

Young Marines

ESPRIT



Accomplishments

- Red Ribbon Week
- Pearl Harbor Parade
- Veterans week
- Toys for Tots

ESPRIT Volume 1 • 2014

By Young Marines



For Young Marines



Young Marines concluded a busy and eventful year by participating in Red Ribbon Week activities, Veterans' Week, and honoring the Anniversary of the attacks on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, as well as performing service in their communities nationwide. Their stories fill this issue... Enjoy!



CLARIFICATION: An article published in Volume 4 of Esprit, Leadership Wisdom from a Leadership Descent, was inaccurately credited to a Tornado Alley (KS) registered adult. The credit should be given to Zoe Jackson, a Young Marine from the Colorado unit who also attended the event. We regret this error.



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National Young Marine of the Year

YM SgtMaj Dakota Richter

• From our National Director

Reviewing Our Mission, Our Work, and a Remarkable Past Year



We wrapped up the calendar year with a wide variety of activities that kept us busy throughout the quarter. The centerpiece of our organization is our work in educating our members and our communities on the perils of uncontrolled and unauthorized drug use. Our mantra is to maintain a healthy, drug-free lifestyle. We understand that and we get it, but we have a mission to ensure that those who live with us in our communities understand that message as well, and by all accounts, you really stepped up and made that message loud and clear through your efforts during Red Ribbon week. Congratulations and thank you for spreading the word.

A secondary role, one that we have assumed over the course of time, is our work with and for veterans. While we like to think that Veterans Day is every day, we tend to lean more heavily on those occasions that allow us the chance to interact with those who actually made history. The Navajo Code Talkers immediately come to mind along with the Iwo Jima Veterans and those who experienced the first days of our entry into World War II at Pearl Harbor. This past quarter we enjoyed a few sunny days in Hawaii, but more importantly was that we paid homage to those who gave everything on December 7th, 1941. The wreath laying at the National Cemetery of the Pacific and the parade through downtown Honolulu were truly an experience that I think most will remember for a long time. And pay close attention for the trip next year as we will offer a few amenities that we have not offered before.



The point to this is that we are making a few changes to the magazine that we hope you will like. The first thing is that our brand will become more apparent. But the second thing is that we are discontinuing the idea of having themes. We have so many activities taking place each and every quarter that we felt as though we did not want to limit you to a specific subject. So, for example, if it's June and you did some special for Flag Day, then tell us about it. On the other hand, if it's May and you participated in Memorial Day events, tell us about those. Finally, we intend to turn the magazine around in a more timely manner so that you receive it sooner... and this means we will have to work harder to meet our printing deadlines. We are interested in what your thoughts are, so please don't hesitate to let us know.

Semper fi,

Mike Kessler



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and our national homepage www.youngmarines.com

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• A Young Marine SgtMaj Who's Also a Colonel

Governor of Kentucky Bestows Honor to YMOY SgtMaj Dakota Richter

Question: Can a person be a YMSgtMaj and a Colonel at the same time?
Answer: Yes, if you're Dakota Richter, 17, of Crestview Hills, Kentucky.

Last May, YM SgtMaj Richter was named the National Young Marine of the Year, and on Oct. 14, 2013, she was named a Colonel in the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels, at a ceremony held in Hebron, KY.

The Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels does not appoint or commission Kentucky Colonels; rather, the appointments are made by the sitting Governor of the Commonwealth, and only the Governor knows the reason for bestowing the honor of a Colonel's Commission on any particular individual.

"Each time I have the pleasure of bestowing a membership to this exceptional organization on an individual," said a recent Kentucky Governor, "the great tradition established by Kentucky's first governor, Isaac Shelby, lives on. The name Kentucky Colonel has become synonymous with strength of character, leadership and dedication to the welfare of others."

Some famous Colonels include Ashley Judd, Wayne Gretzky, Ronald Reagan, Bob Hope, Bill Clinton, Betty White, Marie Osmond, Mario Andretti, Norman Schwarzkopf, Omar Bradley, Roy Rogers, Shirley Temple Black, Winston Churchill and of course, Colonel Harlan Sanders, founder of Kentucky Fried Chicken.

"It's an absolute honor to be in such company," Richter said. "Certainly Kentucky Colonel is a title I'd never thought I'd hold at 17. As most who meet me



know, I'm very passionate about my state, and it's remarkable to be recognized in such a unique, historical way."

A Kentucky Colonel is unwavering in his or her devotion to faith, family, fellow man and country; passionate about being compassionate; proud, yet humble; a leader who is not ashamed to follow; and gentle but strong in will and commitment.

Richter has such qualities in spades. She has worked very hard and with great dedication, and she's had a stellar trajectory with the Young Marines. She joined when she was 11 years old, and currently, she is in her final year as a member of the Northern Kentucky unit.

Last May, she received the Young Marines' highest honor: National Young Marine of the Year.

In addition, she has earned 42 ribbon awards with the Young Marines program as well as the Distinguished Order of Merit, the DEA device for her Drug Demand Reduction ribbon, two nationally-

awarded Personal Achievement awards, Recruit Honor Graduate, Advanced Leadership School Honor Graduate and multiple Perfect PFT awards. Richter has earned the Presidential Volunteer Service Award (gold) and was named an honorary U.S. Marine Rider.

"YM SgtMaj Richter is the personification of all that is good about the Young Marines," said Michael Kessler, national executive director and CEO of the Young Marines. "She has demonstrated leadership, judgment and initiative, and she has been superb as our national representative. Her passion as a mentor for the kids in the program really shines through."

As National Young Marine of the Year, Richter is traveling throughout the country representing the Young Marines, and she is a positive role model for the 10,000 youth members of the Young Marines.

"My Young Marines retirement will certainly be a bittersweet day, after all that the program has blessed me with," Richter said. "It comforts me to know that, similar to my mentors, I'll be able to give back to the program as an Adult Leader in future years."

Richter is on the varsity swim team at Dixie Heights High School in Ft. Mitchell, KY, where she is a senior. One of her goals was realized recently when she heard she has been accepted to the Coast Guard Academy. Another goal is to publish a bestselling novel.

"I am very proud of Dakota's acceptance into the Coast Guard Academy, though not at all surprised, Kessler said. "Next up, a best seller - another goal that I am confident will be accomplished."



National Young Marine Of the Year SgtMaj Dakota Richter with Mr. Hendricks and Mr. Huff, two of her most inspiring mentors, at the 2013 National Leadership Academy.

Closing the gate on Drugs

Creating a Solid Foundation for our Efforts

**By Joseph Lusignan
Drug Demand Reduction
Resource Officer
Young Marine National Headquarters**

Creating a solid foundation. Regardless of the painted walls, the pretty doors, the decorated windows, the flowers planted out front, every building that is made to last, that is made to make a difference, that is made protect...must have a solid foundation.

And often, though something be more ornate, it's not necessarily as strong... and if you're going to build higher floors, the bottom better be sturdy. Such is the efforts of leading a positive drug free lifestyle in the Young Marines.

Recently, I saw a picture on Facebook of a very sharp-looking Young Marine, about 12 years old or so, with a chest full of ribbons. It was a picture of him giving a presentation during Red Ribbon Week. But, when I looked at the poster that he was teaching from, it showed pictures of the drug Krokodil, a drug that is known for eating the flesh of the user. While this might have been an interesting presenta-

tion, and one that captured attention because of the "gross factor," in truth, there have only been less than half a dozen cases of its use (that we know of) in the United States.

How many of our youth need to REALLY worry about Krokodil, when most of them will be tempted by the Gateway drugs on a daily basis? Gateway drugs (tobacco, alcohol, inhalants, marijuana and prescription drugs) are the drugs that entice our youth down a dangerous and unhealthy path and are readily available in our schools, our neighborhoods...and even in our homes. After more than twenty years as a law enforcement officer, I've NEVER met a drug abuser that didn't start with one or more of those five.

In order to be successful, our drug demand reduction efforts need to consolidate and focus on what will truly make a difference in our country. For the last two years, Young Marine units teach the Project Alert curriculum. Does it cover every drug that is available worldwide? No, but it builds the tools to be able to say no to WHATEVER drug is presented or offered.

It also has a leadership component where older Young Marines can be certified as instructors and teach younger Young Marines. By utilizing this curriculum, we satisfy the mandated drug demand reduction hours that every Young Marine must meet, as well as standardize the training that we offer our Young Marines nationwide. Not teaching it yet? Go to www.projectalert.com and get started now.

In the next several months, you are going to see the Young Marines step up even more with our drug demand reduction efforts and make new products and information available to all of our units. While we know that units are involved in many types of activities, there are ways to carry our drug-free message outside of the classroom and into our everyday lives and activities.

When we are successful at this, and have spread that message and that motivation outside of our Young Marines program... then we will truly be making a difference in our nation.

Starting the Conversation

**By Aimee M. Fagan, Adult Volunteer
Blackstone Valley (MA)**

Blackstone Valley Young Marines took the Red Ribbon Week Message out into the community and spoke to kids, parents and grandparents about the importance of living a drug-free lifestyle and remembering the late DEA Agent Enrique Camarena and his sacrifice in the line of duty.

The Young Marines spoke to many people at a local flag football event that was attended by more than 300 participants, and during that time, they had the opportunity to speak to both the youths and their parents.

It started the conversation in many of the families who stopped and heard the Red Ribbon Week Message.

A YM Parent Writes...

My daughter, YM LCpl Laree Osteen of the Orlando (FL) Devil Dogs unit, accepted a Proclamation from our hometown mayor, Jim Gearhart, along with all of city council including eight surrounding cities. I was in awe as I watched her give a thank you speech for their support of our program and the hard work everyone does for to

just say no.

Many thanks to the leadership of the Young Marines program for giving her the support and courage to step out of her comfort zone and accomplish so much.

**Sally Osteen,
Proud parent and Adult Staff**



Red Ribbon Week: A Quick Look

WHAT: An alcohol, tobacco and other drug and violence prevention awareness campaign.

WHEN: Red Ribbon Week is observed annually in October, in memory of slain DEA Agent Enrique "Kiki" Camarena. The red ribbon became a symbol for efforts to reduce the demand of illegal drugs.

Read more at www.redribbon.org

RED RIBBON WEEK

A Red Ribbon Week Photo Gallery



Westover Young Marines were present at the Chicopee, MA Police Safety Complex for their annual expired medication/drug turn-in; expired medications are turned in to the Drug Enforcement Agency for proper disposal. Young Marines helped with crowd control and distributed red ribbons and information about Red Ribbon Week, and later were presented with a Proclamation from Chicopee Mayor Michael D. Bisonnette, as well as a Letter of Appreciation from the State Attorney General Martha Coakley for their Red Ribbon Week efforts.

