



MARCENT

Family Newsletter

VOLUME 7, ISSUE 1

January - February 2012

Inside this issue:

Military Kids Connect	Pg. 1
MARCENT NEWS, Forward & Tampa	Pg. 2-3
MARCENT FWD hosts guests	Pg 4
MARCENT FWD News	Pgs. 5-7
Family Support Information and Resources	Pg. 8



IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS:

- **Family Readiness Officer, 813-827-5787**
- **MARCENT 1stSgt 813-827-7146**
- **TRICARE, 813-827-9906**
- **Airman and Family Readiness Centers
MacDill AFB
813-828-0145
Brandon, 813-655-9281**
- **MacDill AFB Family Advocacy, 813-827-9172**
- **MacDill AFB Chaplain
813-828-3621**
- **MacDill AFB Youth Ctr.
828-7956**
- **MacDill AFB Visitor Ctr.
828-2826**
- **MARCENT TAMPA CDO
827-7009**
- **Sexual Assault Prevention & Response
813-828-SARC (7272)
DOD Safe Helpline
877-995-5247
Outside US
202-470-5546**



Defense Department Launches Website for Military Children

The Defense Department launched a new website for children experiencing the challenges of military deployments.

The highly interactive website, www.MilitaryKidsConnect.org, was created by psychologists at DOD's National Center for Telehealth and Technology. It helps children of deployed parents cope with the stress, changing responsibilities, and concern for the safety of their parents, officials said.

The center, known as T2, developed the website with informative videos, educational tools, and engaging games and activities for three age groups: 6 to 8, 9 to 12, and 13 to 17. The site features monitored online social network forums for the groups to safely share their experiences with deployments.

MilitaryKidsConnect.org is the first DOD website to connect children in the widely separated active, reserve, and National Guard military communities, officials said.

"Since 2001, an estimated 2 million children have said goodbye to a parent headed to deployments in Iraq, Afghanistan, other places around the globe, and on ships at sea," explained Kelly Blasko, a T2 psychologist. "Military children are deeply affected by the separation of their parent's deployment. We've seen that in their hearts, kids deploy too."

The website has features that will help children, parents, and educators navigate the wide range of practical and emotional challenges military families must live with throughout the deployment cycle, Blasko said.

"While military children are very adaptable given the constant changes and stressful nature of military life," she added, "deployment puts a unique stress on family relationships at home, which can also affect the deployed service member. The DOD now has a website to help the youngest members of the military community."

The National Center for Telehealth and Technology serves as the primary DOD office for cutting-edge approaches in applying technology to psychological health.

For more information please visit these related sites:
MilitaryKidsConnect www.MilitaryKidsConnect.org
National Center for Telehealth and Technology www.t2health.org

Information provided from a National Center for Telehealth and Technology News Release.

MARCENT NEWS



MARCENT Single Marine Program off to great start!

GySgt Laci Spencer the MARCENT SMP representative has successfully aligned with the U.S. Air Force Single Airman program at MacDill AFB creating a "Single Military Program."

This new relationship has ignited a flurry of activities and interest for our single Marines.

Recent activities include; paddle boarding, Ecosafaris Zipline Zafari and Blitzkreig Paintball. More activities are slated along with community volunteerism.

Any questions or ideas for our Single Marine Program please contact GySgt Spencer at

813-827-7128

Marines receive Certificate of Commendation



Pictured R to L, Sgt Timothy K. Backer, Sgt Milton Candelaria, Sgt Paul A. Landers, Sgt Milton J. Espinoza, Cpl Joshua S. Dempsey.

Not Pictured; Sgt Marlon M. Brooks, SSgt Amanda Ciszewski, 1stLt Allison E. Dolby

MARCENT Celebrates the 2011 Holidays with style.



MARCENT Promotions and Awards Dec 2011 - Jan 2012



Col Gregory Gillette is pinned by his daughters Rebecca, Sophia and Son Nick.



Sgt Cesar Ponce with LtCol Sean C. Gallagher at his recent promotion ceremony.



HM2 Alberto J. Sevillaparra and Mom Sara at his reenlistment ceremony.

