt. Matthew Miller

Marketing and Public Affairs Representative, RS Montgomery

Finding and enlisting qualified people into the Marine Corps can be a challenging business, but when a strong hurricane devastates an area it can become even more challenging.

Residents of northwestern Florida and southern Alabama began returning to their homes Sept. 17, the day after Hurricane Ivan rolled through and left a wide path of destruction.

Many of the residents affected by the storm were attempting to salvage their remaining possessions as well as clearing debris from their properties.

“People don’t want to sit down and talk with you when they’re trying to take wet furniture and belongings out of their houses,” said Staff Sgt. Jason Smith, non-commissioned officer-in-charge, Recruiting Substation Fort Walton. “At that time, enlisting in the Marine Corps was probably one of the last things on their minds.”

Some of the recruiters faced destruction of their personal belongings as well, such as Sgt. Walter Warren of RSS Pensacola, whose house was condemned because of the amount of water damage.

School closings also posed a problem for the recruiters. Since gaining exposure

through school visits is an important aspect of the recruiting process, contending with school closures for as long as three weeks created numerous challenges.

While these things can be obstacles, the recruiters didn’t let it stop them from recruiting. When they were able to make their way back to the office, they were pleasantly surprised to find the building standing and even happier when power was restored a couple days later.

“We opened our substation for our poolees and their friends to come in and relax in the air

conditioning since we had one of the few buildings that still had power,” said Gunnery Sgt. Jeffrey

McKenney, NCOIC, RSS Pensacola. “This

sparked some interest in the Marine Corps with some of the new kids that came to relax in the office and a chance for the recruiters to talk to them.

“We also got our poolees together to help with the cleanup effort in some of the hardest hit areas,” he added. “With everyone focused on their own houses and possessions, we still found a way to be seen in the community.”

Recruiters in Fort Walton went out and helped support agencies that tend to the basic needs of their community.

“All of us went out, while everything was still a mess, and helped the Red Cross and other disaster relief groups hand out food and water to the people that really needed it,” said Smith. “This put us face to face with young people that we may never have met. Our mindset was that the hurricane wasn’t about to stop us from making our mission, even if basic ways of prospecting, like telephone calls and

home visits had to be put on hold for a few days.”

These creative measures taken by the recruiters of RS Montgomery demonstrated the initiative, pride and commitment to duty that is vital to continued success in a rapidly changing environment.

“The Marines assigned to the substations in southwestern Alabama and the Florida panhandle rapidly adapted to their less than satisfactory conditions,” said Capt. Earl Patterson, V, Executive Officer. “Once they were given the all clear, they moved back in, assessed the situation and started making a positive impacting their communities.”

“At that time, enlisting in the Marine Corps was probably one of the last things on their minds.”

**Staff Sgt. Jason Smith,
NCOIC RSS Fort Walton**

Contact Team Corner

Training, we say it a lot but is it really taking place as it should?

The Basically Trained Recruiter (8411) is no doubt, where the rubber meets the street and is the single most important ingredient in the recipe for success in any and all Recruiting Substations.

With that, it is baffling why we fall behind in training our recruiters. Basic Recruiters Course (BRC) gives us basically trained recruiters and it is up to us as SNCOIC’s and 8412’s to train these Marines to ensure their success.



Keep in mind this is a nine-month process for new recruiters and a continuous process once he/she passes that plateau.

All too often in this fast-paced race to the finish we fail to train our recruiters properly.

We should, each and every month before we step off with a full 30-inch step, make sure that there is a solid plan in place to train and assist each and every recruiter. Let’s get back to the basics.

Have good in and out briefs, make sure your recruiters are using their sales tools (i.e. cash callers and benefit tags) and that you as SNCOICs are monitoring the contact to contract chain.

Train our Marines daily not only to ensure their success but the success of the RSS and RS as well.

Big Spring Jam

Concert series offers chance to contact thousands of applicants

Staff Sgt. Jason S. Fischer

*Marketing and Public Affairs Representative,
RS Jacksonville*

Every year in September, the Marines of Recruiting Substation Huntsville, Ala., Recruiting Station Nashville, shed their Dress Blues and don a more warrior-like ‘boots and utes’ look at a successful concert festival.