-- Submitted by Edward Mitrook



Senator Richard T. Moore of the Massachusetts State Senate delivers a Senate resolution to the Blackstone Valley Young Marines in support of Red Ribbon Week.

-- Submitted by Gary Eldredge



The Orleans Parish Sheriff's Office Young Marines were invited to make a presentation to students at Gentilly Terrace Elementary School on October 28, 2013. The Young Marines spoke before a student body of approximately 450 Pre-K thru 6th graders.

Students are acquainted with Red Ribbon Week, and we explained how the Young Marines are involved.

-- Submitted by Alice B. Reed



Young Marines from the General Raymond G. Davis Metro Atlanta Young Marines met with Georgia's Governor, Nathan Deal, on September 10, 2013 to discuss Red Ribbon Week. Governor Deal presented the Young Marines with a Red Ribbon Week Proclamation.

--Submitted by YM MSgt Gage Bennett

Proud to be a part of Red Ribbon Week

By YM SSgt Nicholas Cozzens
Swansboro (NC)



Our presentation

Throughout Red Ribbon Week in 2013, the Swansboro Young Marines took part in several activities at local schools, including Swansboro Elementary, Middle and High Schools as well as Queens Creek Elementary.

I attended Queens Creek Elementary as well as Swansboro

Middle and High School so it gave me the opportunity to revisit them. I took part in presentations for third through fifth as well as sixth, and eighth grades.

While all of these presentations used the same format each time, one in particular stands out in my mind, the sixth graders at Swansboro Middle School.

Partly because of the fact that it was my biggest audience during Red Ribbon Week, but also because my former science teacher from the sixth grade said to me, "Nicholas, you've really grown up."

While her remark could definitely have been about my height, I knew it was about my level of responsibility even more so. After that presentation, she

had also told the group of Young Marines that I was with that I used to be very shy in the classroom. She was surprised and impressed at my public speaking ability.

I think this particular event and others are a very important part of the community services that Young Marines do to help people out.

Communities like Swansboro all across America, are the home to Young Marine units small and large, and are typically the units' source of resources.

In order to give back to our communities, we should be willing to do for others as they have done for us.

Westover: Encouragement from the Mayor

By YM Pvt Mariclaire Smith
Westover (MA)

The Westover Young Marines celebrated Red Ribbon Week this year with Mayor Domenic J. Sarno of Springfield, Massachusetts on October 23, 2013. The Westover Young Marines were notified that Mayor Sarno wanted to acknowledge them by recognizing their efforts in the annual Red Ribbon anti-drug campaign held in honor of DEA agent Enrique "Kiki" Camarena. The Westover Young Marines received an invitation to Mayor Sarno's office at Springfield City Hall after school to accept a Red Ribbon Week Proclamation from the City of Springfield in Massachusetts.

Both the Westover Young Marines and their parents were greeted warmly by Mayor Sarno.

Westover Young Marines Bass, Espinoza, Rodriguez and Smith joined Mayor Sarno in a discussion about the origin of Red Ribbon Week, the continuing efforts to seek justice for Enrique Camarena, and



Springfield Mayor Sarno assists Westover Young Marines in observing Red Ribbon Week

the importance of keeping his loss in the forefront of our memories while living a drug-free life.

The Westover Young Marines gave a Red Ribbon and matching wristband to Mr. Sarno after being presented with the Proclamation. The most inspirational moment of the visit was Mayor Sarno's recognition of the commitment each Young Marine makes at a time so challenging for today's youth.

After each Young Marine took turns sitting in the Mayor's chair and posed for a photo with him, a remarkable exchange took place. Hoping to inspire them, the Mayor reassured them that they are on the right path and are an influential example to all. Everyone in the room was touched by the positive mood, the good news and a very genuine connection made that afternoon while remembering Enrique Camarena.

Doing Something Good

By YM Pvt Danielle Stokes
Capital City (NC)

I had an amazing time passing out the Red Ribbon Week materials we were furnished (flyers, red ribbons, rubber bracelets, slap bracelets, drug awareness brochures).

I passed the materials out to all my friends, teachers and my bus driver. Out of my entire class I was the only one who even thought about Red Rib-

bon Week. The students that I gave the items to were very excited, I told them what the sayings meant, such as "A drug free me is a happy me". I spoke with my teachers and they also said I was doing something good. It felt good, but I feel like I could have done more. All the people I gave things to wear the bracelets and still talk about the books and things and I cannot wait until next year's Red Ribbon Week.



Two Presentations to Young Audiences

By YM Cpl. Mark McCloskey
Chandler Mustangs (AZ)

October was fast approaching and my Unit Commander kept asking me about doing a Drug Demand Reduction presentation for Red Ribbon Week. A thought came to my mind to try and do a presentation at my church. I met with my Pastor. I asked him if I could do a presentation for the Sunday School group called Kid-Zone. KidZone is for preschoolers thru 6th grade. I told him I would focus on the dangers of smoking. He thought giving a presentation to the elementary age kids would be a great thing.

I also decided to speak to one of the Children's Ministry Leaders to make sure that she was okay with my idea. She liked the idea of my doing a presentation, but thought it would only be appropriate for

the older kids, 4th thru 6th grade, which was the age I was thinking of.

I did my presentation and it went well. Even I learned all the different body organs affected by smoking. It's not just the lungs that are affected, many other organs are involved, also.

I also asked my Youth Pastor if I could present a class about the dangers of smoking to our Youth Group. He thought it was a great idea.

So, that Sunday was a busy day for me, with a KidZone presentation in the morning and a Youth Group presentation in the evening.

I was a little nervous at the beginning of my presentation, but I think it's important that these kids know what smoking can do to you and your body, so they'll never start.

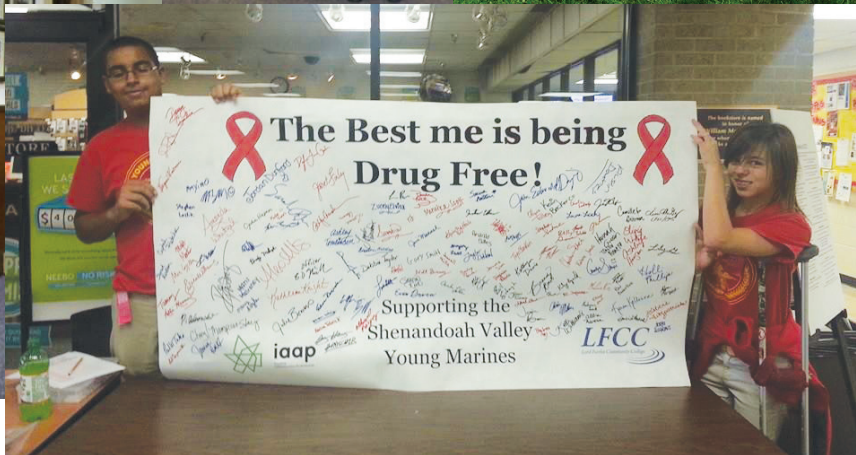
We recently received this note regarding Cpl McCloskey's presentation:

I was thrilled when YM Cpl Mark McCloskey asked my permission to do his Drug Demand Reductipon presentation at our church. I was happy that he thought of us and that he believed his message of living a drug-free lifestyle was important enough to tell everyone around him, even those in his church. He did a great job representing the Young Marines, and we were proud to have him speak.

Dr. Jim Poit
Senior Pastor,
New Hope Comunnity Church,
Gilbert, AZ

Hitting the Road for Red Ribbon Week

The Shenandoah Valley Young Marines spread out over 3 states and made appearances at City Council meetings, community events and did presentations in their own schools to commemorate Red Ribbon Week. Here are some highlight pictures. - Submitted by Gwynn Harrison



An Opportunity to Spread the Word

By YM GySgt Dylan Strong
Natchaug River (CT)

I am always excited to participate in Drug Demand Reduction work not only because I learn more about Red Ribbon Week myself, but also because I enjoy the opportunity to spread the word about it, why we have it, and what it's for.

I enjoy teaching other people in our area the reasons on why it is important not to abuse drugs or alcohol. I would like to receive the Drug Enforcement Agency

device since (in my opinion) it's a more prestigious device to have.

I would also like to earn the DEA streamer for my unit so we can put it on our guidon.

My unit started off this event when my Unit Commander and I went to receive a Proclamation at a town meeting, on October 8th.

It was quite an experience because I have never been to a town meeting or received a Proclamation before. The Proc-

lamation we received cited the work our unit is doing fighting illicit drugs and Red Ribbon Week was recognized as a town-wide event.

We spoke to multiple football teams, and went into the schools during the day to teach the students about Red Ribbon Week and Drug Demand Reduction. I personally enjoy these events and having the opportunity to share my knowledge.



The Shenandoah Valley Young Marines partnered with Italian Delight Pizza in Stephens City and Italian Touch in Middletown and Winchester by offering the Red Ribbon pizza during Red Ribbon week to raise community awareness.



Following color guard for Red Ribbon Week at the Pentagon, Shenandoah Valley Young Marines pose with David Mineta, Deputy Director of Demand Reduction Office, and Jessica Wright, Acting Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel & Readiness.

He Drew A Poster for Red Ribbon Week

By YM PVT Noah Esper
Col Wesley Fox (VA)

I entered the Red Ribbon Week photo contest through the National Family Partnership. I drew a poster of a red bridge connecting two places.

Over the bridge is asked the question, "Which is better?" To one side of the bridge is a storm over a cemetery and to the other side of the bridge is a beautiful tent site.

The official Red Ribbon for Red Ribbon Week ties these two places together under the bridge. The theme this year is "A Healthy Me Is Drug Free!"

I am wearing my Young Marines t-shirt in the photo. I have asked my school to vote for me and I know my Young Marines friends are voting for me (it's great to have friends like Young Marines).



Noah Esper created this thoughtful Red Ribbon Week poster.

...And We Designed Our Red Ribbon Week Shirts

Our Young Marines were provided white T-shirts and asked to draw a design for Red Ribbon Week. YM Sgts Ellie Trahern, Mollie Corino and PFC Gabrielle Ridenhour showed their artistic talents, and everyone was a winner.

Tony Guilory,
Rogue Valley (OR)

A Look Back at Battlefield's *Adventurous* Year

By Battlefield (VA)
Young Marines

Battlefield Young Marines have had quite an amazing and adventurous year. Thanks to Mr. Morehead, we had the opportunity to build a space capsule equipped with a weather balloon, GPS transmitter, four HD cameras, and Sour Patch Kids candy before sending the weather balloon 20 miles into the atmosphere.

We had to see if candy tasted any different after being 20 miles in space. We found it tasted the same (and we didn't get sick). After launching the balloon from The Plains, VA and six tedious hours of searching, we were able to retrieve the project 20 miles west of Fredericksburg, VA in a wooded area (you can check out the weather balloon adventure along with other adventures on the Battlefield Young Marines YouTube channel).

