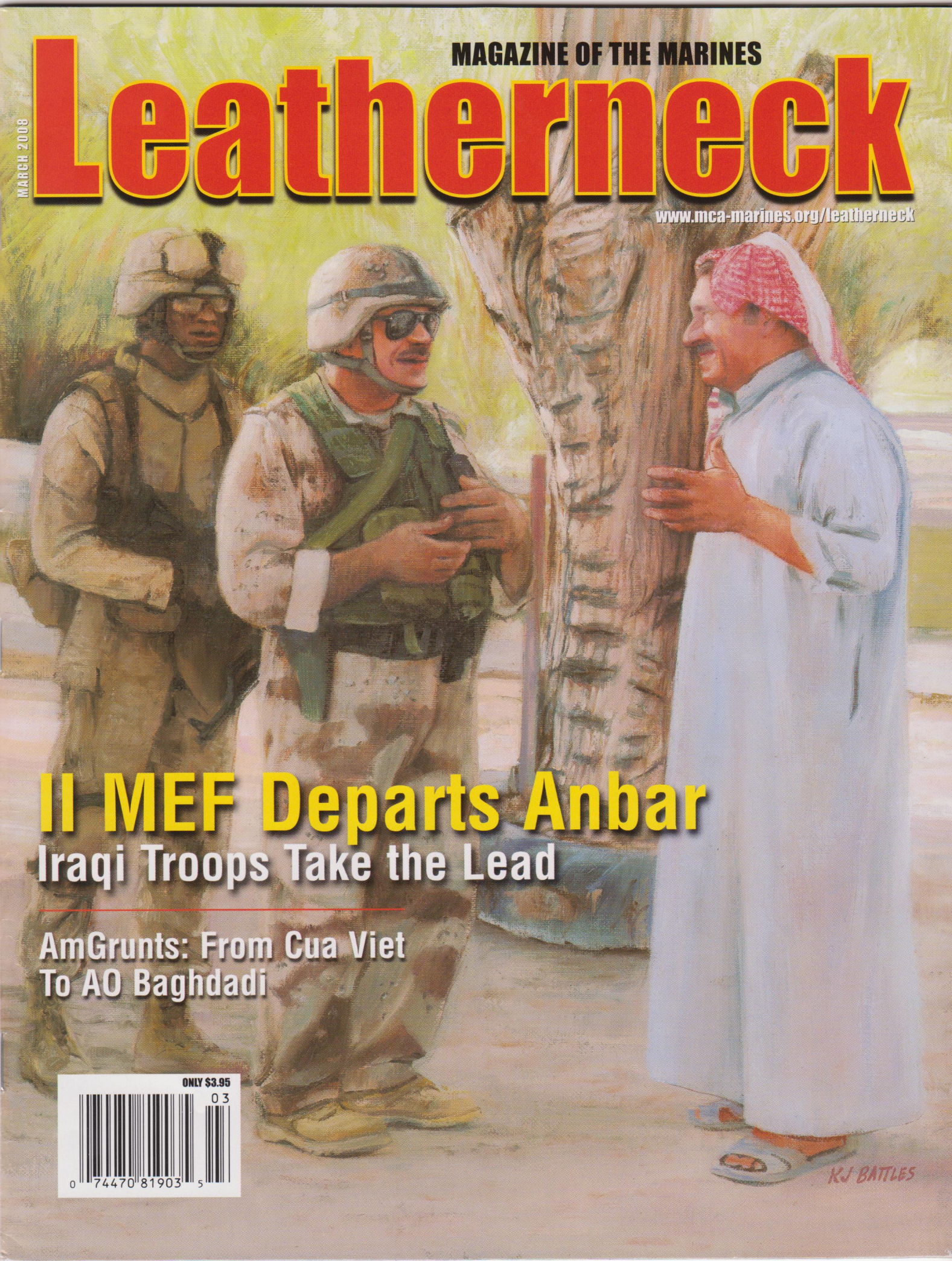


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Edited by Mary D. Karcher

Films Depict Military Lifestyle

Three documentaries that portray military life are receiving accolades from film festivals, and one has even been nominated for an Oscar. These films document military medical training, life as a military dependent, and war from the perspective of the warriors and their families.

"Fighting for Life"

Opening in select theaters in San Diego, Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., and New York City this month is "Fighting for Life," an in-depth portrait of the students, teachers and alumni of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, which trains career-oriented military and public health physicians ("the best medical school no one's ever heard of" according to the students).