Held in Huntsville’s Big Spring International Park, the three-day festival, known as the “Big Spring Jam” is so successful that the Marines recently participated for their sixth straight year.

The Big Spring Jam drew nearly 280,000 people this year, giving the Marine recruiters a huge pool of people to talk and interact with.

According to RSS Huntsville canvassing recruiter, Staff Sgt. Justice Haggard, the Big Spring Jam is one of the premier enhanced area canvassing events his station participates in each year. The festival has proven itself worthy, garnering contracts and nearly 1,000 qualified leads per year.

“We gain exposure to a wider range of our target market,” he said. “It also gives the public an opportunity to see us in situations other than our normal recruiting duties.”

Another RSS Huntsville canvassing recruiter, Staff Sgt. Ronnie Dickey agreed, saying the event is an excellent opportunity to multiply awareness.

“The Big Spring Jam gives us an outstanding opportunity to interact with the community of Huntsville and allows us to gain a lot of exposure.”

The “Jam” filled several city blocks of Huntsville’s downtown with seven stages for the 111 bands who performed this year. People, old and young, came to hear music from many different genres, while some just came to watch other people and fill up on all the carnival-like foods.

The Marines drew fans to their area of the park with their tent set-up, inflatable drill instructors and the red Humvee, challenging young people on the ever-popular pull-up bar.

According to Big Spring Jam director of sponsorships, Andy Kelly, the Marines contribute to the concert series’ success because of the unique things they bring to the “Jam.”

“The Marines bring a lot of diversity to the event and contribute to the fan experience,” he said. “[The Marine Corps] is a positive influence in that part of the park and to the kids who are there.”



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jason S. Fischer

Marines from RSS Huntsville count pull-ups during the station’s premier EAC event of the year: the Big Spring Jam. Each year the three-day music festival draws nearly 280,000 fans, and the Marines host nearly 1,000 of the visitors on their pull-up bar.

Haggard, who has worked at three consecutive Big Spring Jams, said one of the greatest benefits for the Marines who work at the festival is being able to engage applicants in a more comfortable setting.

“It’s great being able to interact with possible future Marines in a more relaxed environment, rather than calling them at their homes or interrupting them at work,” he said.

According to Kelly, there is more to it than just having the Marines on-site to get kids on a pull-up bar; there is something special about having America’s Marines at your event.

“We’re proud to support the Marines’ efforts and all the things they do that they may not get thanked for on a daily basis,” he said. “It gives us a chance to showcase them — we’re glad to have them here.”

Given the level of success the Marines have enjoyed this year and in years past, the recruiters of RSS Huntsville are sure to be prospecting and challenging youth at the Big Spring Jam for years to come.

From the court to the Corps...

Marines volley for athletes



Sgt. Josh Higgins

*Marketing and Public Affairs
Representative, RS Atlanta*

In an effort to recruit quality females into the Marine Corps, Marines here recently took advantage of a rare opportunity to highlight themselves and the Corps in front of more than 400 high school female athletes.

Thirty-two volleyball teams from around Georgia gathered for this year's United States Marine Corps sponsored 2004 East/West Invitational Volleyball Tournament Sept. 9 and 11. Recruiters from several of the RS' substations participated by providing a hospitality room for coaches and setting up information tables to offer interested passers by an opportunity to learn more about what the Corps has to offer.

"A large concentration of athletes at sporting events is good for recruiting no matter what," said Capt. Linda D. Long, executive officer, RS Atlanta. "To have this many female athletes in one place allows the RS to capitalize on prospecting a target market audience who, by and large, are alphas and are definitely physically fit. Moreover, we used this opportunity to provide proof sources in the form of drill instructors who were the epitome of professional Marines and showcased the different career paths for females in the Marine Corps."

Along with the station's recruiters, six female drill instructors from 4th Recruit Training Battalion, Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C., were on hand to field any questions about boot camp that students had, and they added to the image the station was trying to portray — that females can be Marines also.

"Our presence at the tournament is important because we are representatives of what these girls can expect upon arriving to boot camp," said Staff Sgt. Michelle A. Morris, drill instructor, 4th RTBn. "This is an opportunity for them to ask questions about what to expect during their training at Parris Island before ever stepping onto the yellow footprints."