Our unit also participated in several encampments with Shenandoah and Quantico units. We have assisted with the WWII Honor Flights at the WWII Memo-

rial in DC, assisted with veterans at the Sgt Reckless War Horse Hero Ceremony, the 60th Anniversary of the Korean War in DC, and the Molly Marine Dedication at The National Museum of the Marine Corps. We met veterans and celebrities while volunteering at the GI Film Festi-



val, and got really muddy participating in the Run-Amuck.

Our very own PVT Melendez, surrounded by our Young Marines in formation saluting the American flag, sang the National Anthem at the Potomac Nationals base-

ball stadium. We enjoyed the game and after the game we camped out on the outfield and watched fireworks and a movie on the jumbotron.

We had a terrific day at the Prince William County Police and Fire Training Facility. We got to experience the police road course, learned about police history, and explored the fire department's four-story training facility. Our favorite event was meeting a K-9 with his police officer and visiting their training facility.

Finally, Battlefield took to the skies with the EAA Chapter 1099 Young Eagles. We had the opportunity to take the controls while in flight and flew single-engine airplanes over the Fredericksburg, VA area.

Congratulations to all Battlefield Young Marines for completing their Drug Demand Reduction training for the year and for clocking more than 1300 community service hours. A number of our Young Marines have earned the Presidential Volunteer Service Award. We look forward to another great year.

A Family Goes the Distance for Young Marines

By Garry Patton,
Adult Volunteer
Upstate (SC)

When his son, Tyrique, expressed an interest in the armed forces, Daniel Green searched online to research different avenues to acquaint his son with the military way of life. Once Mr. Green discovered the core values of the Young Marines, he knew that he'd found the organization that he and his wife, Beverly, desired for their son's introduction.

"What really got my attention were the tenets of the Young Marine Creed," said Green recently at the Upstate Marine Ball held in Greenville, SC. "Obeying your parents, being neat and clean at all times... I'm a big believer in the importance of how you present yourself. My wife and I have always wanted our kids exposed to organizations that promote strong values. We've seen firsthand situations in which good people make poor choices when they become adults, and we want to do everything we can to prepare Tyrique to



Beverly, Tyrique and Daniel Green: A high level of commitment.

know how to deal with those situations. We like to think we're investing in his future."

What makes the Greens' investment in Tyrique's future unique is the level to which they've committed. Because Greenville has the closest Young Marine unit to their hometown of Orangeburg, South Carolina, they drive two hours one-way to attend drill. And it's not as if the Greens didn't already lead busy lives. In

addition to his commitment to the Young Marines, Tyrique plays baseball and football, performs in a jazz ensemble, and plays percussion in the marching band.

Both Daniel and Beverly Green serve as volunteer firefighters, and they donate time through his employer's partnership with the local school district, serving as mentors for at-risk students.

Despite their hectic schedules, the Greens don't regret the commute. "After we met and got to know SgtMaj James Roberts and realized how committed he was without even having a kid of his own in the program, we knew it said something special about him, and that we'd made the right decision. We've been super impressed with the involvement of not only SgtMaj Roberts, but of all the leaders and parents."

If they can ever take time from their busy agendas long enough to pause and reflect, the Greens might just realize the feeling is mutual.



Having fun at Encampments



Morning Chow.



Lapeer County Young Marines ready for Mission Scarecrow in full camo.



Bravo Team plotting their first course.

A Land Nav Encampment Assists Pvt. Scarecrow

My name is Kirk Meldrum and I am in the Lapeer County Young Marines. This weekend, we had an encampment. Upon arriving we picked up our gear and hiked one mile to our camp which was already set up except our tents which we had to set up. After that we ate and hit the racks. On Saturday, Mr. Ellsworth, one of our staff members had set up an exciting map & compass mission. We were split up into two teams, Alpha and Bravo. I was a member of the Alpha squad. First we plotted our course and found ourselves at a fork in the road. I saw a structure with a bell on it and an abandoned church beyond. This led us to PVT Scarecrow (a stuffed mannequin) and an envelope labeled TOP SECRET which directed us to take PVT

Scarecrow to the medical center because he had a broken leg. Sgt. Vascotto, our leader, made a temporary brace for his leg with a tree branch. We plotted our next course to find an air package of MRE's and had a small feast. The final task of the mission was to ambush Bravo Team. We stealthily approached our objective but we were surrounded! We dispersed in every direction but we did not have the ammo (water balls) that Bravo Team had and were overtaken. Overall it was an outstanding weekend and all of the staff members did a fantastic job.

PVT Kirk Meldrum
Lapeer County (MI) Young Marines



A Team Building Encampment

The Davidson County Young Marines participated in the 2nd Battalion Encampment at UNC's Charlotte Campus Venture Program. The encampment took place on September 27th through 29th. The weekend was filled with team building events. There were several challenge courses, low and high rope courses, trust fall and the wall.

On Saturday, we divided up into three groups of the challenge courses. In all of the events, we had to use everyone on the team. One of the challenges was to get water to a village that was stranded after an earthquake. We had to figure out how to build a pipeline with pipe that was cut in half. We had to walk on logs and not touch the ground

while holding the pipe together so we did not lose any water. Then we had to put the water in a bucket that had ropes tied to it and walk down two logs keeping the bucket level so we didn't spill the water. Everyone had to work together, pay attention to our leader and do our part to make it a success.

Saturday evening we had a drill competition, it was the first competition for most of our unit. We came in 2nd place. Our drill competition team was composed of Young Marines from three of the units present.

-- LCpl Anna Hurley
Davidson County (TN) Young Marines

Miami-Dade: Giving to Those Who Have Nothing

**By Sgt. Austin Gordillo
PFC Bruce W. Carter of Miami-Dade (FL)**

For 9 years, I have been a proud member of Operation Christmas Child, an organization that operates all year, run entirely by volunteers. This organization is a Christian, faith-based ministry.

We conduct events all year long to collect items to go into shoeboxes to be sent to orphaned children living in extreme poverty all over the world. In addition to being a member of Operation Christmas Child, I am very active in the Young Marines of Miami-Dade where I am a Corporal.



Both of these organizations motivate me to be thankful for all that I have, and all that has been given to me.

On Saturday, August 24, 2013, there was an event hosted by the Gordillo family called Surfing for Sandals. The purpose of this event is to collect as many sandals as possible in one day.

The Young Marines of Miami-Dade were in charge of running the event from set up to break down. The day consisted of collecting donated sandals. There were a variety of games for participants to play, and a sand-sculpting contest. I personally mentored the participants of the tug-

of-war contest, encouraging them to put all of their effort into this event, and remind them that win or lose, everyone is a winner because you participated.

The Young Marines of Miami-Dade also mentored the sand-sculpting contest, assisted in counting the donated sandals, and helped in all aspects of the days' events.

Being a member of both the Young Marines of Miami Dade and Operation Christmas Child is a very rewarding and humbling experience. Each activity I participate in is humbling and allows me the opportunity to remember who I am, a proud citizen of the United States of America and a very fortunate young man to be living in this country where I am free to be a part of organizations like these.



(Above): Just a few of the many pairs of sandals collected during the Surfing for Sandals event.

(Below): Young Marines assisted in conducting games, contests and organizational duties and activities throughout the day.



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The Program and Instructors Have Helped Me

By YM GySgt Dylan Strong
Natchaug River (CT)

I joined this program on October 17th, 2006, and ever since that day this program has impacted me in a very positive way. It has taught me respect, integrity, teamwork, leadership, why to stay away from drugs and more.

I've had travel opportunities and seen so much of the world that I never would have without the Young Marines program.

Through the program I've met a lot of good friends, both adults and kids, but there is one registered adult who has impacted me the most in the program, Natchaug River Unit Commander Joseph Couture.

He came on the drill deck as the training officer shortly after I became a Young

Marine and immediately started working closely with all of us. As the years progressed, he helped me as much as he could.

Whether it was working on the PFT with me so I could pass, helping me sign off on my guidebook, working towards my next rank, or even on a personal level. Within the last few years, he has taken over as the Unit Commander and I, along with other higher-ranking Young Marines and registered adults, help him run our unit.

I cannot express how much I appreciate having Unit Commander Couture to help me through the program. He has done such a great job and has impacted my journey in the Young Marine program so much that I am unable to express my gratitude in words.



Joseph Couture and Dylan Strong.

Over all, I'm glad I met this great man, happy I decided to join the program, and proud to call myself a Young Marine.

The Military Order of World Wars Conference

By YM LCpl. Alex Peterson
and YM Sgt Jonah Geligoff

Last June we traveled to Annapolis, MD to take part in the Military Order of World Wars Youth Leadership Conference (MOWW). We and two others from Kentucky represented the Young Marines.

We were separated into our selected teams depending on interests. Sgt Geligoff signed up for Flag Detail while LCpl Peterson signed up for the Entertainment team. Each team was assigned a mentor whose common goal was teaching us useful skills.

The Flag Detail was in charge of raising and lowering the National and State colors everyday.

The Entertainment Team was in charge of keeping the rest of the people at the

conference entertained when we had down time. The first day we were in charge of hosting the ice cream social. When a scheduled event was canceled, the Entertainment Team held a party instead.

We attended classroom lectures each day on ethics, morals, and various other related topics. All of the people who spoke to us were either active duty or retired from the military.

Two presentations were noteworthy. The first one was an interactive presentation by an Air Force Sergeant about protecting yourself on the internet from hackers and phishers.

The second memorable presentation was by an Air Force Colonel. He discussed his experiences as a prisoner of war dur-

ing the Vietnam War. He kept everyone's attention for more than two hours.

This program was a good use of our time. While some parts of it did not always apply to everyone there, most of us took away knowledge that helped us become better leaders and all-around Americans. Although most of the speakers there were connected to the military, this program was oriented more toward civilians and encouraged us to become more well-rounded citizens of this great country.

Learn More About MOWW:
www.militaryorder.net

Something Called "The Knockout Game"

By Joseph Bles,
Young Marines Inspector General

First of all, *this is no game.*

It is a cowardly activity where several really terrible people sneak up on an unsuspecting (usually elderly) adult and at-

tempt to knock them out with one blow, and after doing so, run away laughing. This disgusting behavior has resulted in two people dying as a result of it.

No one is certain if there will be more cases but the best thing to do is use "situ-

ational awareness."

All that means is be aware and vigilant of your setting. Here's a good tip, take the Traffic Safety Administration's advice, "When you see something, say something."

You Can Prevent the Misuse of Prescription Drugs

By Joseph Bles

For a long time, we've been aware of the danger in the misuse of prescription drugs. In most cases, these are left over medicines in pill form just lying around bathrooms or medicine cabinets. They are taken mixed with other pills then swallowed just to see what happens.

