



CASEY JONES/Big Bear Grizzly

The 2014 Pacific Crest Trail Warrior Hikers pose with local American Legion officers May 4 outside American Legion Post 584 in Big Bear Lake. The Warriors Hikers are hiking from Mexico to Canada and stopped in Big Bear Lake to recuperate. Pictured are, front row, from left, Joshua Shields, Shawn White and Angela Powell. Back row, Tom Bielecki, Kevin Black, Post 584 commander Bill Wilson and Post 584 finance officer Don Ritchie.

# A PCT hike tradition

## Warrior Hike soothes the souls of military personnel

By CASEY JONES  
Reporter

Kevin Black and his hiking buddies have traded the chaos and confusion of a combat zone for the peace and quiet of the Pacific Crest Trail.

"We're walking off the war," the U.S. Marine Corps veteran explained May 4 at the Sgt. Woody Woodard American Legion Post 584 in Big Bear Lake.

Black, an Oceanside resident, and four other vets comprise the 2014 Warrior Hikers PCT team. They're hiking the length of the trail this summer. Other teams are hiking the entire Appalachian and Continental Divide trails.

Their journeys are paid for by the non-profit Warrior Hike organization, which was formed by an Iraqi war veteran who hiked the Appalachian Trail after returning from combat and found it soothing for the soul.

Warrior Hike provides the hiking equipment. It arranges for veterans organizations to provide occasional respites, complete with food and lodging, along the way. And when the trip is through, Warrior Hike will help participants find jobs in the private sector with program sponsors.

For now, the PCT team is focused on seeing the sights.

"The whole idea is to just unwind, to enjoy nature, to forget about the war," Black said. "Like I said, we're walking off the war."

So far so good. The group—four males and one female representing four branches

of the military—began their journey April 12 in Campo along the Mexican border.

"It's been great; a relaxing exercise," said Warrior Hiker Tom Bielecki of Alto, Michigan, an infantryman with the U.S. Army National Guard who served in Afghanistan.

But there's a long trail ahead.

The team will proceed along the spine of the Pacific Crest and hopes to complete the 2,650 mile trek to Manning Peak at the Canadian border on Sept. 26, before the snow flies.

"The trail can take a toll, physically," Black said, but noted that the group of veterans has an advantage over others who tackle the trail. "We've all hiked many miles with very heavy packs," he said.

The group took a break to recuperate in Big Bear Lake May 4-5. Their money was no good here.

They were greeted at the trail and ferried into town by Legion members. They were treated to rooms and hot showers at Snow Bear Lodge. And they were feted at the Legion, which fed the hikers during their two-day stay, and sent them packing with bags stuffed with trail foods compliments of the Post 584 Ladies Auxiliary.

"It's a long walk for them," said Auxiliary president Jo-Ann Perry. "We don't want them to be hungry."

"They're treating us like kings," Black said.

Post 584 commander Bill Wilson said that when the local Legion learned that the hikers were coming, the planning began. The group was honored with a dinner May 4.

"This is the kind of stuff we like to do," Wilson said. "These vets are amazing and we just want to help them out."

# Printer for the future

By CASEY JONES  
Reporter

When the printer starts whirring in Jamison Luke's classroom at Baldwin Lane Elementary School, the first-year teacher says he has trouble keeping his sixth-grade science students in their seats.

"They are mind-blown," Luke says. "It's amazing the curiosity this printer has created."

Of course, it's not just any printer. Luke acquired a MakerBot Replicator 2, a 3D plastic printer, by pitching a proposal on a crowd-sourcing website for teachers, www.DonorsChoose.org.

Persons from as far away as New York chipped in to buy the printer, a \$2,600 expense. The device arrived this month.

Luke was lauded for his efforts by the Bear Valley Unified School District board at its April 16 meeting.

"I think what Jamison has done is set the bar higher," said Kurt Madden, school superintendent. "This is our new woodshop 5.0. Within the next year, I'd like to have a 3D printer in all of our school sites."

Luke's sixth-grade science students use computer programs like Tinkercad to design items, mostly toys to date. Students take a rudimentary shape like a cylinder, pyramid or box and turn them into bears, octopuses, elephants and other items.

"They're taking these shapes and building all sorts of things," Luke says.

Each item takes about an hour to make after being designed, with the printer painstakingly adding one layer of plastic after another.

By the end of the year, each student will have designed and printed an item. "They'll do a presentation in front of the class about



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Jamison Luke, a sixth grade teacher at Baldwin Lane Elementary School, displays the 3D printer he acquired for the classroom through Donors Choose.

what they want to print, and why," Luke said.

Next year, Luke is planning several projects and will also integrate the printer into the math curriculum. He hopes to progress beyond making toys.

One possibility is to have each student design a different part for an object, which would then be assembled.

Ideally, he said, students would use the computer to make replacement parts to fix things. Luke designed and printed a replacement for a broken plastic clip on his GoPro camera. "I'd like something to break in class and have the kids design a part to fix it," Luke said.

When Luke looks at the printer, he sees the future. "The future is basically everyone being their own engineers," Luke said.

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