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Riding to recover

Wounded warriors take a bow during the United Health Care Gulf Coast Challenge

By TOM McLAUGHLIN

Northwest Florida Daily News

A couple of years ago, Adam McCann was an injured veteran looking for something missing in his life.

"I was struggling to find a sport I could do," he said. "Another veteran was, like, 'Have you tried cycling?'"

McCann, a native of Cleveland, said he had never cycled in his life on the day he was introduced to Ride 2 Recovery.

"I do about 4,000 miles a year now," he said.

Ride 2 Recovery is a program created to help military members injured in the line of duty rehabilitate their bodies and their minds through biking.

Since he became a rider and now a team leader, McCann said he's lost 40 pounds, greatly strengthened his injured legs and gained much through the camaraderie afforded by Ride 2 Recovery.

"It's helped me physically and it's helped me mentally being around guys and girls in the same situation I'm in," he said.

On Wednesday, 180 Ride 2 Recovery cyclists completed a 74-mile trip from Orange Beach, Ala., to Okaloosa Island. Accompanied by an entourage of volunteer escorts and shepherded by local sheriff's deputies, they were encouraged by well-wishers all along their route and slowed for part of the journey by an overmatched reporter.

"Hurtin'," was how bicyclist Doug Edwards described the experience after he arrived at Ramada Plaza Beach Resort, the day's destination.

Wednesday's ride was one leg of the 395-mile United Health Care Gulf Coast Challenge, the



NICK TOMECEK | Daily News

Cyclists ride over the Navarre Beach Bridge on March 6, during the 2013 Ride 2 Recovery Gulf Coast Challenge. The day's 74-mile leg stretched from Orange Beach, Ala., to Okaloosa Island.

first of seven 350- to 400-mile Ride 2 Recovery challenges this year, according to event spokeswoman Debora Spano.

Riders began their trek in New Orleans and will finish the challenge Friday in Tallahassee.

There were some spills along the way Wednesday, and not everyone could endure the full trip.

One careless motorist in Mary Esther nearly bowling-pinned about a dozen cyclists.

But for the most part the wind blew the bikers in the right direction and the military communities between Pensacola and Okaloosa Island seemed to revel in taking a minute to honor their injured heroes.

One particularly awe-inspiring moment came as they passed Florosa Elementary School, where it appeared that every student and teacher had turned out with American flags to cheer and wave on the group.

"The folks along the Gulf Coast are extremely welcoming," Spano said. "We've had city officials, mayors, welcome us all along. The hotels, everyone has just been great."

The cyclists include injured active duty, those being treated at a transition unit or hospital, and those who have left the service, Spano said.

"It's good to have all these stages, they can help each other

through it," she said.

To be accepted as a rider, the wounded warrior must be fit enough to endure the trips, said Robert Keating, another riding team leader. Riders are also schooled in efficient cycling techniques.

Keating said there were 80 new riders with the group Wednesday. It was one of the largest groups of new Riders 2 Recovery participants, he said.

The Department of Defense provides funding to buy the bikes for military installations, Spano said.

"After you do so many challenges you get to keep your bike."

Running for a cause

By **ARMY STAFF
SERGEANT
RAMON M. MARRERO**

7th Special Forces Group
(Airborne)

Family members of a 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) Soldier travelled to Orlando to run in the annual Disney Princess Half-Marathon to honor the sacrifices of the families and Soldiers of the 7th SFG (A) on Feb. 24.

Out of the five women who ran, three, Pam Smith, Kim Tracy and Stephanie Bartron, are related to Chaplain (Cpt.) Michael Smith, the 2nd Battalion's Chaplain. The ladies belong to a prayer group who has adopted the 7th SFG (A) as "their Soldiers."

The group sent many letters and care packages during the 2nd Battalion's deployment to Afghanistan, and decided to run in the half-marathon in their

honor.

Their motivation, as described by them, "if the 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) Soldiers can make great sacrifices for us, the least we can do is sacrifice a little personal discomfort to train and run this race in their honor."

The ladies were all outfitted with shirts and hats with the 7th SFG (A) logo on them, during the race they met other Special Forces family members.

