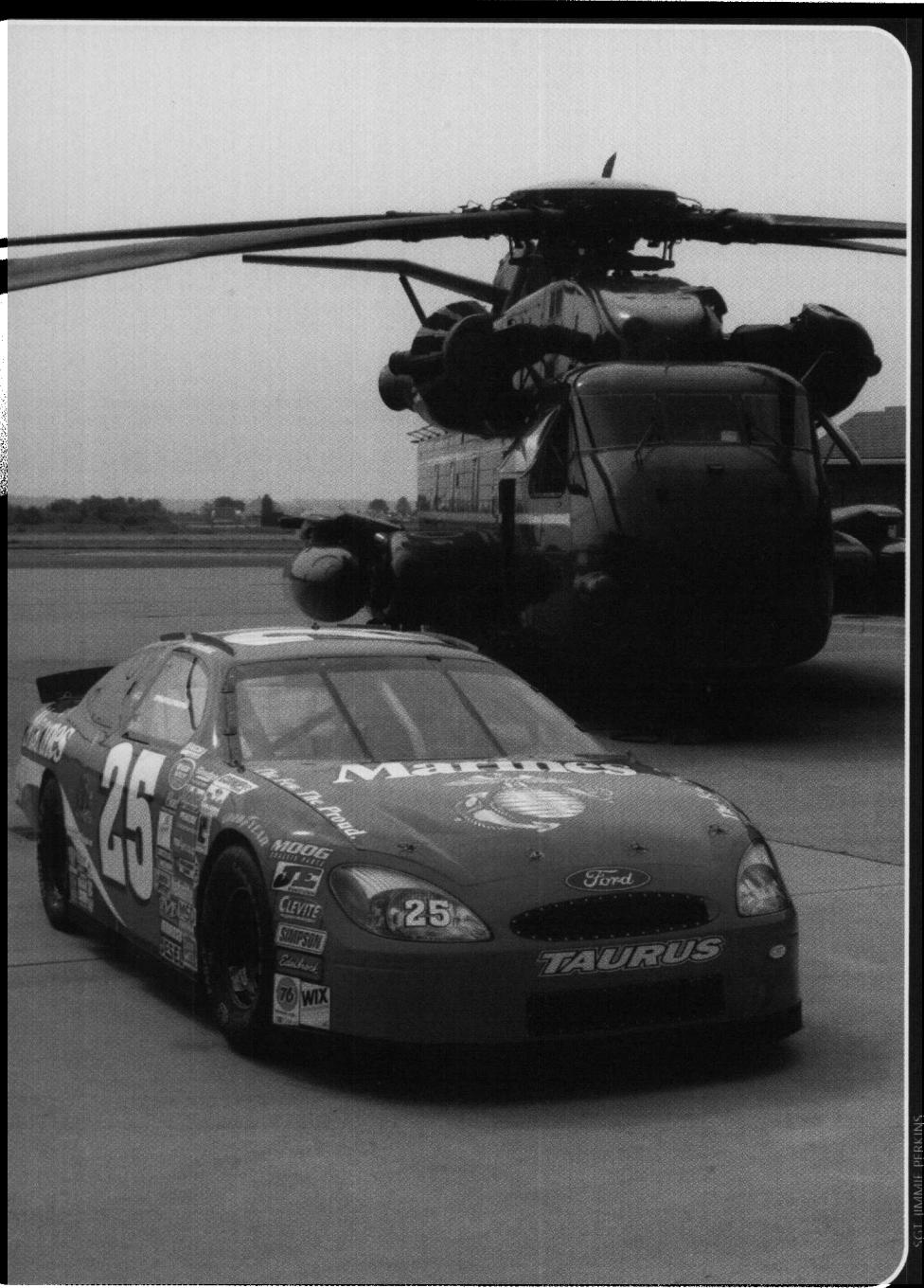


## The Corps Sees Little Difference in How It Tackles Both



SGT JAMIE PERKINS

The #25 Team Marines Ford Taurus NASCAR show car took its place beside a CH-53E of Marine Helicopter Squadron One, Quantico, Va. For the Corps, both are tools in accomplishing missions. Be it warfighting or recruiting, the Marines attack both as though the Corps' future depends on it, because in reality it does.