Reenlistments and Promotions December 2011- January 2012

Promotions; MSgt Jonathan T. Montenegro to his current rank

Reenlistments

Sgt Therral R. Crouch, Sgt Isidro J. Hyatt, SSgt Shawn F. Stickney, SSgt William V. Biesanz, SSgt Travis R. Gavel, SSgt Elwood T. Grant III, SSgt Alfred F. Thurlow, MSgt Dewane D. Thomas, MSgt Jonathan T. Montenegro, MGySgt Oscar N. Osani

Congratulations and Semper Parati

MARCENT FORWARD NEWS



Marines in Action!

Twenty two Marines, one Corpsman, and one spouse ran in memory of one of our fallen brothers in arms Corporal Marc T. Ryan.

The memorial run took place on 19 Nov and was run concurrently in his New Jersey hometown.

He was 25-years-old and was killed in an explosion in Ramadi.

Annual Bahrain Road Runner's Cross Island Race



21 Marines from MARCENT (FWD) participated in the annual Bahrain Road Runner's Cross Island Race on 16 December. It was a grueling 10 mile run across

open desert in the southern part of the island. The course was mostly loose sand but runners had to jump over oil pipelines and climb steep rocky hills just for fun. Thankfully the last few miles of the race were nice flat roads. LtCol Mike Garrett from the G-4 said it was one of the hardest runs he's ever done. Capt Valerie Gaskin from the G-8 showed what Marines can do by placing 2nd in the Females 17-30 age group with a time of 1:29.05. All the Marines who ran will remember this challenging race for years to come. **Semper Run!**



Sulphur Springs, Texas, community members share their holidays with US Marines serving overseas NSA, Bahrain

The West Oaks Funeral Home in Sulphur Springs, Texas, purchased approximately 150 Christmas stockings and solicited the local community to help fill them for deployed Marines.

Volunteers collected snacks, toiletries, movies, and other items and filled the stockings purchased by the West Oaks Funeral Home.

The employees of the funeral home took the lead in getting the stockings and mailing them overseas to Marines stationed here.

This was the first time the community organized the holiday gift drive, but their message in the card said it won't be the last.

"It is truly our pleasure to send you a little something from home, thank you for serving our country,"

the card read.

Merry Christmas from your Sulphur Springs community of family and friends.



MARCENT Forward Promotions and Awards Dec 2011 - Jan 2012



Sergeant Jyher Lazarre was combat meritoriously promoted to his current rank by Colonel Richard C. Jackson, Chief of Staff, MARCENT FWD.



Sergeant Miranda M. Holland, was promoted to her current rank by Colonel Emily E. Swain, Assistant Chief of Staff G-4, MARCENT FWD.



Gunnery Sergeant Conrad L. Calloway, was promoted to his current rank by Brigadier General Brian D. Beaudreault, Deputy Commander, MARCENT.



GySgt Brian D. Peterson was promoted to his current rank by Colonel Richard C. Jackson, Chief of Staff, MARCENT FWD.

Not pictured; Hospital Corpsman 3 Dante J. Brucchi was frocked to the rank of Hospital Corpsman 2 by Major Katrina Patillo HQCO Commanding Officer, MARCENT FWD.

Congratulations and Semper Fi!



MARCENT FORWARD HOSTS DISTINGUISHED GUESTS

ACMC visits MARCENT Forward

U.S. Marine Corps, General Joseph F. Dunford, Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps, along with Lieutenant General John M. Paxton, Lieutenant General Dennis J. Hejlik, Lieutenant General George Flynn, Major General Raymond C. Fox and Major General Angela Salinas visited with deployed Marines of U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Central Command (MARCENT FWD) on December 23, 2011 and wished the Marines and Sailors Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.



During this occasion, Marines were presented with a coin from the Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps for their outstanding contributions and superior performance of service.



A Message from the Sergeant Major Hello MARCENT Forward Family,

I hope you are all doing well and had an enjoyable time over the recent holiday season. For those of you that had the opportunity to have your Marine or Sailor come home for the holidays, I am sure it was the best present of all. I wish you all a successful and prosperous 2012.

I have been with MARCENT Forward just over two months and can tell you that we have a great staff here that is fully committed to the success of any and all missions assigned. You can take pride in the work your Marine or Sailor is doing out here.

I know many of you are deployment veterans and can handle any problem that comes your way but I ask that you save Military One Source www.militaryonesource.com as a favorite on your computer. It is a wealth of knowledge and assistance.

