

Marines here to show weapons of the corps marksmanship unit

By LYNN RAE POVEC
Staff Writer

The U.S. Marine Corps Marksmanship Training Unit, which holds shooting contests to help train Marines in marksmanship, will be at the Memorial Student Center through the end of this week to answer questions about its weapons display.

For more than 40 years, the unit has been responsible for establishing marksmanship policies and techniques for the marines. Based in Quantico, Va., it also develops and refines the mechanisms of the weapons the marines use.

The U.S. Marine Corps Recruiting Station in Houston, which is responsible for recruiting in College Station, invited the unit to set up the 50-gun display here. The Marines arrived here Wednesday morning, and officers will man the display Thursday and Friday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Camouflaged in leaves and face paint, Sgt. James Ferguson will be on hand to explain how a scout sniper "surgically implants" a bullet.

A Marine for six years, Ferguson is "highly trained in fieldcraft observation, camouflage and marksmanship," skills he has taught for four years at the Marines' sniper school.

"(Snipers) are used to reduce selected key targets," Ferguson said Wednesday. "We're not bad people, or murderous individuals. We're just like anybody else."

Snipers must be able to hit a stationary target at 1,000 yards and a moving target at 800 yards, he said. They work in teams of two — one spotting, the other shooting — and a sniper "selects a target on his own terms," Ferguson said.

"Don't compromise," he said. "Let the average guy go by."

Ferguson said a sniper's first shot should, ideally, disable the enemy's radio, the second, the radio man, and the third, the platoon leader.

At the risk of giving his position away to the enemy, a sniper should never fire more than three rounds from the same spot, he said. Marine scout snipers use the M40A1 sniper rifle in executing their missions.

"We have the distinction of being the only service that has developed, built and maintained our own sniper rifle," said Chief Warrant Officer Gene Baker.

Prior to 1978, the military services used the M14A1 rifle, Baker said, which lost accuracy over time because moisture in the air shrunk its wooden stock.

In 1978, the marines developed the M40A1 sniper rifle from a commercial Remington rifle. The M40's stock is fiberglass, which won't shrink. It has a rust-dissolving stainless steel barrel which allows for less recoil be-

Sgt. James Ferguson:
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cause it is heavier.

"Currently all (military) services are trying to buy this from us," Baker said.

He said 25 of the training unit's 180 members travel to Marine bases around the world (excluding Europe) to gather ideas on weapon improvement and to instruct Marines on marksmanship. Other ideas come from commercial industry and various organizations, such as the American Defense Preparedness Association, Baker said.

Master Sgt. Gary Gregory, who drafts the weapons the training unit develops and who helped design the M40, said interaction at the Marines' shooting matches provide ideas for improving a weapon's inner-workings.

The unit holds four, month-long division matches to train Marines in advanced marksmanship.

These are held in Japan, Hawaii, California and North Carolina, where Marines follow a week of instruction with three weeks of shooting practice.

The winners of each match — the top 10 percent of those who participated — continue to other matches within the Marine Corps. National championships which are held once a year in Ohio,

Living with roommates requires adjustments

By ADA FAY WOOD
Reporter

Adjusting to living with a roommate can be as much of a learning process for college students as required classes. However, the Department of Student Affairs has made the process a little bit easier by offering several ways to deal with this new style of living.

"Spend time getting to know your roommate," counselor Stephen Litter said.

Lack of communication is the root of many or all of the problems that occur between roommates, Litter said. Students should discuss likes and dislikes and then lay out ground rules to follow.

Begin the semester by discussing important topics with your roommate, Litter said, and always be willing to compromise. If there are potential or real problems they need to be dealt with immediately.

Especially for freshmen, living with a roommate for the first time could be a difficult adjustment. "Freshmen are dealing with tran-

sition into a new atmosphere," Litter said. This transition can cause problems. For example, newly felt independence can lead to forgetfulness; students with early classes often can be very noisy to a sleeping roommate who has late classes, he said.

If the problems aren't confronted they can affect other people, and this creates a bigger problem, Litter said.

If students can't work the problems out alone, the dormitory resident advisers are available for help. The Student Counseling Service on the third floor of the YMCA Building is another place to go for help.

Karmen Hinch, a resident adviser in Briggs Dorm, said the problems that have already arisen this semester include roommates who are messy and those who are inconsiderate.

A roommate tenancy contract is available at the Off-Campus Center. The contract allows roommates to list all obligations and habits beforehand.

"Don't ruin your whole semester," Litter said. "Talk about it!"

Students encouraged to register for voting

By KATHI COOK
Reporter

As politicians begin to trek down the campaign trails, many people who normally wouldn't be interested in politics suddenly are. But one step is necessary to participate, and it is a simple one — registration.

Anyone who is 18 years old by election day and is a U.S. citizen without a felony record is eligible to vote if they are registered 30 days prior to the election date, Gerald Winn, tax assessor/collector of Brazos County, said.

"We've tried to make applications available everywhere we can," Winn said, "they're on campus, in several banks, or in my office in the courthouse."

Applications now are available at the Memorial Student Center hotel desk, the visitor information center, and the Admissions and Records Office.

Winn said he has sworn-in volunteer deputy registrars who now are eligible to solicit voters to register.

There are several independent groups holding voter drives — like the Democratic parties and Republi-

can parties on campus," Winn said.

Winn said the presidential election and the special congressional elections of Phil Gramm, Richard Smith and Neeley Lewis have created the increased interest in voting this year.

More than 5,000 students enrolled at Texas A&M are registered to vote in Brazos County, Winn said. With a constant student turnover, several names are purged from the voter file every two years. At the beginning of the year, the tax assessor/collector's office sends each registered voter a new registration card. If it is not returned, the voter's name is placed on a strike list from March 1 to Aug. 15 unless the voter re-registers with his new address.

If you choose to remain registered in the county of your permanent residence, to vote absentee you should contact your county clerk or election administrator 24 days prior and up to four days before the election day to receive a ballot.

Even with easy access to applications and a re-registration sent to the voter, some citizens do not register to avoid jury duty, Winn said.



Photo by PETER ROCHA

Sgt. James Ferguson, a scout sniper with the USMC, answers questions in the Memorial Student Center Wednesday afternoon.

Help Wanted

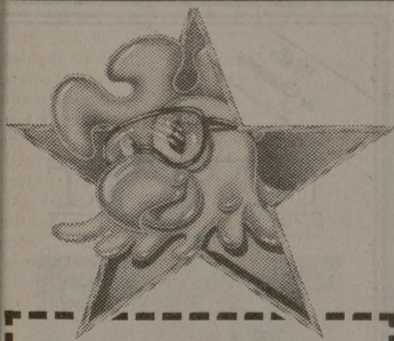
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