Kristen Smith, a high school senior and setter for the Sprayberry High School team, from Kennesaw, Ga., said time is drawing short for her to make a decision about what she will do after high school. She said entering the armed services has always sounded interesting to her, and after learning about the educational opportunities and benefits the Marine Corps has to offer she is certainly considering enlisting.

"I've always heard about the travel and excitement that goes

along with a career in the military, but I had never considered the other benefits," she said. "The drill instructors and recruiters are very informative, and after hearing what they have to say the Marine Corps is at the top on my list of options."

After two days of volleyball play, The Wesleyan School of Atlanta, took first place in the tournament with two straight wins over Starr's Mill High School. Sgt. Glenn L. Koch, canvassing recruiter, Recruiting Substation Atlanta, was on hand to present both teams with the first and second place trophies.

"I think our sponsorship of the tournament has been beneficial to both the teams and us," said Koch. "We were able to help them out financially, while at the same time answering their questions about the Marine Corps and gaining rapport with a large group of outstanding athletes."

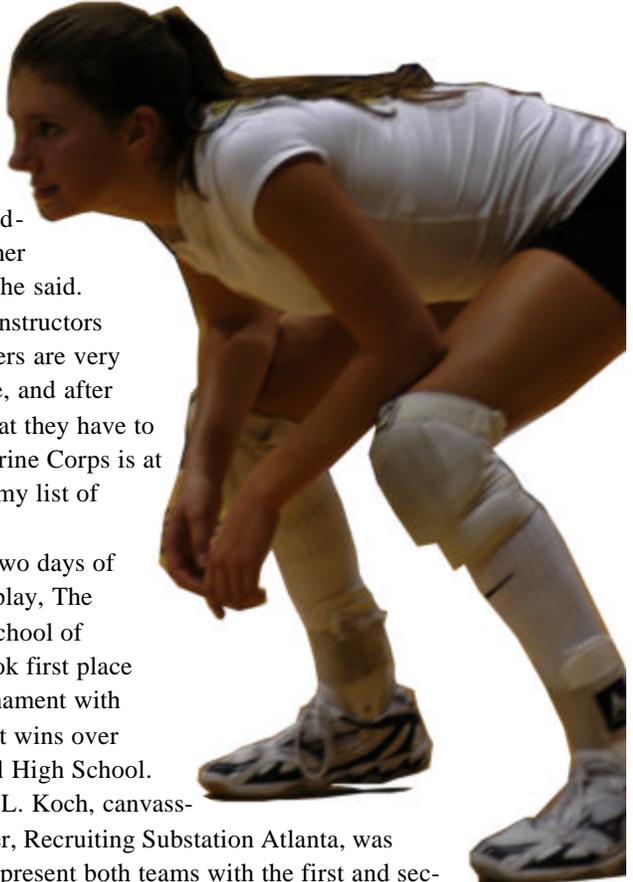


Photo by Sgt. Josh Higgins

Sgt. Glenn L. Koch, recruiter, RSS Atlanta, presents the first place trophy to members of The Wesleyan School volleyball team during the 2004 USMC East/West Invitational Volleyball Tournament Sept. 11.

Future Marine balances passions, commitments to prepare for the Corps

Sgt. David Salazar

*Marketing and Public Affairs
Representative, RS Ft. Lauderdale*

No one batted an eye when Lauren Kurkimilis told them she was joining the Marine Corps.

After all, the Cape Coral, Fla., native, has been through quite a bit in her 17 years.

The oddity is that Kurkimilis, an honors student at Cypress Lake High School & Center for the Performing Arts, even found the time to sign the contract.

Besides attending her regular honors classes, Kurkimilis takes two advanced dance classes, volunteers with her school's Special Education program and is dual-enrolled at Edison Community College where she is taking two classes.

Because her activities require her to be in several places at different times, it was only a matter of time before she would run into the Marine Corps: One of the two jobs she works literally brought her to the Corps' doorstep and Kurkimilis was easily sold on the promise of new challenges.

"I knew right away that having the title of Marine would open up so many doors for me that I wouldn't normally have open to me... if I didn't have that experience," Kurkimilis explained.