**A**n old man had died alone. His body was discovered by chance by a Marine. The Marine felt obligated to ensure that the man was buried properly. At the funeral, there was the clergyman, the undertaker and a few curious spectators invited by the Marine.

The clergyman said the appropriate words for burial and then asked if there was anyone who knew the man well enough to say some words about him.

Nobody spoke up.

The Marine, seeing an opportunity, said, "Well, if nobody has anything else to say, I'd like to say a few words about the United States Marine Corps."

While Commandants of the Marine Corps often claim to be the senior recruiters in the Corps, the fact is that everyone who wears or who has worn the eagle, globe and anchor is considered a recruiter and is expected to contribute to the proselytizing of American youth and their conversion into leathernecks.

This is something that has always been greatly admired and envied by corporate America and the other services.

Thus, when Marine Corps Recruiting stood up as a command on Jan. 1, 1994, there were those who asked, "Why?" The Corps as a rule has always looked at too much specialization as a phenomenon unique to the insect world. Marines, many reasoned, are too cosmopolitan for specialization. They are expected to be riflemen, soldiers of the sea, thoroughly trained in various additional support functions and, when ordered, can be recruiters, drill instructors, embassy guards or anything else that requires moxie, a rifle or a dress blue uniform.

Detractors warned that the Corps did not need to create another command, especially a nontraditional and nontactical one such as recruiting. Also, there were those who still maintained that career recruiters, with a primary military occupational specialty of 8412, were not effective. "Career recruiters are too long away and too far from the Corps," it was long argued. "How can they sell someone on a Corps they haven't really been in for a long time?"

These arguments might have held

water if the Corps had not started meeting its quotas of finding young men and women to fill its ranks during the 1990s when the nation's economy was strong and jobs were plentiful. The other services, having fallen short of their recruiting goals, took to lowering enlistment standards and offering more incentives.

Not the Corps. It raised the bar for recruits and recruiters, requiring 95 percent of applicants to have high school diplomas and 63 percent to score in the upper mental categories of the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery test, which is the standard determining test for entry into the military. The Corps loaded an additional requirement that recruiters not only enlist men and women but also use the delayed entry program to train and prepare those waiting to be shipped to the recruit depot. A recruiter receives credit for enlisting a Marine candidate only when that candidate graduates from recruit training.

It has been more than seven years since Marine recruiters nationwide failed to achieve the number of young men and women required to stand on the yellow footprints in recruit depots at Parris Island, S.C., and San Diego or at Officer Candidates School, Quantico, Va.

Since then the Marine Corps Recruiting Command has had four commanding generals, and none came up short when it came to shipping prospects to the depots or to OCS, or more importantly, putting basic trained Marines into the Corps' operating forces.

Consequently, when Major General Christopher Cortez became Recruiting Command's fifth commanding general on Aug. 8, he became steward of a heritage of success that is impressive and challenging. That it can continue is not doubted in the Corps. The question is how to fine-tune and tailor the next generation of recruiters and qualified applicants.

Those with experience in the Recruiting Command know that recruiting always has been top priority in the Marine Corps—second only to winning wars. They say the key to success lies in the fact that when the Corps has an important job to be completed, it sends its best.

Marines tackle recruiting the same



No audience is too big or too small. Marine recruiters are getting the word out. Maj William J. Bowers, Commanding Officer, RS Lansing, Mich., appeared on the Lansing Community College's "In Focus" and discussed the state of recruiting in Michigan since Sept. 11. (Photo by SSGT Bruce J. Huffman)

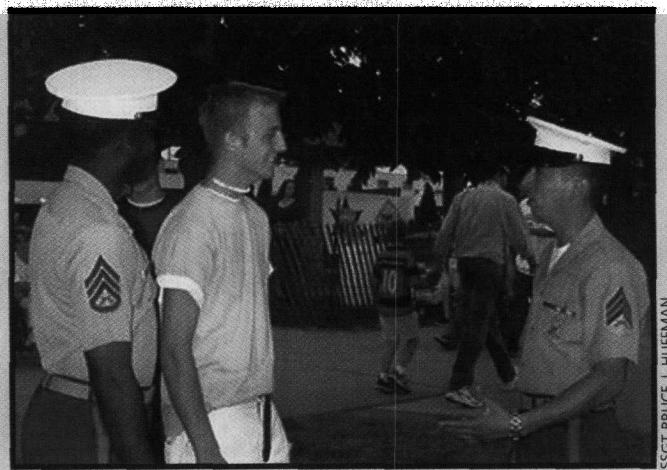
way they tackle wars. They take pride in being "warriors." Some old-timers cringe at the use of the term warriors when referring to Marines, but warriors, according to Webster's Dictionary, are "men engaged and experienced in warfare who show great vigor, courage and aggressiveness." This is essentially what the Corps advertises itself to be, and it carries a warrior attitude even into recruiting.