This is so dangerous that the end result can be (and often is) death.

Recently, *ABC Nightly News* reported that the number of deaths from misuse of prescription drugs has exceeded the number of deaths by automobile accidents. Both highway and misuse of prescription drugs deaths *can* be prevented. In case you find

unused prescription medications, don't flush or put them in the trash.

Instead, contact law enforcement or medical authorities. Then arrange for turn in so they can be properly disposed, and not harm the environment.

• Checking In: Reports from our Young Marines Units

Greater Cleveland Young Marines attended the Cleveland Cavaliers' season opening game. The arena was packed with ten thousand basketball fans and four of the senior Young Marines (SSgt Michael Dulin, SSgt Mason Downing, Cpl Alfredo Mercedes, and Cpl Annie Kampman) participated in a color guard. We enjoyed the cool privileges of being on the court and being seen on TV.

-- Submitted by YM Cpl Alfredo Mercedes
Greater Cleveland (OH)

The Albany (GA) Exchange Club Fair was held November 5-10, 2013. For the past three years, Karen Hartman (Battalion Adjutant), has set up a booth displaying information about the Young Marines program. This year, Ms. Hartman placed second for the Young Marines exhibit.



Albany Young Marines also volunteered to help out with the Annual Dirty Devil Dog Mud Run. When helping out, the Young Marines pass out water, help with Toys for Tots and pick up trash.

The Mud Run introduces members of the community to a Marine Corps-style course run, complete with obstacles, challenges and plenty of mud. Runners can expect to negotiate tires, ropes and other obstacles while they run, jump, crawl, climb, slog or slide through the mud.

The Mud race tests the runner's all-

around toughness, strength, stamina, fitness and mental willpower.

Finally, the Young Marines of Albany participated in CPR training on Saturday, November 23, 2013. Fifteen Young Marines participated and became CPR certified. The training was conducted by the Marine Corps Base Fire Department. The course was held for Young Marines ages 12 and up. Young Marines learned the correct techniques and skills to help others in the event of an emergency. In addition, the staff renewed their certification as well. We thank our instructors, Roger Hall and Sean Edmondson, for taking the time to teach the course.

-- Submitted by Nataniel Lowman
Young Marines of Albany (GA)

Blackstone Valley Young Marines were asked to assist at the 1st Battalion 25th Marine Corps Ball. Young Marines passed out ball favors to more than 800 guests at the outset of the evening's festivities.

The guest of honor was Gen John F. Kelly, USMC. Gen Kelly is a native of Boston and is currently the Commander of the U.S. Southern Command. General Kelly was kind enough to take a few moments to meet and speak with our Young Marines.

-- Submitted by Aimee M Fagan
Blackstone Valley (MA)



The Trinity Valley (TX) Young Marines were honored when a Life Scout from Troop 390, Terrell, Texas asked if we would help him in the community service part of earning his Eagle Scout Rank.



Trinity Valley: Using teamwork to get the job done on a drill day.

His project was to build a room inside the building of the Terrell Volunteer Fire Department to provide the Department with a place to store equipment.

The Young Marines worked 7 hours on a drill day helping to build the walls.

--Submitted by Christine Hall
Trinity Valley (TX)

Where Are They Going? Where Are they Now?

Former YM GySgt Chris Crowley was the Senior Young Marine at Battlefield (VA) until he graduated from high school. During his senior year, he was in the USMC Delayed Entry Program. He graduated in June 2012 and was off to Parris Island on the ninth day of July. He endured many hours of training.

At the end of his training at Parris Island, he was selected for Security Forces. From Parris Island, he spent a few months at Camp Geiger. From there he was sent to Chesapeake,



then he went to Camp Allen for more

training. He recently returned from four months in Cuba and is now back at Camp Allen, training for deployment sometime after the first of the year.

I have a lot of respect for my big brother, USMC LCpl Chris Crowley, and I really look up to him for his service to our great country. Our family will miss him during his deployment, but we know he will have many great stories to share with us when he returns. The Battlefield unit looks forward to his visiting our unit and spending time with us until he is deployed.

-- Submitted by YM SSgt Kevin Crowley
Battlefield (VA)

Former Young Marines MSgt Melvin Hall IV shipped off to MCRD San Diego on September 17, 2012. He graduated from Marine Corps Boot Camp on Decem-

ber 14, 2012 as a Private First Class, third generation Marine.

Throughout the first phase of boot camp, he held the position of Platoon Guide. Some of our Young Marines traveled out to MCRD to watch Melvin graduate.

Melvin is currently stationed at Marine Corps Base, Kanehoe Bay HI, and was promoted to Lance Corporal in June of 2013. Melvin has possible plans to go to Coach school where he will help train and coach on the rifle ranges.

-- Submitted by Christine Hall
Trinity Valley (TX)



PEARL HARBOR:

YOUNG MARINES HONOR ITS VETERANS

67 Young Marines take part in Pearl Harbor commemoration.

Although the attack on Pearl Harbor took place 72 years ago, 67 Young Marines experienced powerful emotions when they traveled to Hawaii for the 72nd Pearl Harbor Day Commemoration. In addition, 27 adult volunteers accompanied the youth members.

"Many Young Marines met survivors of that historic event in 1941," said Michael Kessler, national executive director and CEO of the Young Marines. "Those veterans are, in every sense of the words - living history, and each has a story to tell. It was an honor to attend an event that commemorated a significant turning point in our nation's history."

"We are very proud of the Young Marines and consider them a crucial part of our events each year," said Earl Hurrey, Pearl Harbor Parade committee member and retired member of "The President's Own," the United States Marine Band.

Upon arrival in Hawaii on Thursday, December 5, the Young Marines gathered at the Marine Corps Air Station in Kaneohe Bay and spent many hours cleaning up a beach as a community service project.

On Friday, December 6, youth members of the Young Marines performed a solemn wreath laying ceremony at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, Honolulu, in memory of the brave men and women who are interred there.

And the next day, Saturday, December 7, the Young Marines led the Pearl Harbor Memorial Parade in Honolulu. They carried the banners of the twelve capital ships that were attacked. The parade's objective was to honor the heroes and survivors of Pearl Harbor and World War II; to pay tribute to veterans, active duty military members and military families; to celebrate freedom; and to keep in remembrance the heinous events of December 7, 1941.



Every Young Marine who participated was aware of the staggering numbers: 12 ships destroyed; 2,402 Americans killed; and 1,282 wounded in the unprovoked surprise attack.

"To be able to meet the veterans that were here was really a humbling opportunity," said YM MSgt Oscar Pinate, 17, of the PFC Bruce W. Carter Young Marines in Miami, Florida. "These veterans are slowly passing away, so soon there won't be any left."

The Young Marines units raised funds at their local level to supplement the costs of traveling to Hawaii to attend the commemoration ceremonies.

The Young Marines used their creativity, and applied the program's core values - leadership, teamwork and discipline - to implement unique and effective fundraising efforts.

"When the opportunity to travel to Hawaii arose, the members of the Young Marines started moving mountains in their fundraising efforts," Kessler said. "The result is a testament to the dedication of these young people."

The participating Young Marines units:

- Quantico - Division 2 - Old Dominion Regiment, MCB Quantico, VA
- Hamilton - Division 2 - Maryland Regiment, MD
- Upper Marlboro - Division 2 - Maryland Regiment, MD
- Southeast County - Division 6 - California Regiment, Seal Beach, CA
- Northern KY - Division 2 - KY (the unit of Dakota Richter, the current National Young Marine of the Year)
- Columbia River - Division 6 - North West Regiment, Kennewick, WA
- Pyramid Rock - Division 6 - MCB Kaneohe Bay, HI
- PFC Bruce W. Carter - Division 3 - 1st Florida Regiment, Margate, FL

"The Young Marines don't all want to go into the military," Kessler said, "but the confidence they've gained by virtue of their time with the Young Marines is clearly something that will set a path for them for the future."



(Above): Young Marines color guard members (left to right) Joseph DiGiovanni, Storme DiGiovanni, Brock Lathrop and Richard Deuto.



(Above): Participating in a beach clean up in Kanehoe Bay at the Marine Corps Air Station.

(Left): YM MSgt Oscar Pinate (left) and YM LCpl Albert Villalobos (right).

(Right): YM Sgt Devin Simkins meets a Pearl Harbor veteran.



(Left): Young Marines march in the Pearl Harbor Memorial Parade in Honolulu on Saturday, December 7, 2013.

DECEMBER 7, 2013:

A DAY OF REMEMBRANCE.



Columbia River: Our New Friend, a Veteran Named “Al”

By Alores Villanueva
Columbia River (WA)

Columbia River Young Marines spent the morning of December 4, 2013 touring the Pearl Harbor Visitors Center.

As we gathered to enter the theater to see the short movie about the attack of December 7, 1941 and prior to taking the boat ride out to the *USS Arizona*, we were joined by a Pearl Harbor Survivor who introduced himself as “Al”.

Al told us he visits Pearl Harbor and the *USS Arizona* Memorial twice a year - on Memorial Day and in the week leading up to Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day. As luck would have it, Al sat within the

ranks of our unit in the first row during the movie. What an honor!

After we returned from the *Arizona*, he graciously agreed to take a group picture with us - as he had done in 2011, the last time Columbia River attended Pearl Harbor Day.

Al shared the morning with us and our time on the *Arizona* was made even more special because of him. An outgoing but humble man, he didn't volunteer any information about himself or what he went through the day of the attack.

After returning from Hawaii, I was able to find a story about our new friend, Allen Bodenlos, on TapsBugler.com. The link:

<http://tapsbugler.com/allen-bodenlos-bugle-master-pearl-harbor-survivor/>

What a blessing for the Young Marines of Columbia River to have met this bugle master, be able to chat with him, share time with him and bridge the gap to history with him.



A Ceremony Pays Respects to the Fallen at Pearl Harbor

By YM Sgt Devin Simkins
Young Marines of Grand Rapids (MI)

My trip to Hawaii was a blast. I had the pleasure to listen to a Pearl Harbor survivor tell of his experience during the attacks on Pearl Harbor and we visited the *USS Arizona* Memorial. We took the flowers from our leis and placed them in the water to honor the fallen heroes.

After we visited the memorial, we went on the decks of the *USS Missouri*, also known as “Mighty Mo”. We saw the its big 16-inch guns and I stood on the spot where Japan



The Young Marines performed a wreath laying ceremony to pay respect to the fallen. This cemetery is where USMC Sgt Henry Oliver Hansen, one of the original flag rais-

ers on Iwo Jima, was laid to rest.

surrendered, ending the war. This was a very unique experience to stand on the decks of history.

On December 6, we went to The National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific.

On December 7, the Young Marines participated in the Pearl Harbor Memorial Parade and we were the banner carriers for the ships that were attacked.