Having just started her senior year of high school, Kurkimilis had well over a year before she had to decide what do with her future — but, as with everything else she does, Kurkimilis "went for the gusto" and joined the Delayed Entry Program immediately.

"I decided that to continue to be focused, I needed to immerse myself in it and begin training immediately," said the 5-foot-3-inch prospective Military Policewoman.

Kurkimilis, who also plays the piano and guitar, attributes her drive and energy



Photo by Sgt. David Salazar

Staff Sgt. Joseph Ellis, noncommissioned officer in charge of Recruiting Substation Fort Myers, shows Lauren Kurkimilis the opportunities that abound in the Marine Corps. Kurkimilis has shown some of her abilities already, attending college courses, volunteering and working a part-time job. Though, she mostly credits this to her upbringing.

to those in her life who have inspired her to be strong: Her father, her younger brother who has autism and her mother who she lost to cancer when she was a young girl.

"I've just been so lucky to have so many great people in my life. My little brother, Patrick — he's 9 and has autism. He can't write, he can't communicate, but the things he's been able to overcome have been amazing," she said.

"My mom is by far one of the most amazing people I've ever met. She was so full of life ... and touched so many people's lives. I remember our last trip together was to one of the beaches on the east coast [of Florida]. We had such a good time and looking back I realize that she was in pain, but she never let it show. She just wanted our last memories of her to be good," Kurkimilis recalled.

Growing up without her birth mother did not dampen the young ballerina's spir-

its. At a young age, her father instilled in her the values needed to become the successful young woman she is today.

"My father always told me, 'You could be anything you want to be as long as you're not a liar, a cheater or a 'stealer,'" she said.

Today, Kurkimilis drives her own car and pays her own bills, not out of necessity, but out of the sheer drive to be independent.

"Lauren can be anything she wants to be. But any young adult who makes the decision to serve their country, I'm behind 100 percent," said Kurkimilis' father, Dan. "She's made the decision to join and I'm very proud of it — she makes me very proud."

Her late mother would agree.

"I'm not sure, but knowing her she'd support me," said Kurkimilis. "She'd be worried, but she'd support me. She knows I'd make it through."

Jacksonville half-marathon full of excitement

Story and Photos by
Staff Sgt. Will Price

Marketing and Public Affairs Representative,
RS Jacksonville

The standard length of a marathon, 26.2 miles, was cut in half for the Inaugural Jacksonville Marine Corps Half Marathon — but even half a marathon was full of excitement and challenges.

The event, sponsored by former and active duty Marines from



Vanessa Goodrum pushes to the finish during the Jacksonville Marine Corps Half-Marathon Oct. 2. Competitors were able to compete in either a the Freedom 5k or the half-marathon events.

the area, was held to raise funds for the Freedom Alliance Scholarship Fund, which provides scholarships to the dependent children of servicemembers from all branches of the military who have been killed or permanently disabled in the line of duty.

The 13.1-mile half-marathon was held in conjunction with another foot race, the Freedom 5K. Together, these races drew a record 1,200 fleet-footed participants.

Some power-walked, some jogged with babies in carriages, and a handful of professionals sprinted the whole way. Each grueling step was taken to support our military men and women.

Both races began with a blast from the starter's pistol, Oct. 2 at 7 a.m., at the home of the Jacksonville Jaguars Alltel Stadium. They wound through the San Marco District alongside the St. John's River and ended at Metropolitan Park.

Paul McCrae, a local professor, held a 5:25 minute pace for the 13.1 miles, winning the Half Marathon with a time of 1 hour, 10 minutes, 45 seconds.

"Having the Marine Corps Hummer leading the race was very motivating," McCrae said. "Listening to the music and cadences coming from the Hummer kept me focused."

As the rest of the pack followed McCrae to the finish line, they discovered the Metropolitan Park had been turned into a Marine Corps Base Camp. After scurrying past Amphibious Assault Vehicles from Naval Air Station Jacksonville's Bravo Company, 4th Assault Amphibian Battalion, and under two M-198 155mm Towed Howitzers from Blount Island Command, the running warriors crossed a finish line decorated with cammie netting and American flags.