One of the women, who was pregnant, refused to pull out of the race, and successfully finished all 13.1 miles. All of them were tired at the end, but extremely happy they were able to finish the race.

"It is great to see the support for the Soldiers of the 7th Group reach all the way out of South Carolina, where these ladies live," said Smith, son of Pam Smith, a participant and coordinator for the run.



COURTESY PHOTO

Kim Tracy (from left), Pam Smith, Stephanie Bartron, Pat Graham and Doris Duffy, pose for a photo during the annual Disney Princess Half-Marathon on Feb. 24 in Orlando. These ladies trained and ran the half-marathon in honor of the sacrifices the Soldiers of the 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) have made. The women belong to a prayer group out of South Carolina, which has adopted the 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) as "their Soldiers."

Army chaplain to be awarded Medal of Honor

By **SGT. KIMBERLY BROWNE**

U.S. Army

FORT HOOD, Texas — A former Soldier with the 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, will be posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor by President Barack Obama, April 11, at the White House.

Capt. Emil Joseph Kapaun, chaplain, served with Headquarters Company, 8th Cav. in the Korean War where he was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, or DSC, Aug. 18, 1951. The award of the Medal of Honor to Kapaun is an upgrade of the DSC.

Kapaun, also a World War II veteran, sacrificed his own safety while the regiment was attacked by hostile forces and he moved among the wounded to provide medical aid and comfort.

At dusk, Nov. 2, 1950, the troops who were able to fight were ordered to attempt to break through the surrounding enemy. Kapaun however, remained behind to administer medical treatment and render religious rites wherever needed.

Upon capture, Kapaun and other prisoners of war, known as POWs, were forced to walk more than 85 miles to the city of Pyoktong, North Korea. While forcibly walking this march through snow and ice, Kapaun assisted the wounded and encouraged other Soldiers to do the same.

While he was held captive, he snuck around to more than 200 men that were also captive to say prayers and give support. He also secretly moved able-bodied men out to the countryside at night, while avoiding guards, to get food and firewood to help keep the prisoners alive. At this point the

other POWs had dubbed him the "good thief."

Kapaun was a Prisoner of War from Nov. 2, 1950, until he died from a blood clot, May 23, 1951.

"Father Emil Kapaun is an American hero who embodies the Medal of Honor's ideals as our nation's highest award for military service," said Maj. Gen. Anthony Ierardi, commanding general of the 1st Cavalry Division. "He distinguished himself with valor before his capture and continued to care for his fellow Soldiers at a great risk to himself while interned in a prisoner of war camp. Although Father Kapaun did not survive to be liberated along with hundreds of the prisoners he ministered to and assisted, his faith, honor and selfless devotion to duty reflects the finest tradition of the U.S. Army, the 1st Cavalry Division, and the Army Chaplain Corps."

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Army's 'Ready and Resilient Campaign' kicks off

WASHINGTON (Army News Service) — The Army has made available to Soldiers a new online resource to complement the Ready and Resilient Campaign that launched March 12.

The campaign's website is available now at www.army.mil/readyandresilient, and is designed as a "one-stop shop" for resources related to Soldier resilience and readiness. The new site includes sections for medical readiness, personal readiness, and Soldier transition issues.

On the front page of the site is a list of hotlines for Soldiers to call for when "something bad happens," said Col. John Sims, with the Army's Office of the Chief of Public Affairs. Such an event could in-

clude a sexual assault, suicide issues, traumatic brain injury or post-traumatic stress disorder.

The Army already has dozens of programs and websites that can help Soldiers improve their readiness, help them become more resilient, and help them deal with crises such as sexual assault, suicidal ideation, post-traumatic stress disorder, or traumatic brain injury for instance. But the new website is meant to bring access to those resources together in one place.

"You can find this information in 500 other different places. But this is supposed to be the one-stop shop for Soldiers," Sims said. "We wanted to make a place where leaders, Soldiers and family



U.S. ARMY GRAPHIC

members could go and find information and quick resources, emergency hotlines, and learn to improve their resiliency."

