

The Fair Winds

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CDR W. C. Dempsey, Commanding Officer

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Debbink takes helm Replaces Unruh as REDCOM Midwest

BY JOC RHONDA BURKE
NTC GREAT LAKES PAO
GREAT LAKES, ILL. -- Rear
Adm. Dirk J. Debbink relieved
Rear Adm. H. Kirk Unruh as
Commander, Naval Reserve
Readiness Command (RED-
COM) Midwest June 2, in a cer-
emony outside the command's
suite.

Debbink reports from his
previous assignment as com-
mander, Military Sealift
Command Pacific and Far East,
and deputy commander,
Maritime Defense Zone Pacific.

Unruh will continue in his
assignment as deputy com-
mander, Naval Surface Force,
U.S. Atlantic Fleet.

In a message to the Sailors
of REDCOM Midwest, Unruh
thanked them for their selfless
and superb service.

“Mission first, Sailors and
their families always’ has been
our watchword in REDCOM
Midwest, and we have all
worked hard together in the

aftermath of Sept. 11 to be
‘ready to mobilize, ready to sup-
port, ready to fight, ready to
win, and ready to demobilize,’”
Unruh said. “Indeed, we are
today successfully engaged in
the full spectrum of fleet opera-
tions and fleet support, and
your tireless and dedicated
efforts are having a great
impact on the inevitable victory
we will achieve in the Global
War on Terrorism.”

Debbink is a native of
Oconomowoc, and earned a
Bachelor of Science in Systems
Engineering degree from the
U.S. Naval Academy in 1977.

He completed his Master's
in Business Administration
(MBA) at the University of
Chicago in June 1990.

Debbink served on active
duty until 1983, then affiliated
with the Naval Reserves.

In his civilian capacity,
Debbink is president of MSI
General Corporation, a general
contracting firm.



PHOTO BY JO2 BEN ASTELL NMCRC MADISON
Rear Admiral H. Kirk Unruh watches SN David Harrison during Armed Forces
Day ceremonies May 17 at Miller Park on May 17.



Family Day, Advancement Exam in August

As the children crawling on the gun can attest,
the games, food and fun of Family Day at
NMCRC Milwaukee is well worth it. So is pass-
ing the semi-annual Enlisted advancement
exam. The Chief's Mess will help with either.

Brewers show respect, appreciation

BY LT VICTOR CHEN

NIB DET 713 NMCRC MILWAUKEE

MILWAUKEE -- The Milwaukee Brewers hosted the Cincinnati Reds and paid tribute to our nation's military May 17, Armed Forces Day, which culminated with Milwaukee Armed Forces Week.

Armed Forces Day comes but once a year, but look no further than third base or the Brewer's radio broadcast booth to see how the military influences Miller Park every day.

Milwaukee's Hall of Fame radio announcer, Bob Uecker, and Brewers' third baseman Wes Helms both have strong ties to the military.

Uecker has always been a strong supporter of Armed Forces Day at Miller Park.

"I've always been a military person," Uecker said. "Whatever happens, I'm game, whatever the country does or the president says."

Though talking has been his career for the past 32 years, Uecker also walks the talk. He joined the Army after the Korean War.

"I wasn't drafted," Uecker said. "I wanted to be in the service. I enlisted."

Helms is no stranger to the lessons of military life. He grew up in a family with a clear military tradition.

His grandfather was a Navy SEAL (Sea, Air, Land) during World War II, and his father was in the U.S. Army in Vietnam.

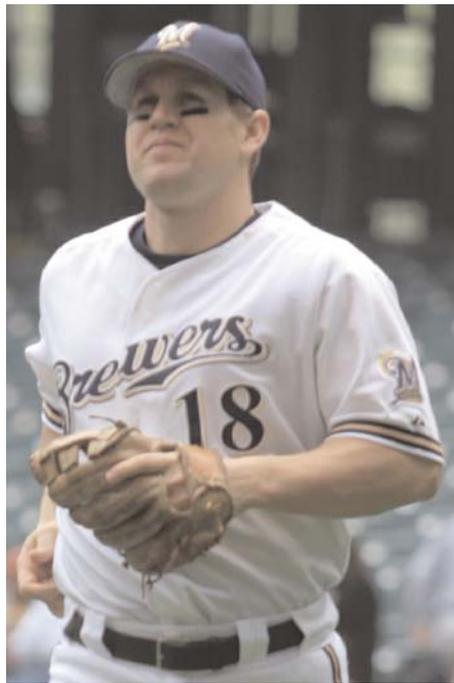


PHOTO BY JO2 BEN ASTELL
NMCRC MADISON

Milwaukee Brewers third baseman Wes Helms attributes some of his success as a baseball player to the military influence provided by his family.