Marines from the surrounding Recruiting Substations Jacksonville, Daytona, and Brunswick with the Officer Selection Team Gainesville, not to be outdone, showed up with their latest weapons of opportunity — stickers, lanyards and D-Rings. They also brought more than 50 Marine Corps candidates to run in both the 5K and the Half Marathon.

At least one Marine and two poolees got more than they bargained for. Staff Sgt. Andrew Jones, Recruiting Substation Brunswick, Ga., canvassing recruiter, with RSS Jacksonville Beach's Bryan Bullard and Matthew Stech, made a wrong turn, adding a full 10 miles to what should have been just a 5K, or 3.1-mile run.

"Apparently, I need to sign up for the Land [Navigation class]," laughed Jones. "By the time I hit 30 minutes, I knew



Jacksonville's Metropolitan Park was converted into a Marine Corps Base Camp loaded with Assault Amphibious Vehicles, M-198 155mm Towed Howitzers and the finish line for all events. RS Jacksonville Marines, Naval Air Station Jacksonville Marines and Marines from the Blount Island Command came out to support the inaugural Jacksonville Marine Corps Half-Marathon.

something was wrong, but I was wearing all my Marine Corps gear — I had to keep going!”

Leading the half-marathon pack for the Marines of RS Jacksonville was Capt. Jon Bonette, OSO Gainesville, with a run-time of 1 hour, 32 minutes, 11 seconds.

Though many of the runners were members of “the proud and the few,” from past, present and future, the event was open to the general public, and the race coordinators could not have been more pleased with the response.

“The turnout far surpassed our expectations for a first-year event,” said Col. Chris Rodatz (Ret.), race organizer. “The quality of the race — from runners bag’s, to the t-shirts to the outstanding support we received from the Marines of 4th Assault Amphibian Battalion’s Bravo Company and King’s Bay Security Forces and Blount Island Command— made this event a huge success!”

“The Marine Corps exposure the marathon gave us in a city with two Navy bases was phenomenal,” said Staff Sgt. Jason Martin, RSS Jax Beach canvassing recruiter. “Next year we hope to make it even better for recruiting by inviting all our high school track teams to participate.”

According to Kathy Rothschild, Freedom Alliance Assistant Director of Development, this event was the largest the foundation has been a part of in its history.

“Thanks to the support of programs like the Marine Corps Half Marathon, the Alliance has already enrolled 74 students to full scholarships,” said Rothschild to race organizers.

Lt. Col. Oliver L. North (Ret.), who now serves as the organization’s honorary chairman, founded the Freedom Alliance in 1990.

“Colonel North is currently in Iraq for FOX News,” said Rothschild, “but he sends his warmest regards and his thanks for a job well done.”

All in all, the event raised a full \$15,000 for the Freedom Alliance — not too bad for “half” a marathon!



Top: From left to right: Col. Chris Rodatz (retired), Col. John Winkler (ret.), Maj. Margaret Weitzel, Joy Hamilton, Lyle Layher, Gerald Shaffer, and Chief Warrant Officer (ret) Gayward Hendry, organized the event. Below: Sgt. Serena Anderson, Marine Security Forces Co., King’s Bay, Ga., finishes the MC Half Marathon strong with a little encouragement.



Pride in the Corps

A recruiter leads from the front, even in his family; sister joins the Corps

Sgt. Matthew Miller

*Marketing and Public Affairs Representative,
RS Montgomery*

August 20 was a very exciting day for Sgt. Christopher Butler; he had driven nearly 600 miles from Mobile, Ala., to Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C., to watch a boot camp graduation. But this was not just any graduation.

Butler stood on the parade deck bursting with pride to see his sister graduating from boot camp on the same parade deck that he had stood on eight years earlier.

About a year ago, LaToya Butler walked into the office of Sgt. Butler, her brother, and made the announcement, “I want to be a Marine.” Her brother, a 28-year-old Marine Corps recruiter in Mobile, Ala., immediately started doing the paperwork to sign her up. Everything worked out and she reported to boot camp May 24.

The next time Sgt. Butler saw his sister was at Parris Island Aug. 20, and not just as a sister, but as Pfc. Butler, sister-in-arms.

