

Minnesota teens get a taste, and an earful, of boot camp

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Teenagers who are considering joining the United States Marine Corps were able to get a glimpse into what they can expect to experience when they leave for San Diego, Calif. or Parris Island, at Camp Ripley, May 3-4.

The recruits came from all over the state and beyond to attend the Marines' Minneapolis Regional Recruiting Office's Mini Boot Camp.

One at a time, buses carrying potential Marines rolled into Camp Ripley, where the recruits were welcomed by actual drill sergeants.

Once the sergeant got on the bus, recruits were ordered off as quickly as possible, before assembling in formation where Gunnery Sergeant Joseph Ferguson had them move in and out of formation over and over again.

"Overall our initial reason is to establish dominance and set a standard immediately. We expect the best and will not allow them to deviate from that at all," Ferguson said.

Once he steps on the bus, Ferguson said he sets his tone and lets the recruits know that they have to give their best effort.

The 15-year veteran of the Marine Corps was a drill instructor from 2008 to 2011 before being brought back into that duty in 2016.

Having worked at the receiving depot at actual boot



(041419-Staples-Motley)

During the United States Marine Corps' mini boot camp, May 3, Recruit Kyle Maxson out of the Coon Rapids recruiting office was yelled at by Gunnery Sergeant Joseph Ferguson after Maxson dropped his bag.

camp, Ferguson knows what it is like and he and his team try to make the mini boot camp as close to the real experience as possible.

When Ferguson and other drill sergeants yell the same thing at recruits again and again, he said they are working to instill the idea through repetition, while creating a sense of urgency.

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—Gunnery Sgt. Joseph Ferguson

critical that discipline is quickly established, Ferguson said.

"Right when we get on that bus for the next 12 weeks, we have to establish that discipline and how we do in the beginning is important," he said, compar-

ing it to raising a child. "How you treat them as a kid is going to influence them as a teenager," Ferguson said.

While the drill instructors may seem mean to some, Ferguson said the goal is to take civilians who do not know how the Marines operate and make them into Marines quickly.

"Instead of giving it to them in baby steps, we are giving it to them 100 percent," Ferguson said. "It's only going to pay dividends."

The mini boot camp allows recruits to see the hard work that goes into becoming a marine, he said.

One of the potential recruits looking to join the marines was Little Falls Community High School Senior Kenneth Glaser.

Three of Glaser's brothers and his sister had joined the Marines, which made him interested in joining.

While he had expected to get yelled at by drill instructors, one thing Glaser had not expected was for it to be so cold at the event.

As recruits arrived Friday, it was raining at Camp Ripley, where they would take part in physical tests, such as pull-ups after they arrived and put their belongings in the tin buildings that used to house soldiers.

For Glaser, if the drill ser-

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Little Falls Senior Center

Monday, May 13 — 9:30 a.m. — Fresh doughnuts; 9 a.m. — Bone Builders exercise and Wild Rummy; 11:45 a.m. — Dinner, beef tips; 12:30 p.m. — AARP driver safety refresher class.

Tuesday, May 14 — 9 a.m. — Pool tourney and Dominoes; 11:45 a.m. — Dinner, chicken; 1 p.m. — Whist.

Wednesday, May 15 — 9:30 a.m. — Bone Builders exercise class and 500 Cards; 11:45 a.m. — Dinner, turkey; 12:30 p.m. — Matter of Balance.

Thursday, May 16 — 7

a.m. — Pool tourney; 9:30 a.m. — free legal appointments; 3 p.m. — Cribbage; 5 p.m. — Evening meal, country steak.

Friday, May 17 — 8:30 a.m. — Board of Directors meeting; 10 a.m. — Wild Rummy; 11:45 a.m. — Dinner, barbecue chicken sandwich.

Everyone is welcome for the meals. Make reservations by noon the previous day by calling (320) 632-8200. Meals-on-Wheels are also available.



Submitted photo

Sales to support raised gardens at LFCC

Little Falls Care Center will hold a spring plant sale, bake sale and silent auction Thursday, May 23, from 8:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. On day of sale, bidding closes at 1 p.m. on silent auction baskets, showcased by Nataly Milbradt, left, and Dorothy Smude. Proceeds from the sale will go toward raised gardens for the residents. The Center is located across from the Holiday Gas Station, 1200 First Ave. NE, Little Falls. For information, call Milbradt at (320) 632-2069.

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