Resilience is an individual's ability to bounce back when "something bad happens, in the simplest terms," said Sims. A Soldier's resilience, he said, can come from how they were raised, the ex-

periences they had in their lives, and how they were trained.

Sims said the secretary of the Army, the chief of staff of the Army and the vice chief of staff of the Army want to show the connection between a Soldier's resilience and a Soldier's readiness for duty. That connection, and maintaining that connection, is the impetus for the Ready and Resilient Campaign.

Readiness, Sims said, is the ability of an individual or unit to accomplish its assigned task or mission.

"We are recognizing that it's not just the training we go through that makes us ready, but all the things that we bring as an individual," Sims said.

Col. Theresa Gonzalez, with Army Medical Command, said for an individual, not being ready could be the result of administrative, medical, or mental health issues. Readiness,

she said, means that a Soldier is resilient to the many stressors that all Soldiers face.

"The difference between people who do well and sustain their capacity, is what we refer to under the name resilience," Gonzalez said. "A more resilient Soldier is able to accept the same load, allostatic load is the term we would use. They can accept the same allostatic load and continue to perform their mission."

An "allostatic load," she said, describes the physical consequences to one's body that result from repeated exposure to stressors. Those stressors could include, among other things, relationship issues or financial issues, for instance.

Such stressors can affect a Soldier's ability to concentrate, Sims added. And long-term exposure to such stressors, and a Soldier's inability to adapt to them and deal

with them can also affect his or her health, Gonzalez added.

Additionally, Gonzalez said, Soldiers rarely have just one stressor in their lives, they often have multiple stressors that can affect them. And the Ready and Resilient Campaign website, and program overall, is meant to help Soldiers identify in one place the things that are affecting their lives and then point them to available solutions.

Sims said the Ready and Resilient Campaign offers "nothing new" in terms of programs, but instead aims to take an array of existing Army programs and optimize them, to make them all more effective. Additionally, he said, some programs that are redundant have been eliminated to ensure resources are directed to other more effective programs.

"Really what we are doing is changing how we view these programs," Sims said. "No longer do we view suicide as unconnected to negative behavior, or sexual assault, or other things. We are now seeing them much more holistically."

The Ready and Resilient Campaign website is just one part of a larger Campaign to emphasize how Soldier resilience directly affects a Soldier's readiness, and the readiness of that Soldier's unit. The goal of the Ready and Resilient Campaign is to make it easier for Soldiers, commanders and families from all components of the Army to find the resources they need to make themselves ready for the war fight, and to help them understand the connection between being resilient and being ready to be a Soldier.



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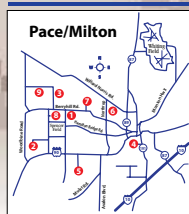
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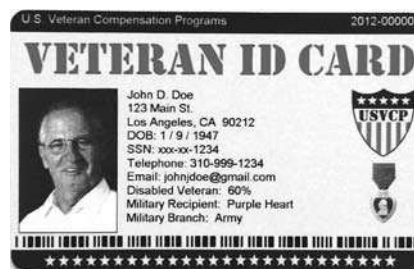
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RED 7 BRIEFS

From staff reports

Wreck-It Ralph outdoor movie

Every third Thursday of the month through September, Legends will have a big-screen showing of a family movie outdoors on the grass at sundown. Movie titles will be new releases and announced prior to show dates. Wreck-It Ralph, a game-hopping adventure for all ages, is showing March 21. Cost is \$3 in advance and \$5 at the event. Free popcorn will be served. Food and beverage specials will be offered. 850-279-3534

UFC Live on PPV at Legends

All fight fans are invited to join Legends Sports Grill at 9 p.m. March 16 for the live pay-per-view showing of UFC 158 — St-Pierre vs. Diaz. Doors open at 7 p.m. with no admission charged. Enjoy food and beverage specials from the Legends menu, plus a lucky prize giveaway. And with Legends' 9 wide-screen televisions and 100-inch HD projection screen, you're sure not to miss one second of the action! All fights start at 9 p.m. with doors opening at 7 p.m. 850-279-3534