"The Marine Corps is not going to send people on recruiting duty who they believe will fail," said Major David M. Griesmer, public affairs officer, Recruiting Command. "Consequently, the Corps selects the best-qualified people for recruiting."

MajGen Jerry D. Humble, the outgoing commanding general of Recruiting Command, echoed that statement in a recent interview with Sergeant Jimmie W.

Perkins, Public Affairs, Recruiting Command, when he said, "We pick our best to go on recruiting duty—the enlisted Marines and young officers that are out there [and] the commanding officers in the recruiting stations. They take [recruiting duty] on as an operational mission, and Marines don't fail in any operation. That's what has made the difference."

Examples of the caliber of Marines assigned to recruiting duty are the new and previous commanding generals: MajGen Cortez and MajGen Humble. Both are well-decorated combat veterans with infantry backgrounds that in other services would have ensured assignments more in line with combat arms. But the Corps' logic is that if a Marine can be depended on to deliver professionally in one area, especially combat, chances are that *that* Marine can deliver in several other areas.



Recruiters miss no opportunity to talk with prospective Marines. RS Lansing recruiters Staff Sergeant Ronald Johnson and Sgt Mauricio C. Lopez canvassed for volunteers at a fireworks display in Bay City, Mich.

SSGT BRUCE J. HUFFMAN



SGT JIMMIE PERKINS

**During an August Marine Corps Recruiting Command change of command ceremony, Sergeant Major Clifford L. Milton (right) delivered the organizational color to MajGen Jerry D. Humble, who passed command and a legacy of success to MCRC's fifth commanding general, MajGen Christopher Cortez (left).**

Consequently, it is policy that those approximately 1,300 leathernecks annually selected for recruiting duty not only are thoroughly screened for the duty but also must have already demonstrated leadership capabilities in other areas.

"Their mission [as recruiters] is to locate ... and enlist young men and women of character to fill the ranks of the Marine Corps in the 21st century," said Maj Griesmer.

Theirs is the target-rich environment of 24 million members of the "Millennial Generation." And just who are these members of the Millennial Generation?

Basically they are men and women who have come of enlistment age at the turn of this century, and according to those who keep such statistics, they are unique. Americans in general often complain that the youth of today is not what the youth of their generation was. And they are right.

"Millennials have a different outlook on life, which we think is favorable to recruiting," said Griesmer. Like the previous Generation Xers, Millennials have become the fastest growing segment of the population. They are empowered and optimistic and less aloof than their predecessors.

Sociologists may debate the reasons

but agree that those of the Millennial Generation have an increased respect for authority and the rights of others. Along those same lines, they have a greater sense of history and a tendency to hold a higher regard for institutions such as the United States Marine Corps.

Although they've been raised to succeed by their parents, they don't mind being led as long as they get a chance to lead. With that comes a sense of teamwork and willingness to be proactive in society and belong to organizations.

Most Marines would say that this is a generation with numbers ripe for service in the Corps. The Corps is making its "elite warrior brand image" pitch to Millennials and pulling in the approximately 40,000 new enlistees a year, which the Corps needs to operate.

The Marines are saying, "If you are serious about a military career, we are the only choice for you." And they aren't sugarcoating their promises.

"We aim our efforts at the youth population who are motivated by challenge, risk and toughness," said Griesmer. "We focus on intangibles: pride, challenge and a chance to prove oneself. We make few promises other than the chance to be a Marine. We do say that the training and leadership skills gained as a Marine will prepare you for future success in and out of the Marine Corps."

It is pitching to the Millennials' strongest characteristics. But it is also the same message the Marines have used successfully throughout their history.

