

I served my country honorably in the United States Marine Corps from June 1981 through June 1985. After boot camp and Air Traffic Controller school I was assigned a permanent duty station at Marine Corps Air Station, New River, Jacksonville, North Carolina. The Air Station provided air support for Camp Lejeune. When we arrived to Jacksonville I applied for base housing. None was available; it would be a six month wait, and therefore we lived out in town. My oldest child, Andrea, was born in June of 1982. Two months later our family moved to Midway Park base housing complex. Midway Park is directly across from the main gate at Camp Lejeune. In August of 1983 renovation of Midway Park forced our family to move to other base housing. We were assigned quarters at 3114 Bougainville Drive in Tarawa Terrace base housing complex.

During our stay in base housing my daughter, Andrea, was seen by doctors at the Naval Hospital on Camp Lejeune 57 times in 30 months for illnesses such as rashes, urinary tract infections, yeast infections and unexplained fevers. Most of the time the medical personnel on base did not have an explanation for her symptoms. We were told to give her tepid baths and children's Tylenol to reduce the fevers. During this time my wife and I conceived our second child, Rachel. She was born on April 27, 1985; 6 weeks prior to my discharge from active duty.

On her initial newborn profile from Onslow Memorial Hospital there were no abnormalities listed. But when we took her to the base hospital for her first newborn checkup the hospital officials noted the following medical concerns:

- Slow weight gain
- Heart murmur
- Double ear infection
- Umbilical hernia
- Brachial dimples and posteriorly rotated ears
- A large hemangioma (raised birthmark) on her lower back
- ASD

It was noted "Speak to pediatrician as soon as arrive home- are leaving in 4 days- may need EKG, CRR & cardiac referral." She had to be fed in an infant seat because of projectile vomiting. She was labeled "a failure to thrive baby." Rachel had an IEP (Individualized Educational Program) throughout her school career. She has been unable to pass the Ohio driver's test. She has had and continues to have major dental issues. Her teeth do not retain enamel. In January of 2007 we were able to diagnose Rachel with VCFS (velocardiofacial syndrome). This was confirmed at Children's Hospital of Cincinnati with a FISH test. This is a deletion of a portion of her 22nd chromosome. There is a 50% chance that this is passed on to any children. In her case it was passed on to her son. AJ was born June 7, 2003. He will be 3 this year and has already had 1 surgery to correct a birth defect. He is in speech and occupational therapy. He too has dental issues. Our nightmare continues.

Six months after being discharged from the Corps, Andrea, our first born, was diagnosed with a rare bone marrow disorder called Aplastic Anemia. Andrea was treated at CCHMC (Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center), which at the time was considered the #2 hematology department in the

country. The head of the hematology department asked us what chemicals we has been exposed to. Our answer? None. They asked us for all of the names of cleaning and hygiene products that we were using. All of the products were ruled out. Andrea was in the hospital under quarantine for 30 days. Andrea was given blood and platelet transfusions. She was treated at Children's Hospital until she was 12 years old.

Can you imagine, I had my oldest daughter in the hospital with a bone marrow disease under quarantine while my youngest daughter was seeing multiple medical specialists for birth defects, and my wife was 6 months pregnant with twin boys. I don't know how we did it.

Andrea's aplastic anemia is in remission now, but her doctor has told her that there is a 50% chance the disease could return, if Andrea decides to have children of her own and becomes pregnant. Well, she did decide to have a child. Alaina was born 9 weeks premature. She was born at 2 pounds 7 ounces and remained in the hospital for 31 days. She had to undergo occupational and physical therapy for approximately six months. She is currently doing very well. Andrea however has had major obstacles. She is now being followed by a hematologist regularly. Her blood counts will never be "normal." She is also having major dental issues. She did not have any cavities until she was 19 years old. Now six year later, she must have her teeth extracted and wear dentures. Her teeth do not retain enamel. She is 25 years old.

Our twin sons, Justin and Jason, are 21. They have had severe migraines since they were toddlers. Their teeth too, are beginning to show signs of enamel deficiency. They are very lyrical of having children.

My wife has had 2 non-cancerous tumors removed and had surgery to alleviate heavy menstrual bleeding which led to her being severely anemic.

It was fifteen years after my discharge, May 27th, 2000 we received a letter from the National Opinion Research Center who was contracted on behalf of the Department of Health and Human Services to do a survey and contact people that lived at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune. They were requesting that our family participate in a survey concerning toxic water contamination, specifically those children who were in utero and born while residing in base housing (Tarawa Terrace, Hadnot Point). They requested that our youngest daughter, Rachel, participate in the survey.

When the survey results came out we were shocked to find out that our daughter was not identified as a study participant, since her documented medical records confirmed that she had two of the birth defects of interest: cleft palate and spina bifida. After we confronted ATSDR officials were her medical records, which we had previously provided to them, they agreed that she had one birth defect of interest, and therefore qualified as a study participant. It was quite clear to me after reading questions that were part of the survey, that the Marine Corps had been aware of this situation for a very long time. From documents that we obtained through the Freedom of Information Act requests, we were able to determine that the Marine Corps/DoD environmental personnel on base were well aware of the VOC contamination before our family moved into base housing. And therefore could have intervened and prevented the adverse health effects suffered by my family as well as other families, whose medical history is very similar to my own.