Teen Spring Break Camp

Teens ages 12-17 looking for some high-energy fun are invited to sign up for a full week of Spring Break Camp activities March 25-29 at the Eglin Youth Center. Camp will open at 7 a.m. with daily activities beginning at 7:30 a.m. Activities include rock climbing, paintball, zip lines, high and low ropes course and a trip to Wild Adventures. Cost is \$200 per week for Youth Center members

and \$225 per week for non-members. Cost of lunch is included in fees. Members are invited to participate in other Youth Center activities after daily camp activities are over. Space is limited; sign up early at the Youth Center. 850-882-8212

Get Into Golf for singles

The Eglin Golf Course presents "Get Into Golf," a new introductory golfing promotion for single military members. In just five fun lessons, participants can get acquainted with the game, then stay connected with five more refresher rounds. Value of this package is \$200 per person and includes free rental clubs for one year. Cart fee is not included. Single military members, all branches, may register free of charge as part of the Single Airman Initiative. Clinic is scheduled for March 12-15 from 5-7 p.m. Participation is limited to 8 golfers per session. Registration will open the month prior to scheduled clinics. If sessions fill, classes will be formed for personnel on the waiting list. Call 850-882-2949.

Disc Golf Tournament

The first annual Eglin Disc Golf Tournament will be held at 8:30 a.m. March 16 at the new Post 1 Point Disc Golf Course. Awards will be presented in all divisions - advanced, intermediate, beginner and youth. Cost for tournament is \$25 and includes registration and t-shirt. To register, call Outdoor Recreation at 850-882-5058.

Game Nights at Legends

Legends Sports Grill hosts a tourney-style Texas Hold'em poker night every second Thursday of the

month at 5 p.m. with the winner receiving an overnight stay in Destin. Xbox gamers are invited out the third Thursday of the month for tournament play from 6-8 p.m. Bring your friends and get in on the fun. 850-729-3534

St. Patrick's Day event benefit

Corned beef and cabbage will be on the menu at the Magnolia Grill on Sunday, March 17, when the restaurant hosts a special St. Patrick's Day event benefitting Catholic Charities and the Fisher House of the Emerald Coast.

The "Raisin' of the Green" fundraiser will take place from noon to 4 p.m., and will feature the traditional St. Patrick's Day meal of corned beef, cabbage and potatoes. Attendees will enjoy lively Irish music, and those who are feeling lucky can take part in a 50/50 donation drawing. The Magnolia Grill is located at 157 Brooks Street in Fort Walton Beach.

The cost is \$8 per person in advance and \$10 at the door. 50/50 tickets may be purchased in advance or at the event, and you need not be present to win.

For more information or to purchase tickets in advance, contact Kelly at 737-0864 or Evelyn at Catholic Charities at 244-2825 or Kim at Fisher House at 259-4956.

Covenant Hospice offers support group

Feelings of grief and loss associated with the death of a loved one can be overwhelming. For this reason, Covenant Hospice will be offering a six-week grief support group from 1 to 2:30 p.m. March 26 at the Covenant Hospice office, located at 220 Eglin Parkway, N.E. in Fort Walton Beach. Those who attend will have the opportunity to explore

their grief in a safe and caring environment.

The support group begins on Tuesday, March 26 and will run for six consecutive Tuesday afternoons through April 30. The support group is free, but registration is required by March 21. Spaces are limited. To register for this support group, or for additional information, call Chris Krebs, BSW at 729-1800 or email to chris.krebs@covenanthospice.org.

Covenant Hospice is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to providing comprehensive, compassionate services to patients and loved ones during times of life-limiting illnesses. The focus of Covenant Hospice is to enable its patients to live as fully and comfortably as possible, to provide dignified palliative care, to assist patients' loved ones in coping with end-of-life issues and the eventual death of the patient, and to improve care for all patients at the end of their lives by example and education.