"We have a longstanding tradition of honor, courage and commitment," said Griesmer. "The Corps is an American icon, revered, respected and looked up to."

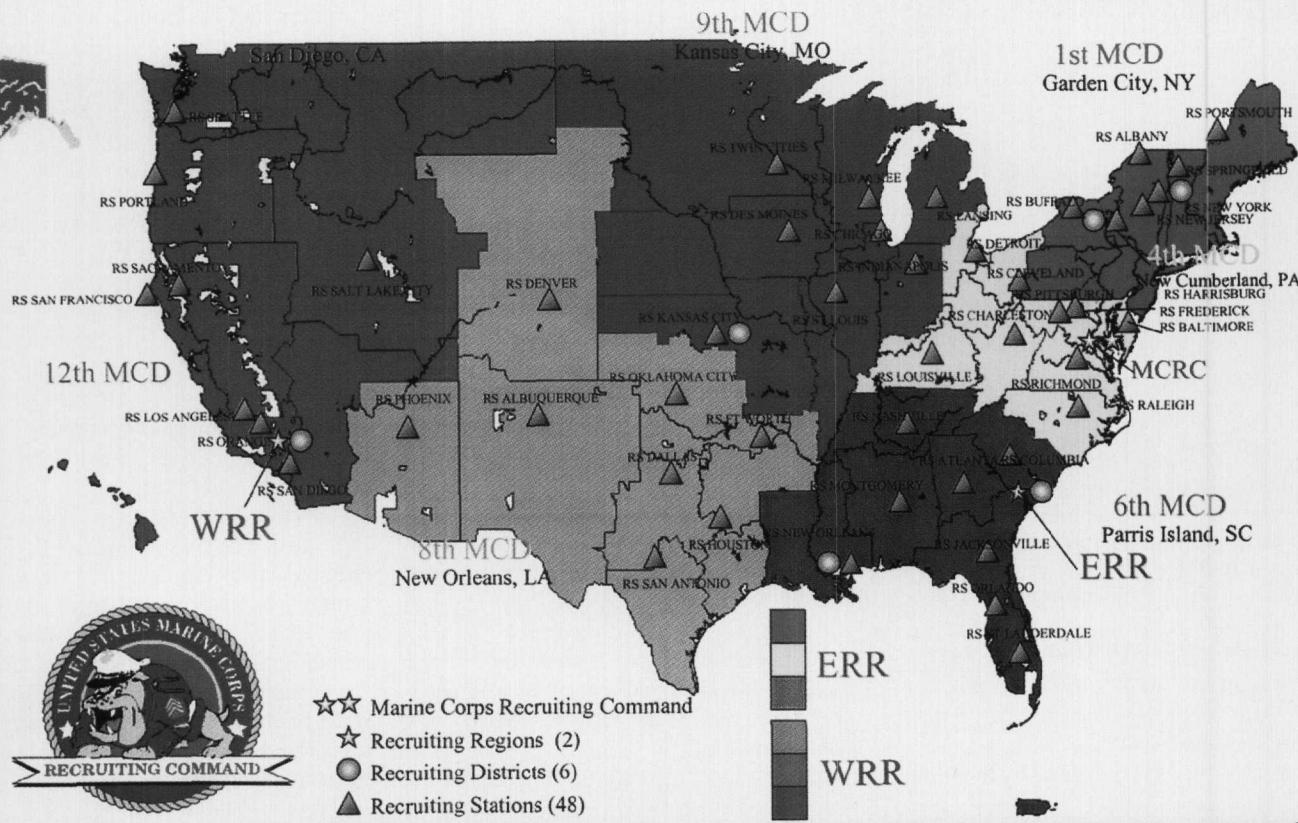
Often the only symbol of the icon in heartland places such as Sioux City, Iowa, or Lukenbach, Texas, is the local Marine Corps recruiter. Success breeds success, and an unblemished record of seven years of achievement also makes recruiting duty more attractive if not less challenging.

Those sent to recruiting duty have always considered their job to be one of the most important missions in the Corps. Maj Griesmer added, "They can be part of a time-proven winning team. We're on a winning streak, and we're looking for talented, motivated men and women to be a part of this team."