“It brought back a lot of memories [for me] and evoked a lot of pride for her,” said Sgt. Butler. “Being able to witness my sister transformed into a Marine for the first time was very emotional. It wasn’t a surprise, I knew she could and would do it, it just means a lot to see her wearing the uniform.”

While Sgt. Butler sees a lot of himself in his sister, he noticed some striking differences in how he and his sister chose the Marine Corps as a path in their lives.

“I had to learn things the hard way growing up and she was given more guidance,” said Sgt. Butler. “My recruiter had to help put me on the right track so I could go to boot camp. The fleet also straightened me out. She, on the other hand, had the sense to follow good role models while she was growing up.”

But similarities in their personalities seem to suggest that she might want to continue to follow her brother’s example and enter the recruiting field.



Photo by Sgt. Matthew Miller

Sgt. Christopher Butler, canvassing recruiter, RSS Mobile, poses with his sister, Pfc. LaToya Butler in the office where LaToya told her brother she wanted to be a Marine. Pfc. Butler said she wanted to join after seeing the positive effects it had on her brother.

“We’re both very adventurous and we like to meet other people,” said Pfc. Butler. “We also like to help other people. I realized how much my brother cared, not just about me, but about all the other young people around here since he started recruiting in Mobile, Ala.”

“We are both very compassionate people,” said Sgt. Butler. “The Marine Corps is just the best tool to get you where you want to be in life. I know that from my experiences in the Corps and she knows that from seeing me go through changes.

“I love being able to help the community by helping men and women make decisions that will help them for the rest of their lives,” he added. “My sister is the same way.”

For now, Pfc. LaToya Butler is on her way to the fleet as a disbursing clerk. She doesn’t know how long her Marine Corps career will last, but if the amount of pride and respect she has for her brother is any indication, this could be the start of a long career.

Domestic Violence Awareness

October is recognized as Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

According to a 1996 study by the American Psychological Association, one out of every three women experiences at least one physical assault by a partner during adulthood. However, the full extent of victimization is not known because only one in seven domestic assaults draws police attention, according to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence website. To help raise awareness of this problem, which affects more than 4 million women each year, visit the NCADV website at www.ncadv.org for ideas, history and links regarding Domestic Violence Awareness.

TRICARE Adjustment

Starting Jan. 1, 2005, Tricare will drop the newborn coverage days in which newborns and newly adopted children are "deemed enrolled" without completion of the enrollment application formally enrolling the child in TRICARE Prime. This period will be reduced from 120 days to 60 days from the date of birth and/or the official date of adoption. The change has not occurred yet in the policy manual, but will occur shortly. For more information visit the TRICARE website at:

www.tricare.osd.mil



Photo by Sgt. Jimmie Perkins

Brig. Gen. Walter B. Gaskin assumed command of Marine Corps Recruiting Command in a ceremony at the Lejeune Hall parade field aboard Marine Corps Base Quantico, Sept. 17. Gaskin accepted command as Maj. Gen. Christopher Cortez retired after serving 33 years in the Corps. Gaskin recently served as the Chief of Staff for the Naval Striking and Support Forces in Southern Europe.

REMAINING SHARP



At this point in training, recruits have completed what many consider the “final test” of recruit training — the Crucible. However, training week 11 will test the discipline and attention to detail the recruits have learned.

The major event during this second to last week of training is Final Drill. This competition pits platoons against one another vying for the highest score. Recruits are graded on the precision of their movements, their uniformity and the sharpness with which they execute the movements.

“Drill is the backbone of discipline,” said Gunnery Sgt. Ambroga Carson, series gunnery sergeant, Echo Company, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion. “It takes a lot of hours to have a platoon stand there and execute the

movement correctly. The final competition is a chance for the drill instructors and recruits to show off how much they have worked on drill.”

Final Drill occurs in the middle of a week that is mostly spent catching recruits up on paperwork and equipment issue. Recruits will begin to clean their equipment, such as canteens and rifles, for turn in during the final week of training. Recruits will also make their final visits to the Dental Clinic, fixing any last problems with their “fangs.”

Recruits will start to prepare for their battalion commander’s inspection as well. They can expect to spend a few hours this week thoroughly cleaning their squad bay and weapons to prepare for this inspection.