Mary Esther UMC hosts 5K

Mary Esther UMC will host its Second Annual "We Walk, We Run, We Change the World" 5K Fun Run/Walk, Saturday, April 6. This year's event includes a Children's Fun Run/Walk and an Obstacle Course, as well as the adult Run/Walk. Proceeds will go to meet the needs of children in Mary Esther; supporting children's outreach ministries such as the Backpack, Angel Tree, and Back to School ministries. Descriptions of these vital ministries and online registration for both Fun Run/Walks are available at the church's website www.maryestherumc.org.

Starting location for the adult Run/Walk is Mary Esther Elementary School,

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Some defense budget relief voted; commissary cuts likely

The Joint Chiefs are breathing a bit easier after the House voted Wednesday to fund the government through September, and included a 2013 defense appropriations bill that would give the armed services more money and budget flexibility to ease the threat of a wartime readiness crisis.



Tom Philpott

civilian personnel paychecks and key military family support programs.

Unaltered by the House bill, for example, is a

Passage of HR 933 also drove home a bracing reality: that even the most conservative defense hawks are set to allow arbitrary “sequestration” cuts to clobber portions of the defense budget, including

\$130 million bite from commissary operations this year, which will force base grocery stores, at least in the continental United States, to close Wednesdays, their lightest sales day, from late April through

September. This will coincide with one-day-a-week furloughs — or 20 percent pay cuts — planned for up to 800,000 civilian employees of the Department of Defense.

Civilian staff will be cut at military hospitals and clinics, at Defense-run dependent schools and at base day care centers. The Marine Corps already has announced that tuition assistance has been closed to new entrants. These are just a sampling of cuts occurring across the military because of a March 1 sequestration order to cut federal spending across the board to save \$85 billion this fiscal year, half of that from the DoD.

Since January, Defense civilian and military leaders have warned that their 2013 budgets are in a vice, created by a continuing budget resolution that froze spending below fiscal 2012 levels, and by the “mindless” cuts of sequestration, which kicked in this month after lawmakers stopped even trying to negotiate a “grand bargain” \$1.2 trillion debt-reduction deal.

President Obama and Democrats insist that any deal be “balanced” with a

combination of spending cuts and new revenue, to include either tax increases or closing of tax loopholes on the wealthy and on special interests.

Republican leaders insist they will not raise more revenue, even by closing loopholes they’ve criticized before, given that they did agree Jan. 1 to allow a several percentage point bump in income taxes for individuals earning more than \$400,000 and families earning more than \$450,000.

Neither side budged as the sequester took hold, despite increasingly dire warnings from the Joint Chiefs that readiness would deteriorate quickly and troop morale was falling amid the budget chaos.

Against this backdrop, Reps. Bill Young, R-Fla., chairman of the House appropriations subcommittee on defense, and Hal Rogers, R-Ky., the full committee chairman, drafted HR 933 to accomplish some short-term goals if the Senate will agree to it. One is to avoid a government shutdown March 27 when the current continuing resolution is to expire.

A second goal is to give some budget relief and

flexibility to the military, first by passing a 2013 defense appropriations bill that had been negotiated last year with the Senate. Also, HR 933 would allow a shift of \$10.4 billion from less critical accounts into operations and maintenance accounts so the services, despite sequestration, can conduct vital training and resume critical construction projects and weapon buys.

The day before the House voted 267 to 151 to pass HR 933, Rep. John Culberson, R-Texas, chairman of the appropriations subcommittee on military construction and veterans affairs, held a hearing in which he pressed the service chiefs to attest publicly to the importance of HR 933.

Gen. Raymond T. Odierno, Army chief of staff, said the Army had begun to cancel combat training center rotations for deploying brigade combat teams, except those bound for Afghanistan. It would be forced to cut flying time for helicopter pilots by at least 37,000 hours in 2013, impacting readiness of 750 pilots. He said HR 933 was “absolutely critical” and would address “at least a

third” of the Army’s budget problems.

Adm. Jonathan W. Greenert, chief of naval operations, was more effusive, saying HR 933 would make “almost a night and day” difference. The appropriations bill alone would close Navy’s current \$8.6 billion funding gap for operations and maintenance by \$4.6 billion.