Filmmaker Terry Sanders set out to make a film to defend the school against attempts to close it by Congress and the Department of Defense. When the Iraq War began, Sanders and his crew gained

screening in your area, visit www.fightingforlifethemovie.com. To learn more about USU, visit www.usuhs.mil.

Susan Steeno
GS Entertainment Marketing Group

"BRATS: Our Journey Home"

This documentary will resonate with those whose lives have been profoundly affected by the military. "BRATS: Our Journey Home" is a film about growing up in a military family. Military "brats" experience a unique lifestyle without a hometown in the traditional sense. Director Donna Musil said, "We brats have no true hometowns, and our friends are scattered to the winds."

Some of the famous brats who participated in the film include U.S. Air Force brat Kris Kristofferson, who not only narrated but also donated original songs to the production, and retired U.S. Army General H. Norman Schwarzkopf, who is a brat and the father of brats. They are among the many who discuss the pro-

"Operation Homecoming"

"Operation Homecoming" is a documentary that explores the firsthand accounts of American military personnel through their written words, and offers a window into the human side of the war being fought in Iraq and Afghanistan. The film, inspired by the National Endowment of the Arts' anthology and program on wartime writing, has been nominated for an Academy Award. (The outcome was not available at press time.)

The film, which was produced by The Documentary Group and directed by Richard Robbins, brings to life the letters, journals, poems and essays featured in the anthology "Operation Homecoming: Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Home Front, in the Words of U.S. Troops and Their Families." Through interviews and dramatic readings by actors Robert Duvall, Josh Lucas, Beau Bridges, Blair Underwood, Justin Kirk, Aaron Eckhart, Chris Gorham and John Krasinski, the film transforms selections of writing into an examination of the experiences of the men and women who are serving in America's armed forces.

Visit www.operationhomecomingthemovie.com for more information.

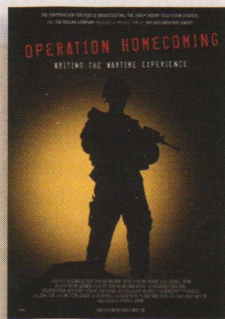
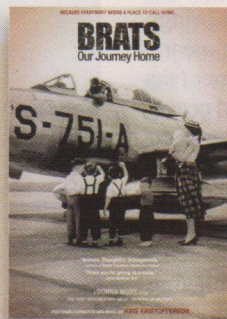
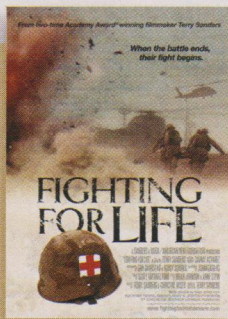
Editor's note: Included in the film is the story "Taking Chance" by Marine Lieutenant Colonel Michael R. Strobl, which describes his escort of the remains of Private First Class Chance R. Phelps from Dover Air Force Base back to his family in Dubois, Wyo., for burial. Read the story at www.nea.gov/national/homecoming/submissions/strobl.html. "Taking Chance" is in production as a separate film with actor Kevin Bacon portraying LtCol Strobl.

Sally Gifford, NEA

and Operation Homecoming Web site

It's Tax Time! Get Free Help

Free tax preparation assistance is available at military installations worldwide. Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) sites provide free tax advice, tax preparation and assistance to military personnel and their families. VITA staff members are trained to address military specific tax issues, such as combat zone tax benefits



extraordinary access to battlefield medicine and the wounded soldiers and Marines who were determined to survive.

Marine Captain Timothy Gerlach is the Headquarters Company commander at USU. He prepares the medical students to work in a combat zone through field exercises and leadership training, as well as educating them about military mindsets, especially in battle when a lance corporal just wants to "go back to [his] brothers." Gerlach encourages Marines to see the film to understand the training, capabilities and challenges of medical personnel.

To read more about the film, or find a

found effect growing up in a military family has had on their lives.

In 2007, the documentary was shown in 64 cities and aboard military bases, beginning its national tour at the Marines' Memorial Association in San Francisco and ending at the U.S. Navy Memorial in Washington, D.C. The film also is being shown overseas, with scheduled screenings planned for this spring in Department of Defense schools in the European Command.

For information, or to order a copy of the film, visit www.bratsfilm.com.

Tim Wurtz