



**March 2012**

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

Dear Families:

I hope you had a chance to attend last month's Contract's Game Show event at Little Hall. The questions were hard, but the contestants did a fantastic job. We had a blast and it was a wonderful educational opportunity. Thank you to Contracts for hosting this fabulous event and to everyone else who coordinated, emceed, volunteered, baked, participated or just showed up to support. You made it a great afternoon. Now I KNOW I'm not smarter than a Contracting Officer!

I know this winter has been very mild, but I'm already looking forward to the first day of spring. There's nothing better than the warmth of the sun and the smell of spring flowers. It's a great time to get some outdoor exercise. Try some walking each week and see how much better you feel. It's a good way to relax and do some of your best thinking. Here's a link to a YouTube video that was shared with me, and I want to share it with you. It explains the value and benefits of walking. It's really simple, yet motivational: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aUalnS6HIGo&feature=youtube\\_gdata\\_player](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aUalnS6HIGo&feature=youtube_gdata_player)

Did you know sea turtles begin their nesting period in Florida this month, too? I was fortunate enough to see this a couple of years ago while living there. We took our kids to the beach on a night with a full moon (no flashlights allowed in nesting areas). We waited patiently for a mother turtle to emerge from the quiet ocean and slowly drag herself over the sand to find a place to dig a hole to lay her eggs. It was an amazing sight and an evening we won't ever forget. Talk about perseverance. That mother turtle takes hours to dig a hole, lay her eggs and return to the sea. She also lays her eggs at the same beach each year. I'm glad we took time to watch this miracle of nature. Sometimes we hurry in life and miss so many opportunities. Enjoy each moment.

March is also filled with some fun mischief. We have pesky little leprechauns that visit our house each March. My kids enjoy building traps to catch one, even though they never do. Gold coins are used as a lure, but no luck yet. These crafty leprechauns turn our milk green, sprinkle green "magic" dust everywhere, topple our traps and leave cryptic Gaelic notes. We write them back (thanks to Google) in Gaelic. We enjoy this family tradition and hope you are enjoying some of your own, too. Life is a collection of stories made often from these very same traditions.

So let's exercise, work and play hard, and enjoy each day. Life is a gift. Don't squander or take it for granted. Appreciate and love those around you. Find some of your "untapped goodness" (words from our Commandant) and share it with others.

One person who does this well is Katie Ruskin. Thank you, Katie, for the wonderful candy bags you made last month for our veterans. Your candy bags and the many "Valentines for Veterans" cards written by our families and Fredericksburg school children showed our veterans how much we care. It felt good delivering your kind words and candy. Thank you for caring and doing something to show it. Don't ever forget. Little things DO count. What you do matters.

Catch those leprechauns!

Traci Kelley

# From the desk of the Family Readiness Officer

By Gerard "Mac" McManus

You have heard it said, "March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb." Well, if close to 70 degrees on March 1 is what a lion looks like, I can hardly wait to see the lamb.

When it comes to springtime I am both an optimist and a pessimist. The optimist in me believes we've turned the corner from winter and only blue skies, sunshine and daffodils await us. The pessimist in me says that since we've had such a mild winter and spring doesn't officially start until March 21, there is still plenty of time for Mother Nature to make up for lost time and hit us with one doozy of a snow storm! I suppose time will tell which side of me is right. In the meantime, enjoy the beautiful weather and remember that spring really is just a couple of weeks away.

MCSC reached yet another milestone Feb. 14. On this date Families On Point sponsored the Command's first-ever game show. Hosted by the folks in Contracts, members of the Command and their families were invited to Little Hall to attend and participate in three versions of popular TV game shows: "Are you smarter than a Contracting Intern?" "Acquisition Price is Right" and "Who Wants to be a Contracting Officer?"

This was the second in a series of events to highlight different groups around the Command in order to educate and inform the rest of the members of MCSC about what each group does, how they do it and to exhibit some of their hardware. Hats off to Contracts for putting on such a fun and informative event; they gave us an opportunity to learn something new about a part of MCSC in an enjoyable way. Next up: Acquisition, Logistics and Product Support (ALPS). Stay tuned for further details.

Looking ahead, we have events already planned while others are in the works in various stages. Our annual Family Fun Day is scheduled for June 21 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Most schools will have already been released for summer vacation and it is still before the Fourth of July, so we anticipate a very nice turn out. Throughout the summer I intend to set up at least two Friday evenings where we will have the barbeque set up and invite families to come on out, bring your own burgers and play some family softball. Again, these are just opportunities for families to come together and members to mingle outside of the office environment while having some burgers and fun. Rooms at the Clubs At Quantico already have been reserved for Dec. 18 for our annual Christmas and Holiday Social. So, save the date.

There's lots going on, lots to be involved in. Come on out and enjoy the fun and make new friends.