I thank you all for keeping the home fires burning and allowing us to gallivant around the world and do Marine Corps things :) In closing, if there is an issue or concern do not hesitate to e-mail me directly and I will do my best to help resolve the situation. My e-mail is john.mcGovern@marcent.usmc.mil Semper Fi, John J. McGovern, SgtMaj, MARCENT (FWD)



Commandant of the Marine Corps, General James F. Amos and Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, Michael P. Barrett, visit MARCENT FORWARD during the Thanksgiving holiday.

The Commandant and Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, visited with Marines deployed in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility and wished the Marines a belated happy Marine Corps birthday and a happy Thanksgiving holiday.



General James F. Amos speaks with the Marines of Fleet Anti-Terrorism Security Team Central Command (FASTCENT) and MARCENT (FWD) about the current state and future of the Marine Corps on November 27, 2011 while aboard NSA, Bahrain.



Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, speaks with the Staff NCO's Fleet Anti-Terrorism Security Team, Central Command (FASTCENT) and MARCENT (FWD) about macroeconomics, retention standards, and goals on November 27, 2011 aboard Naval Support Activity Bahrain.

General James F. Amos and Sergeant Major Michael P. Barrett present a coin to a select group of Marines from Fleet Anti-Terrorism Security Team, Central Command (FASTCENT) and MARCENT (FWD) on November 27, 2011.



MARCENT FORWARD NEWS

Ethiopian boy meets his American parents for the first time

MANAMA, Bahrain, 18 January 2012, A state of nervousness enthralled Maj. Toby Patterson throughout his two-and-half hour flight July 2011 in anticipation of meeting his son for the first time.

Patterson, currently with Marine Corps Forces Central Command (Forward), was embarking from his duty station in Bahrain; his wife, Lindsay Patterson, from their Sneads Ferry, N.C., home. In the Ethiopian capital city of Addis Ababa, the couple would meet to go see their newly adopted boy, Philip.



Philip, currently seven years old, had spent the last three years in an orphanage after his mother died and his father didn't have the means to support him and his other siblings. The Patterson's didn't know how the young boy would react to them.

"It was nerve racking, just because you aren't sure how he'll react to you arriving and being introduced to him as his new mom and dad," said Toby, a native of Marlow, Oklahoma.

After arriving in Addis Ababa, the couple went to see Philip the next day. An employee from their adoption agency drove them eight hours to Philip's orphanage in Awassa, Ethiopia. Finally, after 18 months, countless interviews, and endless paperwork, they met the young boy whom up until then, they had only read about, looked at his photos, and watched videos of him.

"Excited" doesn't quite encapsulate it, Lindsay recalled. "It was almost like meeting a celebrity for the first time," added Lindsay, a native of Uvalde, Texas.

The Patterson's had to go through court hearings that same week to get the Ethiopian government's approval to take Philip home. Their two year journey to adopt a child was almost complete.

The couple desired to have another child shortly after Lindsay gave birth to their first and only biological child, Noah, in February 2008. But after a year of trying and a consultation with a fertility specialist, the couple sought to adopt.

"Actually, Toby and I had decided before we were married that we would eventually adopt," she said.

The Patterson family started their adoption process in early 2010 when they were residing in Australia. The vetting process to determine if the family was suitable for a child would entail receiving letters of recommendation, undergoing background checks, and conducting several in-home interviews with a social worker.

Being a military family who lived in numerous locations, the process was anything but simple for them. Getting criminal and child abuse background checks from every state and country they resided in proved to be time consuming and complicated, they explained. The home study alone took seven months to complete.

Meanwhile, hundreds of miles away, a young Philip waited at his orphanage, unaware of the toil and process his future adoptive parents were experiencing. The international adoption environment is such that infant girls are preferred and the demand for older boys is almost non-existent. According to Lindsay, the seven-year old Philip was considered "old." "It's a heartbreaking situation," she expressed.

Meanwhile in Awassa, the Amharic speaking Philip attended school in the mornings. At school, he learned some English, the language that he would unknowingly have to become familiar with in his future. In his spare time, he played soccer. The soccer ball was a way the Patterson's connected with Philip when they met him for the first time. They deduced Philip's favorite pastime from reading his profile provided by the adoption agency.