Still according to statistics, it is much harder to attract recruiters than it is to recruit qualified applicants. Approximately 20 percent of the students sent to Recruiters School at Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego are volunteers.

The Corps does try to sweeten the pot for those who volunteer. Griesmer cites

# Marine Corps Recruiting Command



If you were ever on recruiting duty, you may note that while the number of districts have remained the same, things such as district headquarters locations, district boundaries, the number of recruiting stations and locations of several recruiting stations have changed.

that while the hours can be long, recruiters establish themselves in the various communities where they canvass and achieve a degree of family stability not found when deployed to the world's hot spots. Recruiters will soon draw more money than they would in the operating forces. If one wonders how much importance the Corps places on recruiting, one should consider that, starting in October 2003, recruiters will receive an additional \$450 a month, which is more than the hostile fire pay Marines earn in combat zones and is the largest amount of enlisted special-duty pay authorized.

Those who find their niche as recruiters also have opportunities for rapid promotion. Some Marines advance two grades within a three-year period. When one considers the fact that recruiters are primarily sergeants and staff noncommissioned officers, recruiting can be a fast track for promotion through ranks that traditionally require lengthy time in grade. A successful tour as a recruiter also allows the individual to choose, within reason, his or her next duty station.

Successful recruiters are self-starters who can work independently, effectively

communicate and develop enhanced leadership and counseling abilities. Recruiters today also say they find recruiting duty to be fun. "Make Mission, Go Fishin'" is more than just a story about recruiters in the August issue of *Leatherneck*. It is an attitude that has been fine-tuned over seven years.

"Making mission is what is expected of Marines," said MajGen Humble. "But we don't rest on our laurels. ... We are

constantly doing self-analysis. We seek input and ideas from sergeants through the colonels. ... [We are taking] the organization to the next level of effectiveness and efficiency."

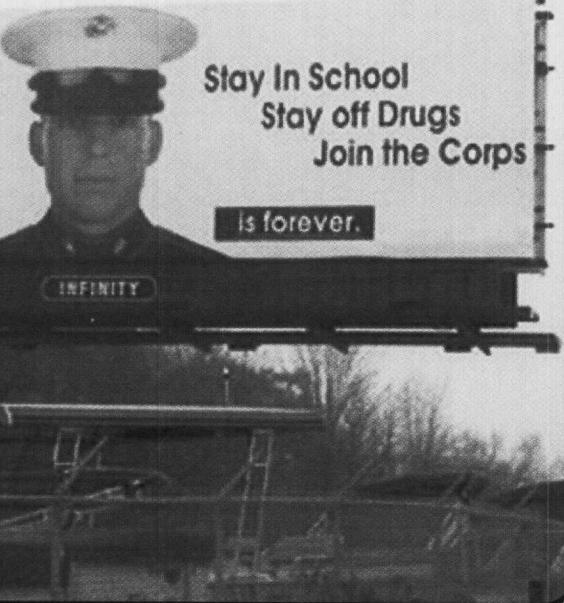
An example of this is the delayed entry program. For years the DEP was a good selling point used by recruiters in all the services. The idea was that a candidate could be sworn into the service and then take up to a year to leave for



The Corps, in conjunction with Harley-Davidson, is fielding 12 motorcycles as a tribute to Marines and motorcycles that were used on battlefields as early as World War I. This particular motorcycle driven by Maj David R. Baldwin in the National Independence Day Parade in Washington, D.C., is decked out with the Corps' colors and graphics designed to appeal to potential enlistees.

SGT JIMMIE PERKINS

1-800-Marines



"The concept in the Marine Corps, in warfighting, is exploit success, and that's what we've done," added the major general. He emphasized that the Marine Corps model of doing business does not emulate corporate America, but corporate America looks to the Corps as an ideal business model. "If you took it on a business model, we are a very high-level, changing, adapting organization."

Business magazines such as *Inc.* tout the Corps as "the best management-training program in America."

But corporate America has its limitations. According to MajGen Humble, the Corps succeeds where others fail because it is a short transition from Marine operations and "doing exactly what our expeditionary maneuver warfare tenants say," to applying the same tenants and principles to recruiting.