## Women's History Month hails education, empowerment

March is dedicated to celebrating women's history and the contributions of women to the United States. This year's theme is "Women's Education-Women's Empowerment."

March 8 marks the 101st anniversary of International Women's Day. Originating in Europe, America has turned one day of observance into an entire month celebrating the accomplishments of women.

The response was overwhelmingly positive. The occasion soon gained enough momentum to obtain national recognition from Congress, which passed a resolution to annually observe Women's History Month. The purpose of Women's History Month for the Marine Corps is to increase awareness and knowledge of women's contributions to society and the Corps. During the 1970's, schools began hosting "Women's Week" to coincide with International Women's Day.

"Education is paramount because it aids in the professional development of all and is a key component for success. By educating Marines, we empower them and arm them with advantages both on and off the battlefield," said M.F. Applegate, Director, Marine Corps Manpower Plans and Policy Division.

Today, more than 13,000 female Marines serve on active duty, and more than 5,000 female Marines serve in the Marine Corps Reserve. They are deployed around the globe and continue to make history in female engagement teams in Afghanistan.

"Women in the Corps have continued to answer the call to serve and protect our Nation," Applegate said. "As opportunities to serve have increased, each subsequent generation of female Marines has stepped up to the challenge and paved new roads for future generations. Since the first woman donned a Marine Corps uniform, female Marines have enriched our Corps' history and enhanced our combat capability."

## **[Special Report: Women's History Month](#)**

The latest American Forces Press Service special report focuses on Women's History Month.

## **Officers' spouses' auction reaps 'Dollars for Scholars'**

MCSC donated a patriotic basket for the Quantico Officers' Spouses' Dollars for Scholars program auction in February. The basket (see attached photo) had a red, white and blue patriotic theme. "Thank you to all who donated items for the basket," said Traci Kelley, the MCSC Commander's spouse. "It was a really fun night, and our military high-school seniors who receive the scholarships will greatly benefit. The money raised is still being tallied, but it was a good amount."

## **National Military Family Association newsletters**

Click on the links to read the latest electronic newsletters for [Military Family Topics](#), [The Voice for Military Families](#), the [Monthly Bulletin](#) and [Spouse Club eNews](#), all published by the National Military Family Association.

## **[First Lady urges governors to aid spouse employment](#)**

First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden, urged the nation's governors to remove employment barriers for military spouses with professional licenses.

## **[Military families can apply for new home](#)**

More than 100 wounded warriors and military and veteran families will be the recipients of a new home this year, thanks to the generosity of a nonprofit organization and one of the nation's largest banks.

## **[NBC show seeks military 'unsung heroes'](#)**

A new NBC show that rewards selfless people for their good deeds is seeking service members, veterans and their families to spotlight in upcoming episodes.

## **[Leaders aim to ease spouse employment woes](#)**

Army spouse Ann Wells has firsthand experience with one of the most pressing employment challenges for military spouses: obtaining an occupational license after a move.

## **[Budget request backs military families](#)**

From education and employment to program cuts and reductions, President Barack Obama's fiscal 2013 budget proposal has been dominating the headlines.

## **[First Lady lauds DOD's new nutrition campaign](#)**

The Defense Department's new obesity and nutrition awareness campaign sets a powerful example for the rest of the nation, First Lady Michelle Obama said.

## **[New campaign aims to improve troops, families' health](#)**

The Defense Department has launched a "groundbreaking" obesity and nutrition awareness campaign aimed at improving the health and well-being of troops, retirees and their families, DOD's top health affairs official announced.

## **Are you ready for a pet?**

Pet overpopulation is a sad reality in the United States. Up to 7 million animals enter U.S. shelters every year, according to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

## **Technology brings family closer together**

Service members and their families often miss important moments in each other's lives during deployments, but technology such as video chat makes it possible to share some of those special moments, even when they can't be together physically.

## **Compact eases school transitions for military children**

Another state has joined an interstate agreement to ease school transitions for children from military families, bringing the overall tally of member states to 40, a Defense Department official announced.

## **New special report focuses on military family support**

A new American Forces Press Service special report that focuses on support for military families is available.

## **First Lady, Dr. Biden laud community challenge finalists**

Noting their contributions to military families' lives, First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden, announced the 20 finalists who will compete for top honors in the Joining Forces Community Challenge.

## **Gold Star wife grateful for White House tribute**

President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama hosted a "solemn tribute" to Iraq war veterans -- including those who made the ultimate sacrifice -- with a dinner at the White House. Among the star-studded generals and troops in formal uniforms was Kim Felts, the only Gold Star wife at the event.

## **NBC show seeks military reunion stories**

A new NBC show that rewards selfless people for their good deeds is seeking redeploying service members to spotlight in upcoming episodes.

## **Mrs. Dempsey urges spouses to share 'amazing' stories**

Military spouses have amazing stories that all Americans need to hear, the wife of the nation's top military officer said.