The Patterson's first week together as a family with their latest son was spent playing soccer and looking at pictures. Detailed conversations had to take a backseat to activities and play due to the language barrier.

Philip was initially shy but he warmed up to his new parents quickly, said Lindsay.

Unfortunately, the Patterson's couldn't take their son home just yet; they would have to return months later because they first needed to get him a U.S. visa. Philip was sad to see his parents leave. "He didn't seem to understand why he couldn't leave with us right then, and that was very heartbreaking," said Lindsay.

Obtaining Philip's visa took three months.

In November, Lindsay returned to Ethiopia to take her son back home to the United States.



Lindsay Patterson and son Philip

MARCENT (FWD)

Unit, Personal and Family Readiness Command Team:

Deputy Commander:

Brigadier General Brian D. Beaudreault

Deputy Family Readiness Officer: Major Katrina Patillo

Chief of Staff: Colonel Richard Jackson

Single Marine Program Rep: Corporal Michael Roy

Sergeant Major: Sergeant Major John McGovern

Senior Enlisted: First Sergeant Godfrey Marille

Chaplain: CDR James Wetzell

Command Team Advisor: Mrs. Karen Beaudreault

STATE LIFE: "he doesn't seem too easily impressed!"

Philip took all his new experiences in stride – the escalators, the televisions, the all-you-can-eat buffets. The Patterson's have several friends who have adopted internationally and the kids' common reaction to their new surroundings in America was awe. Not Philip.

"He welcomes new ideas, places, people and food, but he doesn't seem too easily impressed!" said Lindsay.

Philip is very playful with his younger brother, Noah, who was excited from the first moment he saw his older brother. Noah ran up to Philip and gave him a hug as soon as they walked past airport security upon Lindsay and Philip's arrival from Ethiopia.

In their two-story home, the boys play with their train sets and work on science experiments for Philip who is currently being home-schooled by his mother. Philip teaches his younger brother how to ride a bicycle and play soccer in the neighborhood playground.

"He loves soccer and riding his bike, and he could spend an entire day doing those two activities if we let him," his mother wrote.

Sometimes they fight over toys or argue over which game to play, "but what kids don't?" asked Lindsay.

The boys often take walks down to the Intracoastal Water Way to look for fish and crabs. They also love to climb the kid's rock wall, she shared.

Philip's "very basic" English has been gradually progressing since he moved to America. He is now able to read some English words and apparently has impressive mathematical skills, boasts his mother.

Philip is part of a home-school co-op that meets weekly; the extroverted boy gets along with the other kids in his home-school wonderfully, said Lindsay. Home-schooling also allows Philip to work at his own pace and focus on subjects such as English and language arts.

"His English has come so far in the last few weeks, and he has no trouble communicating his needs and wants," Lindsay stated.



Philip plays with his younger brother, Noah Patterson.



MARCENT FORWARD NEWS

More than a 65 mile run!

MANAMA, Bahrain - Thirteen years ago, Maj. Jesse Sjoberg made a promise to spend the rest of his life with a woman named Jacquelyn "for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health," as the famous wedding vow reads.

In sickness and in health hits "too close to home" to the athlete who has participated in nearly 50 physically enduring events to include: marathons, ultra-marathons and triathlons. His wife he calls Jacqui is one of the one percent of people around the world who suffer from a life-threatening illness called cystic fibrosis a condition that limits its victim's life expectancy to their mid-30s.



Maj Sjoberg with wife Jacquelyn, and sons Ayden and Hunter.

Sjoberg completed a 14-hour, 65-mile trot at Naval Support Activity Bahrain, Oct. 6-7, to raise awareness and financial contributions for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.

"She's why I do this," said Sjoberg, a Marine on temporary additional duty with Marine Forces Central Command Forward, who's parent command is Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 3, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing. "I worry all the time about her, but she's tougher than any two Marines I know. By looking at her, you'll never be able to tell she has this condition."

About one percent of the world's population inherits a defective gene and its protein product that causes the body to produce unusually thick mucus in the lungs and digestive system. This mucus obstructs the lungs and leads to life threatening lung infections. In the digestive system, it stops natural enzymes from breaking down and absorbing food, according to the official Cystic Fibrosis website.

