

UNIVERSITY



Photo by Andre Kanieri

Not only do student Marine reservists Andy Harris (right) and Kirt Fuller have to worry about going to the Middle East, they've got three days to call family and friends and wrap up academic business before being shipped out.

Student reservists get the call for gulf duty

By Catherine Hawley
Emerald Associate Editor

University students Andy Harris and Kirt Fuller always knew as members of the Marine Corps reserves they could be called to active duty at any time, but they never expected it to happen.

But Saturday, they will report to Salem with other reservists in Company A of the 6th Engineers Support Battalion. Monday, they will go to Camp Pendleton, Calif., where they will await further orders.

Harris and Fuller, both reserve combat engineers, said they joined the reserves for college money "and maybe for a little adventure on the side"; the possibility of active duty seemed, at most, remote.

That all changed Nov. 27, when Harris and Fuller received telephone calls informing them their company was being activated.

Since then, both have been scrambling to finish their classes, to contact friends and family and to prepare themselves mentally for military duty.

Both said they believe their chances of being sent to the Middle East are high.

"From what I know, the one other company in our battalion that's been activated is now in Saudi Arabia," Harris said.

The recent call-up of the Eugene-based 6th Bridge Company may indicate that the construction and demolition skills of combat engineers will be re-

quired as well, Fuller said.

"If they're sending bridge-builders over there, they're going to also send all-purpose engineers," Fuller said.

The call-up is difficult to accept for Harris, who had less than a year left to serve. He said he has changed since he enlisted more than five years ago, and he disagrees with President George Bush's decision to deploy troops in the Middle East.

"I sympathize with the Kuwaiti people and those that are suffering as a result of Iraq's aggression," Harris said. "But I would rather see this solved in the Arab League or in some other manner. I would rather see Bush have a little more patience with the sanctions, even if it takes waiting up to a year."

He said he believes Bush has sent troops to the Persian Gulf for the sake of U.S. oil interests, not democracy.

"If American men and women die over there, it won't be for democracy in Kuwait," he said. "It will be so Americans can drive Winnebagos and Cadillacs."

On the other hand, Fuller said he's not "gung-ho" about going to the Middle East, but he sees a parallel between Saddam Hussein's invasions of Iran and Kuwait and Hitler's invasions of Poland and Czechoslovakia that led to World War II.

"As far as just letting a man

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