It was a very big honor to carry the banner for the *USS Pennsylvania*. It was a very humbling experience to see everyone attend to pay respects to the veterans of the attacks on Pearl Harbor. The evening ended with dinner in the park with music provided by the United States Marine Corps Band of the Pacific.

An Inspiring Trip to Pearl Harbor, One I'll Never Forget

YM Cpl Caleb Walker
Oregon Cascade

During September of 2013, my father and I went to Pearl Harbor. I was astonished by what I saw, including the more than 70 years old colossal ships towering above me, like the *USS Missouri*.

We visited the Museum, watched a movie on the Pearl Harbor attack, and took a boat to visit the *USS Arizona* monument with many other people.

The *USS Arizona* visit was an emotional experience that made me feel like I had a connection with each of the people on the boat.

The visit made me feel like I had a connection with each of the people on the boat.

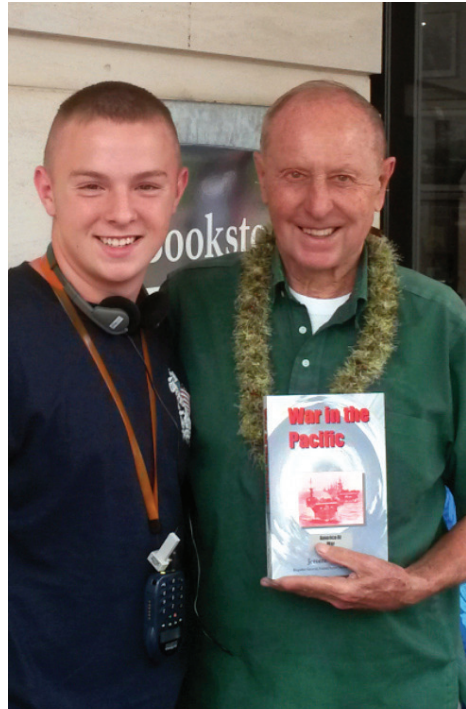
The monument was white, with names of people who died during the attack and flowers to honor them. Oil still leaks from the hull of the *USS Arizona*.

In the gift shop, I saw an older gentleman sitting at a booth with a stack of books.

I stopped to talk to him and learned that he was retired USMC Brigadier General Jerome T. Hagen.

We talked for a long time and he shared with me how he joined the Marine Corps in 1952, served in Korea, and as a Drill Instructor, and then later as an officer during the Vietnam War, where he flew 483 missions in an A4 Skyhawk.

After his retirement from the Marine Corps he wrote a series of



Caleb Walker and Pacific War historian and author BGen Jerome T. Hagen, USMC (Ret)

books titled War in the Pacific.

I bought a copy and BGen Hagen signed it "To: Caleb, 'Young Marine'; This is the way the Pacific War really was. We must never forget. Congratulations on your participation in the Young Marines. Stick with it. Semper Fidelis, Jerome T. Hagen BGenUSMC (Ret)".

I read his book and it is amazing. It was such an inspiring day, being able to visit Pearl Harbor and then talking with BGen Hagen. This was a life experience that I will never forget.

Hawaii - A Hui Hou Kakou (Until We Meet Again)

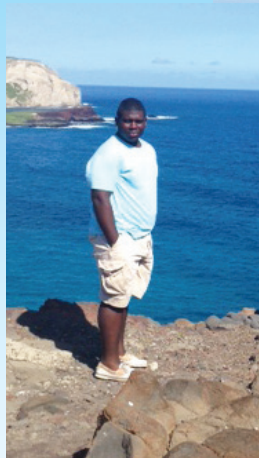
By YM SgtMaj Keon Burton
Quantico (VA)

As December approached, my excitement started to build and build as I prepared to participate in the Pearl Harbor Anniversary events with Young Marines from all over.

I was ready to pack up, leave the mainland (as Hawaiians call it) and head to the Great State of Hawaii.

This was my third trip to Hawaii and taking part in the activities; visiting the Punchbowl and the Pearl Harbor site, exploring the island and speaking with the survivors. Yet, it's always a new and different 'Ike' (experience). I learn something new, I see things in an altered light, and the stories always amaze me.

Seeing my Young Marines friends from across the states is like having a family reunion. We are no longer labeled by



units or titles; we are brothers and sisters.

The beauty of the Island is breathtaking. The Young Marines participated in a wreath laying ceremony, toured the *USS Arizona* Memorial, and marched in the Pearl Harbor Parade.

We also attended a retirement ceremony for YM SgtMaj Storme DiGiovanni of the Pyramid Rock Young Marines and a cook-out at the DiGiovanni's home.

After our obligations, Mr. Michael Guiles from Headquarters gave us orders to explore the island (and I take orders very well).

The Quantico Young Marines headed out for fun. We took a ride along the north shores, stopping along the way at several beaches to swim, surf, learn about the culture and soak up some sun. We visited historical sites, Turtle Beach, sampled local foods, canvassed the area to immerse ourselves in Hawaiian art, music, and literature, walked along the shoreline, and met a few interested people. We even saw a few celebrities (from *Hawaii Five-O*).

These activities are what I love most about this program; it continues to open doors for youths and constantly offers positive influences on its members. I will forever cherish memories of the Pearl Harbor Anniversary events.

So Hawaii, I say Aloha 'oe (farewell to you) and I'll see you next year!

YOUNG MARINES: DOING GREAT WORK IN OUR COMMUNITIES

Running a Marathon: I Pushed On!

By YM LCpl Caleb Wilson
Cherry Point (NC)

This year (at 12 years of age) I ran the Marine Corp Marathon in Washington D.C. as part of the Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command (MARSOC) Foundation Team after raising two thousand dollars for the Foundation. MARSOC Foundation supports active duty and medically retired MARSOC personnel and their families, as well as the families of Marines who have lost their lives in service to our Nation.

When I applied for the Marine Corp Marathon I was originally told I could not run because I was two years under the age limit. After a few email messages, I was allowed to run the race with my Dad. A marathon covers a distance of 26.2 miles, so it is not a normal PFT run. I trained for several

months to prepare for this distance. The night before the marathon, I received the "Spiritus Invictus" award (which means *unconquerable spirit*) from the MARSOC Foundation for my fundraising efforts and desire to participate even after being turned away originally.

Running the marathon hurt a lot, but I pushed on to the finish. I went to school the next day limping because my muscles were very sore, but I was happy to be wearing my marathon shirt.

My advice to all you Young Marines: Push on, pain is not a reason to quit. Each and everyone, set expectations for yourself high and push on to meet them; Don't quit, ever!

Editor's note: LCpl Wilson raised \$2,000 for the MARSOC Foundation.

Caleb Wilson: An unconquerable spirit.



Toys for Tots: Blackstone Valley Did its Homework

By Aimee M. Fagan, Adult Volunteer
Blackstone Valley (MA)

Thanksgiving Weekend kicked off our Toys for Tots Drive. In preparation for several service events, our Young Marines were given a homework assignment - they needed to find out as much as they could about Toys for Tots.

They did not disappoint, and actually surprised some Toys for Tots organizers with their knowledge of the program. They were able to share that the program began in 1947 in California when a Marine Reservist's wife wanted to donate a Raggedy Ann doll as a Christmas gift for a needy child and could not find any place

that would take it. So the Marine and his buddies set out on a mission. That first year they collected five thousand toys to distribute to needy families. In 2011, more than 15 million toys were distributed to children. We expect 2013 to be an even bigger year.

Stuffing the bus and Helping Our Community

By YM Clayton Sauberan
Astabula County (OH)

Every year my unit does a fund raiser called Stuff the Bus. During Stuff the Bus we bring items to donate to less fortunate kids and after that, we try to get more people in by holding signs and

marching around. It is really fun. At our last event, we got more than half of the bus full.

We also attend a small indoor fair which sells clothes. We take the items put them in bags or boxes and carry them out to the cars. It's really fun, but it is hard work.

The people operating the fair say we really help them out, plus it is a great time for PT (some of the boxes are really heavy). All in all, it is a really fun community service project.

Albany: Serving at Thanksgiving

The Young Marines of Albany (GA) volunteered to help the local Police Department with their Third Annual Thanksgiving Dinner. This year the event was held on Tuesday, November 26, 2013. Young Marines SSgt Alexis Baisden, SSgt Joshua Crawford and PVT Malik Peoples and staff members helped serve more than 750 meals.



Mecklenburg County: A Busy Month of Service

By YM LCpl Daolai Chanthirat
Mecklenburg County (NC)

The month of November was the busiest month for our unit. We did a lot of community services for the community and our veterans. These services include cleaning up our community rivers and streams, lots of color guard duties and honoring our veterans at a local Veterans Day Parade.



From cleaning up to providing color guard, the Mecklenburg County Young Marines keep busy serving their community.

Battlefield Assists Semper Fi Fund Program

By YM SSgt Kevin Crowley
Battlefield (VA)

Battlefield Young Marines joined hundreds of volunteers on Sunday, 24 November 2013 to help package 10,700 Purple Heart Christmas ornaments. Once packaged, the ornaments are mailed to USMC Purple Heart recipients across

America. We thank everyone of these veterans for their sacrifice and dedication to our great country.

We enjoyed having MajGen James Kesler, USMC (Ret) and his wife join us at our table during the packing process. Our Young Marines enjoyed talking with them.

We also got to visit Young Marines from Col Wesley Fox, Geiger, Manassas and Bull Run units. This was our third year participating in this great event. We set another record this year in the amount of time it took to package the 10,700 ornaments. Each year gets better. We can't wait for next year.

We Provided An All-Female Color Guard

YM GySgt Allyson Fagga and LCpl Loresah Clemons of Shenandoah Valley Young Marines, YM SSgt Meghan Jones of Manassas and YM Lauren Loria of Col Wesley Fox Young Marines provided an all-female Color Guard at the Ritz Carlton Pentagon City

for the 75th Anniversary of the National Foundation for Women Legislators.

-- Submitted by Gwynn Harrison
Shenandoah Valley (VA)



Foothills: Involved in Our Local Festival For Years

By Stacy Anderson
Foothills (CO)

Our unit has been a part of the Estes Park Highlands Festival for many years. Our color guard takes part in the evening Tattoo, opening ceremonies, the Parade in downtown Estes and closing ceremonies. We also have a booth at the festival that offered information about the Young Marines program and face painting for the kids.





Shenandoah Valley (VA) Young Marines participate in the Young Eagles Program. Pilots donated their time, plane and fuel to expose the Young Marines to aviation, free of charge, on Oct. 5, 2013 at the Winchester (VA) Regional Airport.

-- Submitted by Gwynn Harrison

Shenandoah Valley (VA)

Pensacola Conducts a Flag Retiring Ceremony

By YM LCpl Nicholas Morrell
Pensacola (FL)

On November 16th, 2013, the Young Marines of Pensacola held a flag retiring ceremony at the VFW in Elberta, AL.

