



May 2011

Newsletter

A message from the Commander's spouse to family members:

Wow! Some of you had a fantastic spring break with your families. My family went to Cooperstown, N.Y., to the Baseball Hall of Fame. It's a wonderful museum in a quaint little town in some very beautiful country. We learned a lot about baseball history and just enjoyed some family time together. Here is a sampling of your spring break travels:

Shelley Bianca reported, "We have a lot of trips coming up in the next few weeks, so we chose to stick around Quantico for spring break. Local shopping, ice cream at JoJo's and working on a science fair project occupied our time. The highlight of our week though would have to be the Easter Egg Hunt we participated in on Easter Sunday. It was a beautiful day to spend with family."

Returning from a trip, Vicki Burrow said, "Our family headed south for warmer weather and family fun during spring break. We spent three days in Naples, Fla., visiting my mom, swimming, making sand castles on the beautiful white beaches and relaxing. We then headed to Universal Studios Theme Park and the new Harry Potter area for two days. Johnny took his annual roller coaster ride with me, climbing on the Dueling Dragons ride, against my protests, and spent the rest of the day in 'quiet thought.' We all had a nice week together."

One family took spring break stateside and overseas. "The Smerchansky family divided at spring break this year for the first time," wrote Mr. James Smerchansky. "My wife, Loretta, and our son, Luke, visited with a family in Aachen, Germany, as part of a student exchange program. Our daughter, Madeline, went with the Yorktown High School crew team to rowing camp in South Carolina for six days of intensive rowing practice. Our son, Jake, and I were left to hold down the fort at home. We got in some bike riding, movie watching and good father-son time."

Meanwhile, I definitely want to read some of the books you read and recommended since last month. Keep reading, enjoying and sharing books with each other throughout the year. So many life lessons can be learned from the wonderful books we read. Here are some of your books with their ratings:

Book Rating Scale:

- 1 - Do not read
- 2 - Just OK
- 3 - Pretty good
- 4 - Excellent
- 5 - Life changing

From Toni Stinson:

"The Help" by Kathryn Stockett
Rating: 4

"One Good Dog" by Susan Wilson
Rating: 4

From Jeanne Bergerud:

“Unbroken” by Laura Hillenbrand (World War II prisoner of war survivor)
Rating: 4

“The Paris Wife” by Paula McClain (about Ernest Hemingway's first wife)
Rating: 3-4

From Traci Kelley:

“Water for Elephants” by Sara Gruen
Rating: 3

“Still Alice” by Lisa Genova
Rating: 4

“Skipping a Beat” by Sarah Pekkanen
Rating: 4

“The Secret Lives of Dresses” by Erin McKean
Rating: 3

“Brute” by Robert Coram
Rating: 4

I don't know if you have heard yet, but we have a new Sergeant Major at our Command, and he is fantastic. His name is Sergeant Major James Dalgarn. He and his wife, Christine, and their four children are a part of our Command family now. We want to warmly welcome them to Marine Corps Systems Command and Program Executive Officer Land Systems. Be sure to say hello if you see them around the Command or at an event.

We have a Spouses' Teambuilding Luncheon on May 10 at The Clubs at Quantico. Sergeant Major Dalgarn will kick off the event at 11 a.m. Come meet and talk with him as well as other spouses while enjoying some teambuilding activities and good food. The cost is \$10.50 per adult. Be sure to wear comfortable clothing because our event includes some fun activities on the floor.

Lastly, don't forget to put June 28 on your calendars. This is our annual Family Fun Day. It was a blast last year, and we have even more new things to do and see this year. We're adding an Open House section that will offer new displays and demonstrations for your family to enjoy. Grab some sunscreen and come out to enjoy the fun. I look forward to seeing you there and at all the upcoming spring and summer events.

Sincerely,

Traci Kelley

Marine Corps Community Services events at Quantico

Summer is fast approaching and so are the summer recreational events on Marine Corps Base Quantico.