"She only has about 50 percent of a normal person's lung capacity," said Sjoberg.

Sjoberg's lungs were tested during his 65-miler.

"I... struggle to breathe for 12-13 hours in this endeavor (maybe 13-15 if it's really bad) Jacqui fights to breathe every day...even on the best of days. The comparison is hardly fair."

He has participated in the Great Strides walk for the last 12 years. The Cystic Fibrosis Foundation hosts this event every year to help raise money to research a cure and raise awareness about the rare disease that roughly 70,000 individuals have been diagnosed with across the globe.

"Usually the walk is about one to three miles so the people with CF can complete it," said Sjoberg. "The number 65 is significant to the fight against Cystic Fibrosis as it can be difficult for the children affected by the disease to pronounce the name of their affliction. When asked what is wrong with them, their response often comes out sounding like "65 roses."

One to three miles did not suit the marathon-veteran with a passion for pushing his body beyond the limit.

"I thought 65 miles would be a good distance, I wanted to take it to another level," he said jokingly.

He would have participated in the Great Strides walk in San Diego, but the Marine Corps needed Sjoberg somewhere else.

MARCENT Tampa

Unit, Personal and Family Readiness Command Team:

Commander: Lieutenant General Thomas D. Waldhauser

Family Readiness Officer: Mr. Daniel Abate

Chief of Staff: Colonel Mike Brassaw

Single Marine Program Rep: GySgt Laci Spencer

Sergeant Major: Sergeant Major R. Carter

Senior Enlisted: MGySgt Anthony Lynam

HQ Commanding Officer: Captain Michael Bradford

Command Team Advisor: Mrs. Gail Waldhauser

Contact: 818-827-5787, Daniel.abate@marcent.usmc.mil

"This year, I could not participate in the local Great Strides walk due to my all-expenses paid trip to the Middle East (aka my current deployment)," he wrote on his personal, fundraising Great Stride's webpage. "Nevertheless, it is my goal to raise money for this very worthy cause even while deployed."

This was the 13th time he has participated in a Great Strides event – one annual occasion for each year he has been married. Even though his run was not officially sponsored by the CFF, he managed a way to show his support from the opposite side of the world.

Preparation and Motivation

The Bellevue, Nebraska native spent most of his exercise time preparing for the event.

"I did Crossfit, running and biking," said the athlete who dead lifts 300 plus pounds and has the ability to knock-out 40 pull-ups in a single set. "Sometimes I would work out twice a day."



His typical week leading up to the 65-miler consisted of two to three one hour runs, three times weekly and either a 60-70 mile bicycle ride, or a 20-25 mile run on the weekends.

Sjoberg has a passion for fitness, the Marine Corps, his wife and his family. He shared how he combined the four most important aspects of his life into one event.

"I was just born to do it," Sjoberg said about his love for running. "She (Sjoberg's wife) is an absolute miracle to the CF community. Her parents were told she wouldn't make it to kindergarten. When she was growing up, they said she wouldn't make it to see middle school. She finished middle school and they told her she wouldn't make it to high school. She made it to college, she did get married and we have two beautiful boys together now; defying all odds. She's amazing."

Sjoberg had once heard that only 100 people around the world who suffer from CF have given successful birth.

Jacqui has now done it twice.

"To know every day that you don't know how it's going to turn out is a challenge in itself," said Sjoberg. "She represents hope. She has come this far in life and has never complained."

Sjoberg meets his future wife.

Sjoberg's brother Eric had been in a Reserve Officer Training Corps program while he was preparing for Marine Corps Officer Candidate School. Sjoberg met with his brother for a physical training session at Iowa State University.



Maj Sjoberg leads the way.

After the workout, the Sjoberg brothers went into the dorms. While walking in the hallway, Jesse heard a female's voice shout "Sjoberg."

"I thought someone was hollering for me," said Jesse. "I forgot for a second that my brother was in ROTC here and they called each other by their last names."

The young Jacquelyn approached them and identified herself as the voice calling from a far. She embraced Eric, then turned to Jesse and said you must be a Sjoberg too.

This occasion being the first time Jesse and Jacquie met, she hugged him as well.

"I instantly knew she was the one," he said with a smile. "I just knew right then and there."

