

# **The 2000 Navy & Marine Corps Great American Smoke Out Day**

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**The American Cancer Society sponsored the 24<sup>th</sup> annual Great American Smoke Out Day on November 16, 2000. This awareness, education and motivation campaign urged smokers to quit for the day. The Navy and Marine Corps hosted and sponsored the GASO by offering prevention and intervention activities on bases worldwide.**

**The GASO offers an opportunity to prevent the onset of tobacco use in youth and young adults, to reaffirm the tobacco free military message and to quit using tobacco. According to LCDR Asha Devereaux, M.C. of Naval Medical Center San Diego, "tobacco use has taken the lives of more Americans than any war, and continues to do so during peacetime." The Smoke Out is an invitation to quit using tobacco, not only for the day, but also for good!**

## **Highlights**

**At Camp LeJeune, the GASO was co-sponsored by the Naval Hospital Health Promotion Program and Marine Corps Community Services. A moratorium on the sale of all tobacco products at the Marine Corps Exchanges and C-Stores for the Smoke Out day was held!**

**At Naval Hospital Corpus Christi, Health Promotion hosted the 1<sup>st</sup> annual Cyber Smokeout! The Naval Hospital website <http://nhcc.med.navy.mil/WellnessCtr/wellnessCtr.htm> was developed. The on line site offered tips for quitting, along with a support group of buddies to help with quitting.**

**The Military Health System published a November 15, 2000 article (DoD Pushes Dropping Coffin nails During Smokeout) promoting the Great American Smoke Out day! The article included an interview with Dr. John Mazzuchi, Deputy for Clinical and Program Policy, in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs encouraging quitting tobacco.**

**Navy and Marine Corps Medical News (November 10, 2000) lead article was Put out that smoke at the Great American Smokeout!**

**Tricare developed a homepage devoted to the Great American Smoke Out!**

**<http://www.tricare.osd.mil/smokeout/index.html>**

## **Outstanding GASO Program Features**

### **Marketing the GASO!**

**Traditional marketing of the event was done via the CHCS at the MTF, through the use of bulletin boards, flyers, hospital and base newspapers, base tv and radio, local media print and airways. Several bases used the electronic signs to announce the GASO, and banners and signs were posted at the entrances of Quantico, Everett, Camp LeJeune, MCAS Cherry Point, and Dahlgreen. Also at Camp LeJeune, banners were posted in base family housing.**

At Everett, the front gate was manned by volunteers, including a costumed "Mr. Ciggy Butz". The volunteers offered survival kits and encouraged smokers to quit and participate in the GASO.

Six volunteers were GASO advocates at the front entrance to Naval Hospital Bremerton. They passed out American Cancer Society GASO promotional materials and also a message from the Commanding Officer. The message read-

Naval Hospital Bremerton has a proud tradition of superior readiness. Readiness depends on a healthy and fit force. Tobacco use degrades personal fitness and can ultimately impact our readiness. If you smoke or chew tobacco, I urge you to quit. If you don't use tobacco, a friend or colleague needs your support to quit. The Great American Smokeout on November 16<sup>th</sup> is a great opportunity for us to make a commitment to improved health.

C.S. Hunter, CAPT,MC, Commanding Officer, Naval Hospital

### **Kick Off Activities**

Across the Navy and Marine Corps, the fun run/walk was a common event to initiate the GASO... In San Diego, the Cold Turkey Trot 5k, at Naval Medical Center was attended by the Commander and Deputy Commander, and 25 teen participants from a local school!

At Camp Lejeune, the kickoff event was a Tobacco Free Family Day held the weekend prior to GASO! The activities included pony rides, clowns, face painting, food, guest speakers and educational materials.

### **GASO Activities**

Typical activities were tables set up at the MTF/DTF, and displays set up around the base and at the Exchange.

Survival kits, educational materials and adopt a smoker were frequent activities. Sign ups for an upcoming Tobacco cessation class were offered. Games and contests were often mentioned, which included guessing the number of cigarette butts in a jar (Millington, Quantico), Tobacco roulette (BMC North Island), and Tobacco Trivia (Camp LeJeune). Drawings and raffles for prizes were reported to be hits at Groton, MCRD San Diego, Keflavik and Pearl Harbor.

Outreach to young people was a GASO activity at several bases. This involved going to the schools at Keflavik, Okinawa and Camp LeJeune for presentations. In Okinawa, the DODD's schools had a full day of activities! At Groton, the base Youth Center sponsored an event; and at Bethesda, the Health Promoters went to the Child Development Center for a presentation .

#### More Creative GASO activities

- \*Offering nicotine gum to smokers quitting for the day (USNH Okinawa)
- \*Exchanging tobacco products for 15 minutes in the mediation room at the Wellness Center (NH Corpus Christi)
- \*Developing a road sign (similar to the one about the # of deer killed on base this year) and posting it on the main road Caution xxx people killed by tobacco products this year (MCB Quantico)
- \*Photos taken of GASO quitters with picture hung in their respective work area (NH Charleston)
- \*Exchanging tobacco for a massage (NH Camp Lejeune)
- \*Rip It Out Campaign! Tobacco advertisements were clipped out of magazines by participants and entered in a drawing (Pearl Harbor)
- \*The Command Master Chief quit tobacco and others at the command were challenged to quit with him! (NH Cherry Point)

- \*Using the pictures drawn by children- such as a baby with a cigarette, dirty air, mom and Dad with smoke over their heads, displayed at the GASO (NNMC)**
- \*Free dental cleanings (NH Corpus Christi)**
- \*GASO held at galleys (Bremerton)**
- \*Smoke out signs posted at base smoking areas (NTC Great Lakes)**
- \*Placing suckers at designated smoking areas (NH Charleston)**
- \*Exchanging tobacco products for hats, t-shirts, smokeout umbrellas and key chains (Everett)**
- \*Wearing of Smoke Out hats by leaders and medical personnel (BMC Everett, NH Bremerton)**
- \*Drawings for a massage (Pearl Harbor)**
- \*Placing suckers at designated smoking areas (NH Charleston)**
- \*Message from C.O. USNH Rota in The Well Street Journal (Captain's Corner) encouraging tobacco cessation!**

### **2001 GASO Ideas**

- Grow and improve your Great American Smoke Out Day Program!**
- Include more participants in the planning of the GASO**
- Market, market, market!!**
- Reach out to more smokers and potential tobacco users at your base!**
- Take the GASO to more locations- such as high visibility and traffic locations, commands, fleet, schools...**
- Enlist leadership support and participation in the GASO!**

- Partner with community, commands, MWR, MCCS...
- Extinguish the smoking lamp for the day!
- Add more GASO activities, and events...
- Develop metrics for the GASO program

**Special thanks to those commands who contributed to this GASO article!**