Lunga Park, the best kept secret on Quantico, is gearing up for the summer fun. Check out their extended Memorial Day hours and Kids Cane Pole Fishing for a great day of family fun.

<http://www.quantico.usmc-mccs.org/Lunga/PDF/Lunga-KidsCanePoleFishing.pdf>

<http://www.quantico.usmc-mccs.org/Lunga/PDF/Lunga-MemorialDay.pdf>

Join Lauren King, Health Promotions Dietitian, for an informative class, “Portion Size Me,” and see how you are doing.

<http://www.quantico.usmc-mccs.org/HealthPromotion/PDF/SFWHATSSOBIGABOUTPORTIONSIZES.pdf>

Need a book for a Father's Day or graduation gift? Former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld will be at the Marine Corps Exchange for a book signing at 11 a.m. May 10.

<http://www.quantico.usmc-mccs.org/MCX/pdf/MCXDonaldRumsfeld.pdf>

Girls Night Out for girls ages 6-12.

Lanie learns to enjoy nature in her own back yard and so can you as the girls plant flowers at the LINKS House.

<http://www.quantico.usmc-mccs.org/LINKS/PDF/MCFTB-LINKSforKids-GirlsNight.pdf>

Do deployments from 1940 differ from those of today? Join us and find out how Molly, her family and friends support her dad who is getting ready to deploy.

<http://www.quantico.usmc-mccs.org/LINKS/PDF/LINKSforKids-GirlsNight.pdf>

What does The Clubs at Quantico have going on this month? See their newsletter for all upcoming, delicious events.

<http://www.quantico.usmc-mccs.org/TCAQ/pdf/TCAQNewsletter.pdf>

Co-parenting can sometimes be a trying balancing act. Let the staff at Family Advocacy Program help you juggle the steps into a unformed event.

<http://www.quantico.usmc-mccs.org/FAP/PDF/FAP-CoParentingSeminar.pdf>

It's never too late to attend the Commander's Welcome Aboard and find out what you are missing on Quantico.

<http://www.quantico.usmc-mccs.org/RAP/PDF/WelcomeAboard.pdf>

Join Marine Corps Family Team Building for a fun-filled event and learn how important it is to take care of ourselves so we can take care of the family.

<http://www.quantico.usmc-mccs.org/MCFTB/PDF/MCFTB-TakingCareOfMe.pdf>

Join Family Employment for a day of career and empowerment as you work your way through the maze of job hunting.

<http://www.quantico.usmc-mccs.org/FMEAP/pdf/FMEAP-CareerDay.pdf>

Check out the monthly calendars for health promotions, the New Parent Support Group and Base Library.

<http://www.quantico.usmc-mccs.org/HealthPromotion/PDF/SFHealthPromCalendar.pdf>

<http://www.quantico.usmc-mccs.org/NPSP/pdf/NPSPCalendar-May.pdf>

<http://www.quantico.usmc-mccs.org/Library/pdf/LibraryCalendar.pdf>

Don't forget about the Military Spouse Appreciation Bunco on Thursday and Family Health and Fitness Fair on Saturday.

<http://www.quantico.usmc-mccs.org/pdf/BuncoMilitarySpouseAppreciation.pdf>

Family news from the Defense Department

Click on headlines below for full stories.

[DOD, USDA announce family support partnership](#)

The Defense and Agriculture departments formally recognized a 25-year working relationship yesterday as well as a budding partnership aimed at improving military families' lives. Robert L. Gordon III, deputy assistant secretary of defense for military community and policy, and Cathie E. Woteki, USDA's chief scientist and undersecretary for research, education and economics, signed a proclamation in recognition of the DOD and USDA Extension-Military Partnership during the opening session of their joint 2011 Family Resilience Conference.