Photo by Cpl. John F. Silwanus

Recruits unstack arms during drill.

“The battalion commander’s inspection is the most important inspection [recruits] have during their time on [Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C.],” said Staff Sgt. Dan Ryley, series gunnery sergeant, Echo Company. “The drill instructors will ensure their recruits will do well on this inspection. So, they will spend some time prepping.”

Recruits can look forward to their first graduation practice at the end of the week.

“It starts to sink in that the platoon will graduate recruit training once they have their first graduation practice,” said Ryley. “It really hits home that graduation is around the corner.”

Recruits will also get a taste of what it will be like to escort their families around the base, when they are given four hours of liberty on Sunday.



Photo by Cpl. John F. Silwanus

Echo Company recruits lean in to disassemble their stack during a close-order drill competition. Recruits will compete in Final Drill during Training Week 11.

SETTING THE PACE

Stations of the Month

RS Atlanta

Large - RSS Kennesaw - NCOIC: Gunnery Sgt. Sawyer
Small - None

RS Columbia

Large - RSS Asheville - NCOIC: Master Sgt. Dillard
Small - RSS Anderson - NCOIC: Gunnery Sgt. Lacour

RS Ft. Lauderdale

Large - RSS Fort Pierce - NCOIC: Staff Sgt. Wagner
Small - None

RS Jacksonville

Large - RSS Jacksonville Beach - NCOIC: Gunnery Sgt. Reid
Small - RSS Savannah - NCOIC: Gunnery Sgt. Villafane

RS Montgomery

Large - RSS Pensacola - NCOIC: Gunnery Sgt. McKenney
Small - RSS Anniston - NCOIC: Gunnery Sgt. Deal

RS Nashville

Large - RSS Memphis - NCOIC: Gunnery Sgt. Richardson
Small - None

RS New Orleans

Large - RSS Shreveport - NCOIC: Staff Sgt. Ham
Small - RSS McComb - NCOIC: Staff Sgt. Nelson

RS Orlando

Large - RSS St. Petersburg - NCOIC: Gunnery Sgt. McDaniel
Small - None



From the XO

Marines,

Fiscal Year 2004 belongs to the Pacesetters, as your efforts have enabled the District to cross the finish line well in front of the pack. Brig. Gen. Tryon passes along that it was an outstanding team effort on the part of the Sixth.

Again, all Recruiting Stations made mission and the District was number one in the Eastern Recruiting Region. As you are well aware, this concluded an excellent year.

Indicative of your superb personal performance this past year, 103 Achievement Medals and 216 Certificates of Commendation were awarded to District Marines. More awards are expected as we continue to compile year-end statistics. Fiscal Year '05 will bring both old and new challenges to the District.

Again, for those Marines that are looking to rotate or EAS in the near term, I request that you look at the possibility of a six to 12 month extension. The upcoming months will be busy with numerous conferences, inspections, and holidays. Ensure to plan appropriately so that you can continue with the momentum that you have worked so hard to establish. We will continue to have challenges in '05, such as the storm season and manpower, however, I have full confidence that we will persevere and make this new year even better than the last. Continue to press, work smart, and make some time to have fun!

Semper Fidelis,
LtCol MacKenzie

Heavy Hitters

Recruiters with 5 or more contracts

Atlanta

Sgt. Wafler

Columbia

Sgt. Shrove

Ft. Lauderdale

Sgt. Adams

Sgt. Piper

Jacksonville

5 Gunnery Sgt. Bengston

New Orleans

Sgt. Kelley

Sgt. Robertson

The Honor Roll

Congrats to the following honor grads:

Aug. 20 - Fox Co.

Pfc. Tony R. Montgomery, Ft. Pierce, Fla.

Recruited by Sgt. Eric Adams, RSS Ft. Pierce

Pfc. Christopher J. Johnson, Jackson, Miss.

Recruited by Staff Sgt. Eric Jackson, RSS Jackson

Pfc. Veryl T. Carter, New Orleans, La.

Recruited by Sgt. Olan Valmyr, RSS New Orleans

Pfc. Michael A. Yeager, Killen, Ala.