If the full Congress passes it, he said, Navy would be able to put another carrier strike group and amphibious ready group forward and “get back to the covenant that we have with the combatant commanders ... We’d get some carrier overhauls, we’d get carrier new construction, we’d get submarine new construction, we’d get all the military construction back.”

Marine Corps commandant Gen. James F. Amos warned that unless operating dollars are restored, by mid-2014 more than 55 percent of non-deployed Marine ground units and 50 percent of non-deployed aviation units would see readiness ratings fall to C-3 or below, which means they would be unable to carry out some core missions. Non-deployed pilots would get 10 flight hours a month versus 15 to 17 hours needed to stay proficient. Maintenance on F/A-18 fighter aircraft would fall so far behind schedule, Amos said, that “we may very well never catch up” to get the aging fleet “back up to flying status.”

Gen. Mark A. Welsh III, Air Force chief of staff, said HR 933 would make a “huge” difference to his service, allowing re-programming of budget dollars to mitigate sequestration’s impact.

“In a big way,” Welsh

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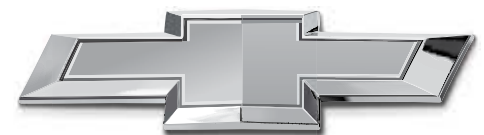


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2005 DODGE GRAND CARAVAN SE.....	P12891A	\$5,995	2010 FORD FUSION SE.....	P12920	\$13,995	2011 TOYOTA CAMRY BASE.....	13193A	\$16,995
2002 PONTIAC GRAND AM GT1.....	T13518A	\$5,995	2011 CHEVROLET MALIBU LS 1FL.....	P12926	\$14,995	2008 BMW 3 SERIES 328I.....	12574A	\$17,995
2005 CHEVROLET COBALT LS.....	P13004A	\$6,995	2005 CHEVROLET TAHOE Z71.....	13292A	\$14,995	2012 CHEVROLET IMPALA LS.....	P12996	\$17,995
2004 CHEVROLET TRAILBLAZER LT.....	13372A	\$6,995	2011 FORD ESCAPE XLT.....	P12925	\$14,995	2011 CHEVROLET TRAVERSE LT 1LT.....	P12930	\$18,995
2004 NISSAN ALTIMA 2.5 S.....	12571B	\$6,995	2010 VOLKSWAGEN BEETLE 2.5L.....	P13025	\$14,995	2006 LEXUS GS 300.....	12140A	\$18,995
2002 VOLKSWAGEN PASSAT GLX.....	12575B	\$6,995	2009 CHEVROLET COLORADO LT.....	P13009	\$15,995	2005 CHEVROLET SILVERADO 1500 Z71.....	P13015	\$19,995
2005 CHEVROLET MALIBU LS.....	13442A	\$7,995	2009 JEEP PATRIOT LIMITED.....	P13002	\$15,995	2009 FORD EXPLORER EDDIE BAUER.....	12481A	\$19,995
2002 FORD ESCAPE XLT.....	13149B	\$7,995	2012 KIA FORTE EX.....	P13006	\$15,995	2010 FORD EXPLORER SPORT TRAC XLT.....	P13014	\$19,995
2003 GMC SIERRA 1500.....	T13499A	\$9,995	2006 CADILLAC DTS BASE.....	13233A	\$16,995	2013 FORD FOCUS SE.....	T13366A	\$19,995
2006 NISSAN FRONTIER SE I4.....	13227B	\$11,995	2007 CHEVROLET SILVERADO 1500 CLASSIC LS LS1.....	T12572B	\$16,995	2008 JEEP WRANGLER X.....	13467A	\$19,995
2009 PONTIAC G5 GT.....	13184B	\$11,995	2011 FORD FUSION SEL.....	P12937	\$16,995	2011 NISSAN FRONTIER SV.....	T12247A	\$19,995
2006 BUICK LUCERNE CXL.....	T13508A	\$12,995	2011 NISSAN ALTIMA 2.5.....	P13013	\$16,995	2011 DODGE RAM 1500 SLT QUAD CAB.....	P12939	\$20,995



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