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Veterans Day: Armed forces a family tradition

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Washburn said it is difficult for those who are not veterans to comprehend the meaning of Veterans Day. "Many soldiers don't see it as a sacrifice, they see it as their job," Washburn said. "You don't realize what life fear is until you go overseas."

Kramer, who has been in the Army for more than 20 years, said he hopes the community recognizes the importance of Veterans Day. "(For community members) hopefully it means a day in remembrance of those who have served their country," Kramer said. He said for him it is a day of honor for the soldiers, airmen and everyone else who has served.

Washburn said that he didn't understand until now why his dad, a Vietnam War veteran, didn't often speak of his experience. "I've lost three or four buddies since the war started," Washburn said. "Now I know why he didn't talk about it much."

While in Iraq, Washburn spent a lot of time doing patrols and maintaining peace and order. "We were on the front line, and hot, cold, hungry Joes working eight to 10

hours under the wire," Washburn said. He said the accommodations were difficult because the soldiers had to build their own showers, had access to a phone that could only be used every four days and didn't have air conditioning. "I didn't expect it to be so hot; the sun is so bright," Washburn said. "It's much brighter and the temperature is hotter, so the climate was unexpected."

Washburn had some close calls while in Iraq; he said that the mortar attacks provided some of the scariest experiences. "You hear a boom and 25 seconds later you hope it doesn't land on you," Washburn said.

On the other hand, Washburn said there was a lot of camaraderie while he was in Iraq and that the locals really appreciated having the soldiers there. "A lot of people will shake your hand, and they're so thankful that you're saving them from that totalitarian regime," Washburn said. "Eighty-five percent love you and the other 15 percent want to kill you, and you don't know who is who."

Washburn emphasized his dissatisfaction with the media's coverage of

the war. He said that four out of five articles are negative, and if things were being portrayed accurately only one out of five would be negative. "We'll walk by farms that have fertilizer and rice that have been dropped off by our military for them to use," Washburn said. "We're also trying to restore water treatment plants. The media only sees oil, but we're trying to improve their water too."

Washburn said his decision to join the armed forces was driven by family tradition. "Every generation of my family has served in a war; it's a fifth-generation military tradition," Washburn said.

Since returning from Iraq just in time to spend the Easter holiday with his family, Washburn has been able to continue his studies at the University. He is an economics major and will graduate in the spring. He will remain a member of the National Guard until early 2006, and his future goals include transferring to active duty in the Army. "Eventually I might like to be an officer, but that's a ways away," Washburn said.

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Exodus: Canadians urged to 'Marry an American'

Continued from page 1

in moving to Canada is "absolutely huge." Kischer said many of his clients are professionals in their late 30s, although some people with teenage sons are also interested because of worries about the reinstatement of a military draft.

"It's definitely a mix," he said. Kischer added that many college students are probably not eligible to apply for skilled-worker status immediately after college because of the one-year work experience requirement. Kischer plans to hold seminars in Seattle, San Francisco and Los Angeles to brief people on Canadian immigration because of intense interest in the subject, according to a Nov. 10 article by the Canadian Press.

While Americans may not be immediately flocking across the border, they are visiting Canada's main immigration Web site in record numbers, with the site receiving a six-fold increase in U.S. hits the day after the election, according to a Nov. 5 article by Reuters. The Web site, www.cic.gc.ca, usually receives about 20,000 visits from U.S. citizens a day, but traffic jumped to 115,016 U.S. visitors on Nov. 3, according to the report. U.S. visits dropped to 65,803 on Nov. 4.

Last year, Canada accepted 5,990 immigrants from the United States, which ranked sixth in total immigrants after the Philippines, with 11,978, and Pakistan, with 12,330.

The U.S. consulate in Toronto estimates that 1 million Americans may already be living in Canada — many of whom aren't registered — according to a Nov. 3 article by The Associated Press.


This isn't the first time Americans have looked to Canada for refuge. Some 125,000 Americans opposed to the draft and the Vietnam War fled to Canada between 1964 and 1977, according to a Sept. 8 report by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Many of the "draft dodgers" returned after President Jimmy Carter offered amnesty in 1977, but the 1986 census showed that about half stayed in Canada, according to the report. Activists in Nelson, British Columbia are planning to erect a bronze sculpture, to be unveiled in 2006, honoring those who came to Canada and resisted the Vietnam War.

As grave as would-be immigrants' concerns may be, not everyone is taking the situation seriously. The provision in Canada's immigration code that hastens the citizenship process for people who marry Canadians prompted the publisher of a Toronto magazine to create www.marryanamerican.ca, a satirical Web site dedicated to matching "Canadian singles, tired of the dating scene" with a "sexy American liberal."

"Open your heart, and your home. Marry an American," the site implores. "Legions of Canadians have already pledged to sacrifice their singlehood to save our southern neighbours from four more years of cowboy conservatism."

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