He pays tribute to his heritage every game by wearing a SEAL or Navy t-shirt under his jersey, and has done so since he can remember.

"I tip my hat to the armed forces out there in Iraq," Helms said. "There isn't another job on the face of the earth where

you're putting your life on the line, and I really appreciate that."

The Milwaukee Brewers clearly enjoyed showing their appreciation for the community and our nation's armed forces. For Uecker, it's especially enjoyable.

"One of my favorite times of the baseball season -- or any other time -- is when we do military things like (Armed Forces Day) here -- especially when Kate Smith sings 'God Bless America.' No one sings 'God Bless America' like her," Uecker said.

Helms credits a lot of his baseball success to his upbringing. Growing up with a military parent, "The work ethic I learned from my father is clearly one reason why I'm here today. Growing up, we always had to do our chores and homework before going out to play," he said.

The game on Armed Forces Day was close and exciting, with the Brewers' Eddie Perez hitting a walk-off home run to give the Brewers an 8-6 victory.

Though the loss is disappointing to the Reds, they still take time to recognize the sacrifices our nation's service men and women make each day.

After the game, Reds' pitcher Danny Graves, whose father retired from the Army, said of our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines, "I really respect them. They're the ones out there protecting our country and our freedom."



PHOTO BY SN MATT O'MALLEY NMCRC MILWAUKEE

Recruits graduate in Milwaukee

SN Recruit Lena Gonzalez (left) huddles with family and friends after graduating from Recruit Training May 16 at Milwaukee's US Cellular Arena.

Gonzalez, from Milwaukee, attended the ceremony with Wisconsin natives and shipmates SN Recruit James Connery of Madison, SN Recruit James Ehrlich of Neosho and SN Recruit Michael Poerter of Hartford.

Hogs hit road in honor

Harleys, Reservists remember, pay tribute to those who gave

**BY JO3 PAT MIGLIACCIO AND JO3
GLENN GEIGLER
NMCRC MILWAUKEE**

On May 17th Reservists from NMCRC Milwaukee, veterans and other groups climbed aboard their Harleys and thundered down to Milwaukee's lakefront to join hundreds of cheering spectators for an Armed Forces Day tribute.

Hosted by US Marine Corps Reservists and local Harley clubs, an estimated 150 riders ignored crisp overcast conditions and assembled earlier at the Harley Davidson plant located on 117th and Capitol Drive to begin the freedom celebration.

"The ride was a great experience," said ITC Ron Strelka, a Vietnam era veteran and current Naval Reservist from Milwaukee. "It was a privilege to participate with veterans from past military engagements to honor our country. I was proud to be a part of it."

Arriving at the War Memorial in Veteran's Park, the cyclists then gathered along with military and civilian attendees for a short program near a traveling replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

The Vietnam Wall, known as the "Traveling Tribute," carries the names of the 55,000 plus Americans claimed during the Vietnam conflict. It is 4/5ths the size of the permanent memorial in Washington D.C. and served as a perfect backdrop for the days events.

After the singing of the national anthem and a short prayer, Reservist, Maj. David Owen, USMC, proclaimed "Armed Forces Day to be a special day when we honor our veterans and their contributions to our nation."

Calling "America's veterans, America's heroes," Owen noted the recent passing of former Milwaukee Reservist Maj. Kevin Nave, USMC, during Operation Iraqi Freedom and announced that this year's ride was held in his memory.

Following a moment of silence for Nave, the program continued with speeches from various guest speakers to include



David Gough, Department Vice Commander of the American Legion, who characterized the Vietnam Wall as "a place of healing and reconciliation."

"It reminds us of the sacrifices made by veterans for two centuries to keep this nation free" said Gough. "Every name etched into this wall testifies to that and can be characterized in a single word...veteran."

"There is no shame in enshrining the names of fallen comrades in immutable stone" Gough continued. "They carried the

weight of the world and they carried each other."

Though the ceremony focused on the Vietnam era, event organizer David Kurtz's eulogy recognized "all the fallen serviceman who have died for our country."

Closing proceedings evoked the most emotion from the Armed Forces Day turnout with Gough initiating a wreath laying ceremony followed by the sounding of Taps and final prayers.

Medal of Honor winner Gary Wetzel concluded the morning program with brief inspiring remarks stating, "We're here for what the flag stands for...freedom, sacrifices and the men and woman who are still serving our great nation."

"Freedom, freedom, freedom!" said Wetzel. "This is what it's all about."



The above photo box will feature a picture of USMC Maj Owen. This box will be an extended cut-line for the layout's three photos.

ACB-1 shoots it up

