

# 65 Miles for 65 Roses

Contributed by: Cpl. Lucas Vega, Marine Forces Central

**A BIG thank you to Major Sjoberg for his admirable endurance fundraiser and his service! You truly are a hero to CFF and our country!**

MANAMA, Bahrain — Thirteen years ago, Maj. Jesse Sjoberg made a promise to spend the rest of his life with a woman named Jacquelyn “for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health,” as the famous wedding vow reads.

In sickness and in health hits “too close to home” to the athlete who has participated in nearly 50 physically enduring events to include: marathons, ultra-marathons and triathlons. His wife he calls Jacqui is one of the one percent of people around the world who suffer from a life-threatening illness called cystic fibrosis – a condition that limits its victim’s life expectancy to their mid-30s.

Sjoberg, a marine from Bellevue, Nebraska completed a 14-hour, 65-mile trot at Naval Support Activity Bahrain, Oct. 6-7, to raise awareness and financial contributions for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.

“She’s why I do this,” said Sjoberg, a Marine on temporary additional duty with Marine Forces Central Command Forward, who’s parent command is Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 3, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing. “I worry all the time about her, but she’s tougher than any two Marines I know. By looking at her, you’ll never be able to tell she has this condition.”

About one percent of the world’s population inherits a defective gene and its protein product that causes the body to produce unusually thick mucus in the lungs and digestive system. This mucus obstructs lungs and leads to life threatening lung infections. In the digestive system, it stops natural enzymes breaking down and absorbing food, according to the official Cystic Fibrosis website.

“She only has about 50 percent of a normal person’s lung capacity,” said Sjoberg. Sjoberg’s lungs were tested during his 65-miler. “I... struggle to breathe for 12-13 hours in this endeavor (maybe 13-15 if really bad) Jacqui fights to breathe every day...even on the best of days. The comparison is hardly fair. He has participated in the Great Strides walk for the last 12 years. The Cystic Fibrosis Foundation hosts this event every year to help raise money to research a cure and raise awareness about the rare disease that roughly 70,000 individuals have been diagnosed with across the globe.

“Usually the walk is about one to three miles so the people with CF can complete it,” said Sjoberg. “The number 65 is significant to the fight against Cystic Fibrosis as it can be difficult for the children affected by the disease to pronounce the name of their affliction. When asked what is wrong with them, their response often comes out sounding like “65 roses.”

One to three miles did not suit the marathon-veteran with a passion for pushing his body beyond the limit.

“I thought 65 miles would be a good distance, I wanted to take it to another level,” he said jokingly. He would have participated in the Great Strides walk in San Diego, but the Marine Corps needed Sjoberg somewhere else.

“This year, I could not participate in the local Great Strides walk due to my all-expenses paid trip to the Middle East (aka my current deployment),” he wrote on his personal, fundraising Great Strides webpage. “Nevertheless, it is my goal to raise money for this very worthy cause even while deployed.”

This was the 13th time he has participated in a Great Strides event – one annual occasion for each year he has been married. Even though his run was not officially sponsored by the CFF, he managed a way to get his support from the opposite side of the world.

For the whole story visit:

<http://www.marines.mil/unit/marforcent/>

[Pages/65milesfor65rosesMarcentMarineruns65consecutivemilestoraiseawarenessforCysticFibrosis](http://www.marines.mil/unit/marforcent/Pages/65milesfor65rosesMarcentMarineruns65consecutivemilestoraiseawarenessforCysticFibrosis)



**Maj. Jesse Sjoberg with his family Ayden, Jacquelyn Hunter.**

### Stay Posted:

**CFF Nebraska is planning on a “Team Fundraiser” to train for the Omaha Marathon next September so you can follow in the footsteps of Maj. Sjoberg!**

**If you or someone you know is interested please contact the office at 402.330.6164 or [nebraska@cff.org](mailto:nebraska@cff.org)**

*A great way to get fit and raise funds for CF research!*