30 days had elapsed since Jesse's first encounter with the young Jacquie. During this time Jesse had gone on a few dates with her. He had shared with her that he was leaving for Marine Corps OCS, and that she was "the one."

"She flew into Omaha a few days before I left," said Sjoberg. "I picked her up in a limo that took us to one of the nicest restaurants in the city. I had a violinist play while we were eating dinner."

Shortly before the dinner was over, Sjoberg proposed to Jacquelyn. "She said yes," said Sjoberg.

Support from the command

"He originally only told a few of us that he was running 65 miles on Oct. 6," said LtCol. Albert K. Kim, a Marine on the staff of MARCENT (Fwd). "He's a really humble guy; the fact that he is so humble made me want to help him even more."



Maj Sjoberg motivates MARCENT Marines prior to his 65 mile trek.

An e-mail was sent to the command by Kim, a friend of Sjoberg. Attached to the e-mail was a hyperlink, that sent users to Sjoberg's fundraising page revealing to readers the situation behind his 65-mile run. The page also provided a link for contributors to donate money to the cause.

"Any type of long distance run requires a support team," said Lt. Col. Jason C. Perdew, a fellow marathoner who exchanges running tips with Sjoberg on a regular basis. "It's very difficult to do by yourself; you're pushing your body to the limit."

Before the e-mail was branched out to the command, Sjoberg had raised around five thousand dollars in monetary contributions.

A few days after the entire command was aware of Sjoberg's 65 mile run, his collection total had doubled to more than ten grand.

"That's what Marines do," said Kim. "We look out for each other and help each other."

Not expecting a lot of support, Sjoberg was amazed when large numbers of Marines within the command volunteered their time to man the aid station, as well as run alongside him during the time event.

"I love Marines, I love the Marine Corps and I love how Marines treat my family and me," said Sjoberg.

The finish line

He usually participates in the endurance events to test himself in challenges most would see as "unattainable."

"People can do more than they think," said Sjoberg. "I love endurance events and testing myself."



Two figurines depicting Major Sjoberg's children look on from a support table.

"When the sun rose that morning, it started to get pretty rough," shared Sjoberg, explaining his fatigue as the finish line grew closer. "Each step was a challenge. My feet and legs were done; every muscle was just done."

On the final lap there was not a single person at the finish line -all his supporters were running with him, ensuring he finished.

"It was motivating," he said regarding his support on his final lap.

After running for 14 hours and five minutes, he finally crossed the finish line.

"The first thing I did was call my wife and kids to tell them I had finished," said Sjoberg. "My wife told me she was proud and to get some rest."

"Actually the first thing I did was sit down," he said with a chuckle.

Following a round of congratulations and applause from the Marines and sailors within the command, Sjoberg stumbled to Burger King to enjoy a well-deserved, post run meal: A whopper and milkshake.

"After a big event like this one is when I'll eat something like that," said Sjoberg.

The first night Sjoberg only slept a few hours. The next night however, he slept for 10, allowing his body to regenerate from the 65-mile punishment.

The Cystic Fibrosis Foundation holds an annual Great Strides walk to help raise money to help find a cure for the disease.

While there are a variety of treatments and medications to combat this disease, there is no cure.

Major Sjoberg created and ran the event to raise awareness and funds for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.



Military OneSource is a free 24-hour service available to all active duty, Guard, Reserve members and their families regardless of activation status. Information and referrals are given on a wide range of issues including behavioral health. Face-to-face, phone and online counseling services are available.

800-342-9647 www.militaryonesource.com



www.macdillfss.com

www.cnic.navy.mil/bahrain

Great resource for MacDill AFB information and activities.

Great resource for Naval Support Activity Bahrain.



MacDill AFB Airman and Family Readiness Centers

Serving all Military personnel and their families in the Greater Tampa Bay area. Please visit www.macdillfrc.com to learn more about their services.

***Brandon: 710 Oakfield Dr., Suite 153,
Brandon Fl 33511 813-655-9281***

***MacDill AFB: Post Office Plaza, Building 18,
8105 Condor Street MacDill AFB, Fl 33609
813-828-2721/0145***

NSA Bahrain Support Services

The Fleet and Family Support Program Bahrain reinforces Operational Readiness by providing a wide range of services to the Military community.

www.cnic.navy.mil/Bahrain/

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