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NEWS PROFILE

Siblings share fondness for Coast Guard

Contributing writer Catherine Baum interviewed Kelly and Cameron Gebbo, siblings who returned to their home in Clay for the holidays from their Coast Guard units. Their short visits were a surprise for the rest of their family. Cameron, who enrolled in the Coast Guard in December 2003, is on the USCG Sherman, in Alameda, Calif. His sister, Kelly, who enrolled in August 2004, is stationed at the Coast Guard station at Sandy Hook, in Highland, N.J. New Year's was the first holiday they had been home together since they joined the service. Cameron arrived Dec. 23 in Clay and departed Jan. 8 for California. Kelly had a shorter visit, arriving New Year's Day and departing Jan. 4.

Name: Kelly and Cameron Gebbo

Age: Kelly, 20; Cameron, 21

Address: 8387 Zenith Drive, Clay

Occupation: Kelly, boatswain's mate third class, U.S. Coast Guard; Cameron, machinery technician third class, U.S. Coast Guard

Education: C.W. Baker High School, Baldwinsville. Kelly graduated in 2004, Cameron in 2003

Family: Mother, Kim Lisi; stepfather, Vittorio Lisi; step-sister, Jessica Lisi, 18; step-brother, Anthony Lisi, 14; half sisters, Katie Waldron, 14, and Sara Waldron, 12

How is the Coast Guard different from other branches in the military?

Kelly: The Coast Guard is different from other branches mainly because our primary mission is search and rescue. We train to save lives every day. A few other reasons would be we are a very small military branch. We also work for the Department of Homeland Security, not the Department of Defense. We have some of the oldest equipment. Some of our ships are older than the Navy museums.

How did you get to your current enlisted rank? Cam-

eron: I came up from E-1, which is boot camp, and then I went to E-2 and E-3 while I was stationed in Buffalo. When I went to "A" school, I



John Berry / Staff photographer

CAMERON GEBBO, 21, and his sister, Kelly Gebbo, 20, shared the holidays recently with their mother, Kim Lisi, for the first time since 2002. The siblings, who graduated from C.W. Baker High School in Baldwinsville, are in the Coast Guard.

Who would you like to read about?

Is there someone you'd like to see profiled? Maybe it's the a volunteer who's done important work in the community, the new secretary at your school or the head of the zoning board. Send your suggestions and a contact telephone number to the bureau address at left or call the bureau chief.

became an E-4; E stands for enlisted. When you become an E-4 in the Coast Guard, you have a rank. You have a label. Kelly's also an E-4 as a boatswain's mate.

What does "A" school entail? Kelly: "A" school is a school that E-3s go to, to move up in rank, to become a petty officer. My particular school was three months in length and challenged my knowledge as a non-rank and as a soon-to-be petty officer.

Learning how to become a professional mariner brought me out of my comfort zone

many times and taught me how to take control of any situation I was given.

Last fall, your brother received a Letter of Commendation for recruiting you into the Coast Guard. What was your reaction? Kelly: He is the reason for me being where I am today, and for that I say "job well done, brother."

It is an awesome accomplishment, and it is not that easy to get someone to join the service and sign him or herself over to the government. I always have wanted to join the military. I couldn't

see myself doing anything else from the time I was very young. But he was the reason I chose the U.S. Coast Guard.

What has the Coast Guard done for you? Cameron: It showed me the world. I have been to the Republic of the Philippines, Guam, the Marshall Islands, Hawaii and the West Coast. We were in the Marshall Islands two or three times because we had hurricane relief duty.

What advice would you offer to someone interested in joining the Coast Guard?

Kelly: Learn how to stand on your own two feet. Even though we work as a team, you can't always depend on others to make decisions for you. Also, be confident in your knowledge and work, but keep an open mind to constructive criticism.

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