Recruited by Sgt. Barry Dean, PCS Florence, Ala.

Aug. 27 - Echo Co.

Lance Cpl. Donnell D. Nelson, Johnsonville, S.C.

Recruited by Sgt. John Brutus, Florence, S.C.

Pfc. James J. Lloyd, Jr., Albany, Ga.

Recruited by Sgt. Shawn Justice, RSS Albany

Sept. 3 - India Co.

Pfc. Brian A. Cramer, Warner Robins, Ga.

Recruited by Staff Sgt. Alderman, RSS Warner Robins, Ga.

Pfc. John M. Liest, Baton Rouge, La.

Recruited by Staff Sgt. Hernandez, RSS Baton Rouge, La.

LEADING THE PACK

CO's Award of Excellence



RS New Orleans, 1.52
Maj. James Christmas



RS Atlanta, 1.46
Maj. Cason Heard



RS Columbia, 1.42
Maj. Charles Dunne



RS Orlando, 1.42
Maj. Matthew Reid



RS Nashville, 1.35
Maj. Steven Wolf



RS Jacksonville, 1.25
Maj. John Bolt



RS Ft. Lauderdale, 1.14
Maj. Daniel Greenwood



RS Montgomery, 1.02
Maj. Hugh Ware

Spotlight on:



Sgt. William Sluss
Recruiter, PCS Dickson, RS Nashville

Sergeant Sluss is a leader in the fight because of his level of dedication to the mission at hand. His successfully prospects seven counties in search of new applicants. Since he has been in Nashville, he has had two 6-contract months and several 5-contract months. Sluss believes in being honest with young people he comes in contact with, and always lets them know the whole truth, good and bad. "The key to leadership is taking good leadership and bad leadership and making your own style," he said. He also says he tries to apply the 11 leadership principles as much as he can every day.

Years in USMC (active): 7 years
 Primary MOS: 6092 Intermediate Aircrew Mechanic
 Favorite Duty Station: MCAS New River, N.C.
 Favorite Book: "Message to Garcia"
 Favorite Movie: Frequently
 Personal Hero: My father.
 Hobbies: Football, hunting and fishing
 Greatest Accomplishment: Fathering his two children.



From the Ops O

First, I'd like to thank the entire 6MCD for giving me such a warm welcome to the Pacesetter team. While serving with ERR the past three years, I saw the 6MCD transformed from a District that needed help to make mission to a District that now sets the standard, not just for ERR but for MCRC as well. In my first month here, I now see the reasons for that success: strong leadership from the commanders and SNCOICs, and a sincere commitment by our Marines to be WINNERS. The positive attitudes from those I have observed and communicated with have been nothing short of inspirational.

Now, on to business: September was a challenging month fraught with distractions. At no time did I hear any complaints or excuses about the difficult obstacles that had to be overcome. Instead, all I saw were RESULTS. Your performance last month added an exclamation point to the accomplishments of the fiscal year. Final results pending, it looks like 6MCD will finish as the highest producing District in the nation. Well Done!

We are now in a very strong position to exploit FY04's success. We are starting FY05 with a pure net mission, so take advantage of this by beating the production drum loud and often. Production in volume is the key to everything we do out here. We must also turn our attention to shipping our requirement by component and category EVERY MONTH. Special emphasis needs to be given to reserve component and female shipping. We cannot fall behind in these areas!

Another area I believe we need to focus on in FY05 is maximizing the PPC program. The quality of leads we are getting has never been better, yet we still are not getting the contracts we should because there are non-believers in our midst. Operations sections must drive production by ensuring that procedures are in place to assist our Marines in getting the most out of the program. There's more to it than tracking return rates and filling out a monthly report. Aggressively monitoring the prospecting of hot leads, particularly those from marines.com and 1-800-MARINES, is a step in the right direction. The District Ops section and Contact Team will be publishing specific guidance on how we will attack the PPC program this year.

I am extremely honored to be a part of the Pacesetter team. I look forward to getting out on the road to see all of you in action. Make Mission, Build Pool.

Michael R. Bowersox
 LtCol USMC



***RS's Atlanta,
Columbia and New
Orleans***

***APR Banner
Winners***



6th Marine Corps District