We had a flag history class and then we practiced folding flags.

The ceremony began with Ms. Karen,

one of our staff members, talking about what the flag represents to the American people.

Then GySgt Belanger, our Unit Commander, and Mr. George, our Executive Officer, participated with our unit's 13 Young Marines in burning the flags while rendering an honorable hand salute.

By the end of the ceremony, the Young Marines of Pensacola retired 248 flags. We learned a lot from this event, such as why this flag should be honored and how it honors the men and women who have served and sacrificed for our country.



Indiana: Cleaning up After a Tornado

By Cpl Mariah Henk
Speedway (IN)

Many parts of Indiana were hit by natural disaster in November. I was lucky, but a neighboring town was not. When I heard the news, I wanted to help. So, the next morning I took a day off school to help clean up. Seeing the wreckage broke my heart, but that only made me

more determined to help this town. It was hard work, but seeing the progress motivated me even more. Many members of my community pitched in, and donated what they could. If it wasn't for all the local support, this town would still be in ruins. I'm thankful to be part of these recovery efforts.

Speedway: We're Making a Big Impact in a Small Town

By David Hulett,
Unit Commander
Speedway (IN)

Our unit started in January of 2013. Three Young Marines turned to eight, then to twelve and now twenty four. Our first Community Service was on March 11th and since then, we have logged almost 3200 hours of Community Service as a unit. Our Young Marines have helped with projects at churches, animal shelters, food pantries, veterans hospitals,

public libraries and Marine Corps League detachments. We have made friends and partners in the area's veterans assistance community.

We have an inner unit competition to see who can log the most individual hours and eight of our Young Marines have performed more than 100 hours of service in eight months. One of our Young Marines even organized a Saturday "Street Sweep" in which the Young Marines picked up debris and trash in the

small town in which we drill. His hope is to expand this activity to many more towns and communities.

It was nice when people in town asked us what we were doing, we said simply, "We want to help".

Being a Unit Commander is rewarding, but seeing your Young Marines act like responsible, caring young adults is especially rewarding. I'm looking forward to many more years with these wonderful kids.

Oxon Hill: Helping Provide Access to Healthy Food

By YM Cpl. Nigel Gollman
Oxon Hill (MD)

The Share Food Program mission is to promote healthy living and stronger communities through affordable wholesome food. Through the efforts of our volunteers and the support of our community, the Share Food Program distributes

thousands of pounds of food a month throughout the region. Our unit supports their efforts by going to one of the Share warehouses to package potatoes from 100 Lbs. bags to individual 3 lbs. bags. They are taken to local distribution centers for completing share packages for sales at reduced cost through the community. The potatoes are cold to handle,

but at the end of it all, I feel good because I know that we have been part of an effort to help someone in our community to have access to wholesome food and healthy living.



Helping Others in Need Can Be Just As Rewarding

**By YM SSgt Nicholas Cozzens
Swansboro (NC))**

A big part of what we do as Young Marines is helping our communities. We all know that we have to raise funds within our communities in order to operate our units. But what about helping out other deserving non-profit organizations? Giving of our time and talents is always helpful, but working hard to raise money on behalf of others in need can be just as rewarding.

Recently, one of my mom's friends asked me if I would be interested in participating in a fundraiser for the Johns Hopkins Cancer Center that focuses on

male breast cancer. She said that I would need to wear women's heels and walk laps. At first I wasn't sure, but the more I thought about it, the more I realized what a good cause it was.

On November 3, 2013, I participated in the 3rd Annual "Fill Her Shoes" walk for a cure, sponsored by the Leather and Lace Motorcycle Club in Jacksonville, NC. It was hard to find heels to fit my (size 13) feet, but my neighbor's husband participated too, and lent me the ones that he used. I had a blast and even ran 2 laps in those 3-inch heels. Maybe next year I can help get a team of Young Marines to participate in this worthy cause!



Palm Beaches Young Marines were a part of the National Football League's first ever human flag at Miami's Sun Life Stadium

Where Are *Your* Opportunities to Promote Us?

**By YM Sgt Randall B. Townsend
Palm Beaches (FL)**

On September 22, 2013, a special invitation went out to season ticket holders for the Miami Dolphins to participate in creating the NFL's first ever human flag. As luck would have it, the Palm Beaches unit has some close friends that hold season tickets for the Miami Dolphins and the invitation was passed on to three of our very own members to participate in the event.

Palm Beaches always looks at each local event and invitation to see how we

can best represent our unit and program. In this case, we became 3 of more than one thousand people to form the American flag on the football field during the playing of the National Anthem at opening ceremonies.

It is absolutely amazing how a 2 hour practice run the day before could be so successful, as you can see from the photo. We also had an opportunity to speak with the organization's community relations director in order to promote our program and its ideals.

As a result, we have been placed on

the waiting list to post colors at a future game and are now also on their list of organizations to serve in the community in partnership with them.

Every unit probably has an opportunity to make their community aware of the Young Marines, and may not know it. Opportunities present themselves in many ways. Keep your mind open, vision broad and remain alert and you will find many ways to introduce Young Marines to the world so that we are no longer "The best kept secret", but rather a program full of great opportunities for America's Youth.

Veterans Week 2013

Serving at Veterans Day Honors at Arlington

By YM SgtMaj Alex Loria
Col Wesley Fox (VA)

On Veterans weekend 2013, I had the opportunity to lead the flag procession and carry the American flag for a veterans ceremony in Arlington National Cemetery. President Obama was there, along with other government officials, officers, Medal of Honor recipients, and others who gave speeches honoring veterans. An Honor Flights Veteran was recognized



who is more than 100 years old! Another Young Marine (LCpl Villatoro) carried the

Medal of Honor Society's flag with me as we lead the other veterans' organizations through the crowd, to the front of the amphitheater. While they lined up along the amphitheater walls, we went on stage to post the Colors and sit for the ceremony. We were about 15 feet from the President. I was closest to Mrs. Obama, and she smiled at me as I sat for the presentation.

After the ceremony, we were invited to the reception with the Medal of Honor Society. We were able to meet several Medal of Honor recipients including the President of the Society, Mr. Harold Fritz.

Following lunch, we attended a ceremony at General John J. Pershing's grave site, and LCpl Villatoro and I were asked to stand and hold the flags.

As the afternoon went on, the wind continued to pick up. The event was a dedication to General Pershing's life and career, and there were representatives from most of the allied countries present who participated in a wreath laying ceremony.

It was a great privilege to honor the men and women who have served us.



Chicago's Own Honors Some Hidden Veterans

By YM Cpl Christopher Repa
Chicago's Own (IL)

During Veterans Appreciation Week this year my unit arranged a visit to a local retirement center where forty eight Veterans live.

We decided to have a party to help them celebrate Veterans Day. As the Veterans

entered into the hall they saw our Color Guard and all of us in uniform, they smiled and waved. Our ceremony started with the Color Guard, the National Anthem and the Pledge of Allegiance. Our Unit Commander spoke a few words thanking the Veterans for their service and described the Young Marines program.

Each veteran was presented a certificate of appreciation and an American flag lapel pin. Tears came from their eyes as they thanked us. We then enjoyed listening to their stories over refreshments.



Following the Footsteps and Career of a Great Warrior

By CPL Hayden Lippincott
East Valley (AZ)

SMSgt Charles E. "Buster" Donnel, USAF (Ret) [1921 - 2013], my great-grandfather, was born in Lewiston, Maine, on March 17, 1921.



He was best known for being an original member of the famous Merrill's Marauders, who fought behind enemy lines in Burma during World War II.

Buster Donnel was wounded in combat, and was tagged to be sent away from the front for medical treatment. He tore his tag off and went back to the front. His service in both the U.S. Army Air Force and later, the U.S. Air Force, was from 1937 to 1964. After retiring from the

U.S. Air Force, Buster worked at Bath Iron works in Bath, Maine, building ships for the U.S. Navy for another twenty-plus years, then taking part-time work at Brunswick Naval Air Station in Brunswick, Maine. In the late 80's, he finally fully retired to the Bob Hope Enlisted Retirement Village located outside Eglin Air Force Base near Shalimar, Florida.



SMSgt Donnel was loved by everyone he came in contact with. He served as an advisor, mentor, story-teller and "adopted grandfather" to many active duty military and veterans alike in the Shalimar area.

He enjoyed having our young warriors around him, telling stories, and their seeking his advice. His second family was our military, and he had a special place in his heart for the U.S. Army Rangers and

those in U.S. Air Force Special Operations.

In 2010, Buster was awarded numerous medals and awards spanning his service from 1937 through 1964, including the Distinguished Service Medal, two Bronze Stars, a Purple Heart, the Combat Infantryman's Badge and multiple Campaign and Battle ribbons for his service during World War II and the Korean War.

A true patriot, my great-grandfather will be missed by many, as he passed away last August. Active duty and World War II Veterans invited me to honor the Senior Master Sergeant at his interment service. I was invited as an honorary participant in the color guard ceremony, with active duty Army Rangers and U.S. Air Force Special Operations personnel.

Farewell "Buster", *Semper Fi, OORAH!*

A few of my great grandfather's medals.





Westover (MA) Young Marines in front of the Veterans Memorial, after spending a Saturday morning re-flagging St. Thomas Cemetery in West Springfield, MA for Veterans Day. They helped re-flag more than 500 cemetery plots.
 -- Submitted by Edward Mitrook



Westover Young Marines also marched in the Veterans Day parade in Westfield, MA, along with members of the Westfield River Valley Marine Corps League. In the picture, wearing dress blues, is Cpl. Don Dorrington, an Iwo Jima veteran. Mr. Dorrington is 88 years old and marches with the Marine Corps League and Westover Young Marines every Memorial Day and Veterans day.
 -- Submitted by Edward Mitrook



I participated in four Veterans Day ceremonies. Two of them were at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Purcellville, VA, where I participated in the color guard. For another one, I went to the Ball's Bluff Civil War Cemetery for a ceremony with the VFW of Leesburg, VA. The last one was in Lovettsville, where I carried the wreath with another Young Marine for their special ceremony. I am glad that I could show my appreciation for the veterans who have served us.
 -- Submitted by YM PVT Noah Esper, Col Wesley Fox (VA)



A Color Guard for the Paralyzed Veterans of America

By Stacy Anderson
 Foothills (CO)

On Saturday Nov 9th, 2013, Foothills Young Marines performed a color guard ceremony for the Paralyzed Veterans of America Mountain States Chapter, at their annual awards banquet. Another organization cancelled unexpectedly and we gladly accepted. It was a busy Veterans Day weekend filled with many color guard events but we knew this one was special.

When we arrived, we set up our gear and



started to watch as the room filled with guests. It quickly became apparent that this color guard would challenge our skills to make it flow in the space provided.