"Of course other people are trying to apply it in a business model, but the difference is they don't have in their organization this brotherhood, this family, this ethos of pride in the Corps. Those sergeants [and] those gunnery sergeants ... are never going to fail because of their pride in their Corps. Our Marines may work longer and a lot harder than possibly some of the other services, because they're not going to take less than quality [applicants], but that is what sustains us."

"We're not bragging ... but the fact is ... this year [is] the most successful recruiting year in our history, in quality and quantity. We get ideas from a wide variety of sources and adapt them," MajGen Humble acknowledged. "Quality of life [for recruiters] has greatly improved. Recruiters get finished earlier out there on their missions and spend a little more quality time with their families and that of course raises morale. ..."

"In those seven years of success we have recruiting tours of three years. We have a whole new set of [recruiters], and [they] will do just as well as those who came before them. [It is] just like we go fight in the Corps. [The Marines who fight today] fight just as well as the men who planted that flag on Iwo Jima [or who fought on] Guam, or [in] Vietnam. It's consistency."

"Seven and a half years ago [Marine Corps recruiting] was made a command, so seven years later, 84 straight mission-making months—complete success."

*Editor's note: This month begins a new fiscal year for our recruiters. They are motivated, well trained and mission-oriented. Leatherneck congratulates them on these past accomplishments. Stay on the attack.*

**The Corps capitalizes on messages such as staying in school, staying off drugs and living a healthy lifestyle as a Marine in order to appeal to a few good men and women of the 24 million members of the Millennial Generation.**

recruit training. The Marine Corps decided to take it to the next level and use that time in the DEP to better prepare future recruits for the Corps. It is an idea that was immediately copied by the other services.

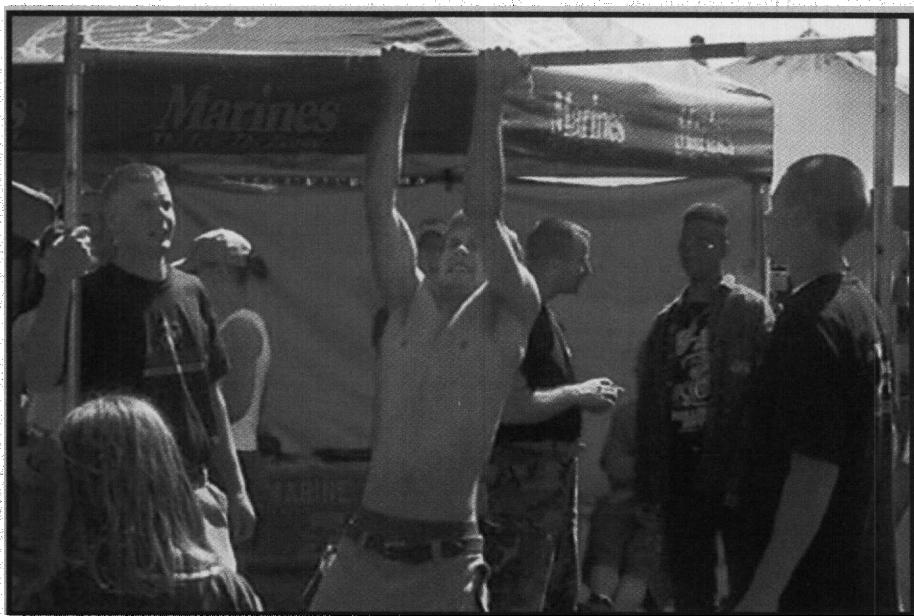
"We are always looking to enhance quality," said MajGen Humble. "Marines start training while they are in the DEP pool. We don't wait for them to go to boot camp to train."

Physical fitness is only one part of the program. Future Marines can no longer go to boot camp without initial testing. But it is more than that. The Marine re-

cruiters provide classes on Marine Corps history, customs and courtesy, and the applicants are told what to expect in recruit training.

The Marine Corps recruiting command is also looking for ways to influence parents, educators, coaches and minority leaders and convince them that the Corps is a positive step for today's youth.

"We need to continuously self-evaluate, taking the good things and improving on them and taking the things where we are not doing as well [and] find out why and improve them too," said MajGen Humble.



**The Corps still wants young men and women who are in good physical condition and seek challenges. Michigan recruiters set up a pull-up bar to test applicants' and poolies' strength at an event in Grand Rapids.**