[Chaplains discuss spirituality, resilience](#)

I had the opportunity to talk with two military chaplains following their panel on "Connecting Spirituality and Family Resiliency" at the 2011 Family Resilience Conference in Chicago. In this [video](#), Army Maj. Quentin Collins of the National Guard and Navy Capt. Jack Lea discuss the importance of spirituality to a person's overall well-being and the positive impact it can have on a family's resilience.

[Gordon cites need for family support](#)

I attended the opening session of the 2011 Family Resilience Conference along with about 2,000 military and civilian family-support professionals from around the world. In his opening remarks, Robert L. Gordon III, deputy assistant secretary of defense for military community and family policy, emphasized the importance of collaborative efforts when

working to improve military families' lives. He also expressed confidence that the conference attendees can make inroads in those support efforts.

First Lady aims to improve military families' lives

First Lady Michelle Obama stood tall behind a podium in the White House's East Room, her husband close at hand, as she addressed a packed audience of high-ranking military and government officials. Although it was a high-powered crowd, the first lady wasn't there for the officials or for the star-studded brass. She was there to speak for military families.

Mom talks about changes, challenges

Army reservist Amy McLaughlin had a lot to handle over the course of one year. She and her husband separated, she had to move her family across country, and her son was diagnosed with Asperger's syndrome, an autism spectrum disorder. Fortunately, she said, her children have one of the traits so common among military kids: resilience.

Show seeks families for home makeover

The producers of ABC's "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" are seeking people involved in the military whose home deserves an extreme makeover. The producers are looking for people with "amazing strength of character and who put their own needs aside to help others," a press release said. "Whether it's a soldier, a mom, a teacher or a fireman, we think deserving families are families who inspire those around them."

First Lady, Dr. Biden kick off Sesame Street, USO Tour

First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden, hosted the concert-style event to thank military families as well as to encourage community members to support and honor them as part of the White House's Joining Forces family support initiative. The event also helped to kick off a new installment of the [Sesame Street and USO Experience for Military Families](#), a free traveling tour exclusively for military families.

'Military Kid of Year' has leadership qualities

For a 10-year-old boy, Tristan Fissette has fortitude to spare. The son of Chief Petty Officer Patrick Fissette, a Navy reservist, the fourth-grader is working on his second-degree black belt in karate and has no shortage of other activities that keep him busy, especially when his dad is deployed. Despite the demands of his karate training, he finds time to help feed the hungry and to mentor new students in karate and in school.

Organization honors service members' children

"Our Military Kids," a national nonprofit organization, honored four children and a military family here yesterday in an award ceremony at the Navy Memorial. During the organization's "Our Military Kids of the Year" event, retired Marine Corps Gen. Peter Pace -- 16th chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Our Military Kids advisory board member -- spoke on the importance of the families service members leave behind when they deploy, especially the children of those families.

First Lady, Dr. Biden urge military family support

Joined by a few famous friends, First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden, stopped by a packed auditorium to thank troops and their families for their service and to encourage community members to "join forces" in support of military families. The concert-style event, featuring performances by singer Nick Jonas and a host of Sesame Street Muppets, was the final stop of Obama and Biden's whirlwind, two-day tour around the nation to kick off the "Joining Forces" military family support campaign.

Department program works to prevent child abuse

Child abuse and neglect can affect all levels of society, but for military families, help and support are at their fingertips. The military's strong sense of community gives service members and their families an advantage in preventing abuse and neglect, said Tib Campise, a senior program analyst for the Defense Department's family advocacy program.

Fisher House helps service members' children

Military children of service members who died or who were seriously disabled in the line of duty might be eligible for a college education through the Fisher House Foundation. Foundation chairman Kenneth Fisher says the Heroes' Legacy scholarships can be used by students to attend school in the fall. The application process is under way and open to the children of all branches of the military.

Mrs. Mullen spotlights family issues in new blog

Building resilience and providing long-term support are keys to strengthening military families and better equipping them to weather the frequent, multiple deployments so prevalent in this decade of war, the wife of the nation's top military officer said.