The aisle was off-center and the room was filled with Veterans and those on Active Duty. They were at the banquet in appreciation of their community service

throughout the year. It wasn't until after the ceremony that we were made aware that Congressmen Ed Perlmutter and Mike Coffman had also witnessed our performance.

After the banquet we had time to visit with the veterans, share some laughs and take pictures. It was truly such an honor to be there. I was so proud to show off our Young Marines to a crowd that could appreciate their dedication to getting the job done right.



Remembering Another Group of America's Veterans

By YM Pvt Caleb Van Apeldoorn
 Capital City (NC)

Shortly after graduating recruit training, I had the opportunity to spend two weeks with my father, Master Sergeant B. Van Apeldoorn (Ret), who is a Vietnam Veteran. During my visit to Rochester, NY on Saturday afternoon July 27 2013, I had the honor to be a part of a Wounded Warriors ceremony.

It took to place to honor three warriors who had been wounded while serving in Afghanistan. During the ceremony I held

the POW/MIA flag with the Patriot Guard.

The POW/MIA flag represents the prisoners of war and those who are missing in action. Being a part of the ceremony gave me a better understanding of what the men and women of our military go endure and just how important their sacrifices are to my way of life and my freedom. During the ceremony, there was one soldier in particular who made an im-



pact on my life. This soldier had suffered burns to his entire face and ears. Even going through what he had in this time of war, he was still very proud to serve in the Army and had no regrets. This impressed me a lot, and made me proud to be part of a country that stands up for what its beliefs. Seeing this ceremony reminded me to be thankful for everything I have, and for the men and women who lay down their lives for us every day. I only hope to be as brave and strong as these men who were honored that day.

War Memorials: Much More Than Just Monuments

By YM Cpl Melody Conde
Foothills (CO)

Just before Veterans Day, we learned about War Memorials in a class at Young Marines. We learned how people submit their ideas for a memorial, and how a design gets chosen.

Many monuments take years to build, sometimes in excess of ten years. Many use symbols to represent victory or freedom: For example, WWII memorials often include an image from the Victory medal of the Greek goddess Nike holding a broken sword to represent victory.

We looked at local memorials like the Colorado Freedom Memorial which

names more than 6,000 Colorado men and women who have died in wars since 1876. We also learned about the National War Memorials in Washington DC. The National World War II Memorial includes two engraved "Kilroy was here" images, which was a popular graffiti symbol on abandoned buildings during World War II.

The information in the class amazed and affected me. I now see that war memorials are much more than just monuments. They tell veterans and the families of the dead and missing that they are still remembered. Their sacrifices are known and are very greatly appreciated.



Two Veterans I've Met Whose Lives Define Patriotism

By YM PFC Jacob Massengill
Southeast County (CA)

Patriotism [PEY-tree-uh-tiz-uhm]: Devoted love support, and defense of one's country; national loyalty. This is one definition of *patriotism*, but I think it means more.

Captain Douglas G. Phillips (USN, Ret) reminds me of patriotism. Captain Phillips was stationed on the *USS Ramsay* during the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7th, 1941.

He told me of watching the beautiful scenery from the ship's deck that morning when he first saw a Japanese plane.

Instead of cowering away, he warned the few who didn't know what was happening and assisted another sailor by loading a mounted 4-inch rapid fire gun; their efforts downed three enemy planes.

Jay Groff is also a Pearl Harbor survivor. He was jolted awake by a huge explosion. He defended two American B-17 heavy bombers that were attempting a landing, and continued fighting for the rest of the attacks. After Pearl Harbor, he served our country for thirty more years.

He became a Boat Master Marine Superintendent and later served at Brooklyn Field, Johnston Island and Hamilton

Air Force Base. Transferring to an administrative position after the Air Force retired crash boats (a type of high-speed offshore rescue boat) he served in Izmir, Turkey, and at the Pentagon, where he worked for the Secretary of the Air Force.

If anyone knows what patriotism means, these two men do. You can ask anyone from the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force or Coast Guard and they would all agree that these men are two outstanding examples of a patriot, and that they would probably do the same if they had to protect their country from attack.

The Grand Opening of a Veteran-Owned Business

By Stacy Anderson
Foothills (CO)

Veterans Day can be a great day for a veteran to get a free hair cut, cup of coffee or sometimes, lunch. For one local veteran, it was a day to write a new chapter by opening his own business. Foothills Young

Marines performed color guard duties on Veterans Day for the Grand Opening of a local Quiznos Sandwich Restaurant.

The owner is a veteran and he offered a free lunch to his fellow veterans. It was a beautiful Colorado day, perfect for the Flag, old friends and good food.



“...I Figured Out How and Why They Attend”

By YM GySgt Brenden Quinonez, YM LCpl Harley Bradford and YM PFC Denver Bradford
Foothills (CO)

At school, many kids ask me if I am going to join the military.

I always reply with a subtle “Yes” and that question is always followed by the question, “Why?”

Before Veterans Day in 2013, I had no simple answer to that question.

On that day, I stood in the low winds of a grassy field. That field was part of the United States Marine Corps Memorial.

In the center of the grassy field, there stood two massive flags.

One was the flag of the United States



Marine Corps and the other one was the flag of the United States.

The memorial also contained flags of the fifty states and Marine Corps regimental flags, all the size of post flags.

The people there amazed me, for they attended every year, whether it had been

snowing, raining, or in the middle of great winds.

As I spoke with them, I noticed that they ranged from an E-1 to a Colonel in rank.

That moment, I figured out how and why they attend. I had no need to ask them why they came, for I knew by the look in their faces when the announcer had talked about the men that had fallen in combat. Today my answer is clear: I wish to serve my country, not for glory, but for *honor*.

As I am determined to serve my country, I can start now by being an honorable Young Marine.

In Memory of the 241: They Came in Peace

By YM PFC Logan Bera
New River (NC)

On October 23, 1983, a bombing occurred at the MNF (Multinational Force) barracks in Beirut, Lebanon.

The death toll was the highest single day death toll for the United States Marine Corps since the Battle of Iwo Jima in World War II.

The numbers are devastatingly high; the bombing killed 3 soldiers, 18 sailors, and 220 Marines, a total of 241 American servicemen.

In honor of those who died, The Beirut

Memorial was built in Jacksonville, North Carolina. My unit, the New River Young Marines, attended a history class on the Beirut bombing taught at the Beirut Memorial.

I have only been to the Memorial once with the Young Marines, but I learned a lot from my visit.

The day of the Beirut Bombing is a special day to me because it makes me think how different life would be without the freedom to be myself and be in the Young Marines.

It also makes me think that if all of

these men and women hadn't risked and given their lives, would there be a United States?

I often think about the men and women who make sacrifices for our freedom and those who have already sacrificed for our country, and I find myself stopping to salute them as my own small gesture of thanks.

Young Marines is always fun and I enjoy attending the ceremonies and events, because I learn so much and I have made a lot of friends in the Young Marines.

Boston's Semper Fi Luncheon: What a Way to Celebrate!

By YM SSgt Brian Fagan
Blackstone Valley (MA)

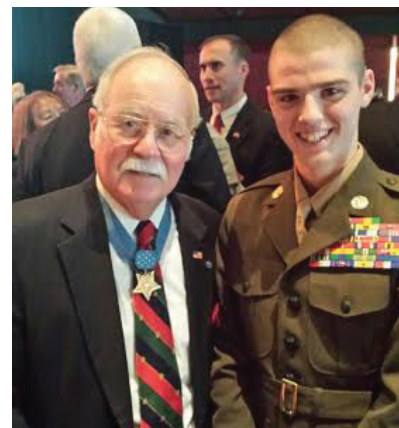
I have been to a few Semper Fi Luncheons in Boston over the last few years. My father usually takes me. But this year's lunch was amazing. It is a pretty big event with a hundreds people coming from around the country to attend.

As soon as we got there, I knew this year's event was going to be the best one yet. When we walked into the banquet area, there it was... *the World Series Championship Trophy!* The Boston Red Sox sent the trophy over for all the Marines and their guests to see. It was cool to be so close to it and to have my picture taken alongside it. But the day got even bet-

ter. Not only was there a great lunch, but there were all sorts of heroic people and great leaders there.

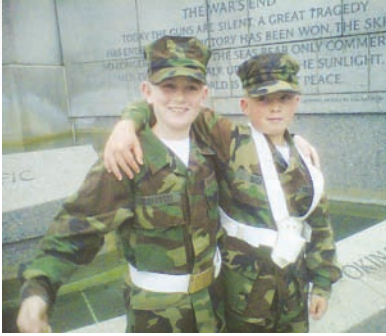
I had the chance to meet Harvey C. “Barney” Barnum, a Congressional Medal of Honor recipient and General James F. Amos, the Marine Corps Commandant. What an honor!

I heard some great speeches and was totally surprised to see our Young Marines National Executive Director, Mike Kessler, at the luncheon. We had a chance to speak a while (I think he was equally surprised to see one of his Young Marines at the lunch). It was a great way to celebrate the Marine Corps Birthday and Veterans Day! *Semper Fi!*



Medal of Honor recipient Barney Barnum with Young Marine Brian Fagan.

Honor Flights: Some of the Ways Our Units Get Involved



Shenandoah Valley, Battlefield, and Manassas Young Marines all come together to provide the Color Guard for the Austin, TX Honor Flight. Pictured are PFC Jeziorowski and PFC Buck of Shenandoah Valley Young Marines.

-- Submitted by Gwynn Harrison
Shenandoah Valley (VA)

Our unit held a fund raising car wash with all proceeds going to benefit Honor Flights. Matching our funds were the Marine Corps League, Veterans of Foreign Wars and the VFW Auxillary. The funds totaled \$1,200. Receiving a letter of appreciation for the unit from Honor Flight were YM Pvts Cody Marvin and Zack Chiia.

-- Submitted by Tony Guillory
Rogue Valley (OR)

By YM Sgt Patrick Alford Lt Alexander Bonnyman(TN)

Despite the government shutdown and closure of the veterans' memorials in Washington, DC, on October 9th, 2013, the 15th Knoxville HonorAir flight for East Tennessee Veterans proceeded as scheduled

Knoxville HonorAir is dedicated to honoring East Tennessee World War II and Korean War veterans for their sacrifices on behalf of our freedoms. Twice a year, they fly a planeload of veterans to Washington DC to visit the war memorials built in their honor. It is a one-day event where they leave early in the morning and return that same evening.

I had the privilege of going to greet their return flight that evening. Pvt Russell and I were taken to the entrance where we were given the honor to assist the veterans in wheel chairs down the procession line.

McGhee Tyson airport in Knoxville is not a large airport but there were an estimated

1,700 people in the hallway to greet these men and women to whom we owe so much. As I guided veteran Cal Kirkland through the procession, I don't think one person missed shaking his hand or thanking him.



It was humbling to be in the presence of Mr. Kirkland and other men and women who fought so bravely for our freedom.

I also got to meet his family who very graciously thanked ME for what I did. I was honored to do that for him and I certainly did not expect to receive a thank you.



It makes me feel so proud to be a Young Marine. Our leaders tell us when we are in uniform we represent all Young Marines and to always remember our core values.

I think that is one way we can honor our veterans every day, by embracing the life they have fought to give us with Discipline, Leadership, and Teamwork.

Pensacola Presents a WWII Veteran with a Quilt of Valor

By YM LCpl Nicholas Morrell Pensacola (FL)

November 2, 2013, started out as a normal day for my fellow Young Marines and me. We started off with a physical fitness test (PFT), then changed into our uniforms, listened to a drug demand reduction (DDR) class, and then had drill practice.

After we got finished with drill, we expected our usual debrief of future events, but something else happened instead. We walked into the classroom and saw a table with what appeared to be portrait of a World War II soldier and a number of medals on it, too. We looked at it with curiosity and then we all sat down and waited for instructions.

Doc VanOstenbridge, one of our staff members, first explained what was about to happen, what the ceremony was and then asked for volunteers for the cere-

mony and we gladly raised our hands. He chose YM PVT Cole and YM LCpl Lewis to read a description of the event. Then he chose YM LCpl Moye and me to present the quilt.

We started off the ceremony with a reading and then Doc VanOstenbridge talked about the war veteran, who turned out to be his dad. His father wrote about landing at Omaha beach a week after the D-Day landings, and his job during World War II, which was working with anti-aircraft guns. He described being a part of General Patton's 3rd Army, and what it was like to survive battles during World War II.

Then after his wonderful description of his father's experiences, YM LCpl Moye and I presented the quilt which the se-

nior Mr. VanOstenbridge described as "very beautiful".

Everybody got a good look at the magnificent quilt provided by Quilts of Valor, an organization begun during the Civil War that hand makes quilts for war veterans. The Young Marines of Pensacola



and Mr. VanOstenbridge assembled for a group picture. Some of the Young Marines returned back to their seats while others asked Mr. VanOstenbridge questions about his own ex-

periences during the war. I believe the Young Marines of Pensacola learned from this ceremony to always honor and value our war veterans, because without them we wouldn't have our freedoms that we enjoy today.



Young Marines Delivering The Message:

Every significant national Young Marines activity in 2013 was picked up in national, regional and local media in both broadcast and print.

**By Gary Weisbaum
Chief Marketing Officer**

As I am sure everyone has seen by now, the Young Marines HQ staff have invested significant time and resources to increase the national and local visibility and awareness of the Young Marines organization overall and the “very special” work the over 11,000 Young Marines and 3,000 plus adult volunteers do every day across the United States.

I am pleased to report that these efforts have not only provided the desired results, but in fact have exceeded even our own expectations. Every significant national Young Marines activity in 2013 was picked up in national, regional and local media in both broadcast and print. Now to be clear, not every activity was picked up in every market across all available media however the Young Marines were recognized in markets across the country for their work with veterans, and with reducing demand for drugs. And I am happy to let you know that we are “only getting started!”

For 2014, Young Marines marketing and communication activities will move to an even higher level with expanded press releases and public relations efforts by our public relations agency, GRPR. Our efforts to increase the content, information and “search” capabilities available on our www.youngmarines.com website will be greatly enhanced and watch for a new look tied to our Young Marines brand plan roll out early in 2014. In fact, if you have not noticed it already, this edition of the *Esprit* Magazine has also incorporated important elements of the Young Marines brand plan.

As many of you already know, it is critical for communication to have consistent looks and messages from an organization and its affiliates (units in our specific case) and our efforts to get this accomplished are well underway.

As the new year gets started, plans are in place to bring even

greater and more significant attention to the Young Marines at both the national as well as the unit level. Our major activities including the Iwo Jima trip, the Navajo Code talkers event, the Pearl Harbor anniversary event (our 2013 participation is featured in this issue) and all of your efforts 365 days a year to honor all veterans will receive even greater coverage and exposure in 2014.

As the new year gets started, plans are in place to bring even greater and more significant attention to the Young Marines at both the national as well as the unit level.

This, plus your critical and important efforts to Reduce the Demand for Drugs in this country will bring more eyes and ears to the Young Marines “very special” story. Plus for this year, our relationship with IZOD IndyCar, Indy Lights driver Zach Veach will be front and center in our communication efforts.

Finally, I wanted to let you know that our efforts in 2014 will not be just at the “national” level. This year, we are happy to announce that we have reassigned Janelle Johnson to take on the assignment of Unit Marketing Manager. This new position in the Young Marines HQ Marketing operation will provide all of our Young Ma-

rine units guidance and assistance in capitalizing on media, fundraising, and communication within your local markets, where the need to “get the word out” in an effective manner is so critical. In the next 6-8 weeks, Janelle will be reaching out to all of our Division leadership and units to identify specific programs that have worked well, those that were great ideas but did not achieve the desired outcome, and the specific needs of our units from a marketing and communication standpoint. The goal, a “Best Practices” program for our units to be successful in all of your marketing and communication needs.

I look forward to keeping you updated on our efforts and progress and am honored to be a part of a group with such “outstanding” participants.

Young Marines After Action



Ashtabula County (OH): Ashtabula County assisted Northeastern Ohio's Marine Corps League Detachment #782 in a massive toy sorting, under the direction of Pam Laughlin -- Submitted by Alicen Limestoll, Adutant, Ashtabula County Young Marines



Northern Kentucky: Celebrity Scooper Night at Bruster's Ice Cream with XO David Byrd and National Young Marine of the Year SgtMaj Dakota Richter.



Northern Kentucky: Young Marines Staff having a little fun after Recruit Graduation. Left to right: YM Cpl Nathan Byrd, YM LCpl Ian Franzen, YM Cpl Liam Galloway, YM Sgt Drew Hensley, YM Cpl Chris Gruner, YM SSgt Diane Bethay, NYMOY YM SgtMaj Dakota Richter and YM Sgt Steven Hoxmeier.



Plus, Some Scenes from Swansboro's (Busy) Summer



The Swansboro (NC) Young Marines white water rafting in West Virginia.



Attending the dedication of the SSgt Reckless Memorial at The National Museum of the Marine Corps in Triangle, VA



At a flag retirement ceremony at the local VFW.



Lending a hand as volunteers at the Crystal Coast Paddlefest.



Marching in the morning parade at the Annual Swansboro Mullet Festival.

Graduations and Special Achievements

Congratulations to all our new Young Marines and to all those who taught and nurtured them. *Good work!*

Unit: Tornado Alley (KS)
Date: September 17
UC: Michael Weber
Honor grad: Bryce Becker

Unit: Southwest Michigan
Date: September 18
UC: Not specified
Honor grad: Zackary Decker

Unit: Speedway (IN)
Date: September 30
UC: David Hulett
Honor grad: Sydney Sims

Unit: Eagle (CA)
Date: October 5
UC: Patti Siegmann
Honor grad: Not specified

Unit: Calvert County (MD)
Date: October 13
UC: Rob Willis
Honor grad: Not specified

Unit: Keystone (PA)
Date: October 17
UC: Paul T. Kirsch
Honor grad: John O'Rourke

Unit: Shiawassee County (MI)
Date: October 19
UC: David Assfalg
Honor grad: Eric Cunningham

Unit: Northern Kentucky
Date: November 17
UC: Lynne Arnold
Honor grads: Reece Keller,
 Jared Darpel

Unit: Rutherford County (TN)
Date: December 15
UC: David Assfalg
Honor grad: Anna C. Tuma

Unit: Elizabethtown (PA)
Date: Not specified
UC: Michele Keener
Honor grad: Coco Ward

Unit: Emerald Coast (FL)
Date: Not specified
UC: Lynn Dominique
Honor grad: Reece Keller

Unit: Pyramid Rock (HI)
Date: Not specified
UC: John DiGiovanni
Honor grad: Emilio Novillo



Perfect Physical Fitness Test (PFT)

YM LCpl NAME Cantwell	Emerald Coast (FL)
YM LCpl Ethan Lundy	Pensacola (FL)
YM MGySgt Alex Loria	Col Wesley Fox (VA)
YM Pfc Jonathan Craig	Northern Kentucky
YM PVT Josef Viramontes	Rutherford County (TN)
YM SSgt Brian Booker	Rutherford County (TN)

Thanks from a YM Parent

I'm writing to say how much Young Marines has helped my family. I learned about the Young Marine program around spring of 2012 and my oldest son Kyle joined in August of 2012. By the time he finished recruit training, he was doing so much better in school. Kyle learned a lot in this last year of Young Marines, such as fire prevention, cooking and survival on encampments, marching in parades and his favorite event, the Golden Gate Encampment.

Then in August of 2013, my middle son Anthony joined Young Marines. Anthony has just graduated from recruit training.

I want to sincerely thank John Fitzgerald (Commanding Officer) and all of his staff for playing a huge roll in both of my son's successes, both personally and academically. This is an awesome unit and I recommend it to all my friends and family.

Nicole Bara
Foothills (CO) Parent



Anthony and Kyle Allen

"If I Can Accomplish This, SO CAN YOU!"

Dear Esprit,

I have just completed my 8th straight perfect PFT!

I would not have been able to overcome my injuries and achieve this goal without the support of my unit and other fellow Young Marines.

At my JLS in Dallas, Texas I received a 499 physical fitness score. After that, I was determined not to fall short again. As a long distance runner, I have bat-



PFTs, one being in my SLS in Smyrna,

Tennessee and others were a part of a healthy competition in my unit, as we push each other towards our new personal bests.

So, to the Young Marines in my unit and others, we stand behind you with encouragement. If I can accomplish this, SO CAN YOU!

Semper Fi,
YM GySgt Logan Hankerson
Tarrant County (TX)

ZACH VEACH

SCHEDULE 2014

STREETS | ROADS | OVALS

ST. PETERSBURG
STREET
MARCH 30
ST. PETERSBURG, FLA.

BARBER
ROAD COURSE
APRIL 26 & 27
BIRMINGHAM, ALA.

TORONTO
STREET
JULY 20
TORONTO, ONTARIO

MILWAUKEE
OVAL
AUGUST 17
MILWAUKEE, WIS.

LONG BEACH
STREET
APRIL 13
LONG BEACH, CALIF.

INDIANAPOLIS
ROAD COURSE
MAY 9 & 10
INDIANAPOLIS, IND.

MID-OHIO
ROAD
AUGUST 2&3
LEXINGTON, OHIO

SONOMA
ROAD COURSE
AUGUST 23 & 24
SONOMA, CALIF.

