



1st Battalion, 1st Marines

RIGHT OF LINE FIRST AFOOT

NEWSLETTER

February 2011

MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDING OFFICER

Greetings Family and Friends of BLT 1/1,

As most of you are well aware, the Marines of BLT 1/1 spent long hours training in the field this past month following the holiday leave period. I know that some families were wondering why operational tempo actually increased just prior to deployment rather than slowed down. This is an understandable concern, as all of us want to have as much time available to spend with our loved ones before we depart. I assure you that these long hours of training will only serve to help us better accomplish our mission in the coming months.

As you know, the unit will deploy overseas in February and will not return until sometime later in the year. It is only natural for families to be concerned for the safety of their loved one and the challenges he will face over the next few months. The newspaper headlines and evening news only fuel that concern with repeated scenes of violence and unrest on the other side of the globe. Do not be alarmed. Although the world can be a dangerous and uncertain place, Marines are the very best at protecting the innocent, defeating evil, and restoring order.

Your Marines are ready for this deployment. I have served alongside them for the past 15 months and firmly believe they are better trained, better equipped, and better led than any other unit... friend or foe. They have been trained to handle anything and everything. Every one of them is eager, determined, and focused. The confidence and swagger they possess stems directly from being part of a tight-knit, highly proficient, and extremely professional outfit.

I will ensure that everyone is kept posted on what we are doing and where we are at as often as possible. We will continue to provide monthly newsletters and frequent updates on the unit via the Battalion Facebook Page. Do not hesitate to contact our Family Readiness Officer, Mr. Rick Andersen, or a member of the Command Team if you have any questions or require assistance. I am committed to ensuring that families have all the support they need back at home while we are forward deployed. The more we help our families out here on the home front, the easier it will be for Marines to focus on their mission overseas.

I look forward to writing to all of you again next month, probably from somewhere far out in the Pacific Ocean. Thanks again to all the families and friends of BLT 1/1 for helping make this the finest unit in the Marine Corps. Your Marines are truly the best of the best, and I have no doubt that their actions and accomplishments on this deployment will have you beaming with pride.

Semper Fidelis,

LtCol Craig R. Wonson



LtCol Craig R. Wonson

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First Battalion, First Marines Facebook Page:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Oceanside-CA/1st-Battalion-1st-Marines-FIRST-OF-THE-FIRST/11208242257039>



BLT SGTMAJOR



Marines, Families and friends of Battalion Landing Team 1/1, I hope you are all working to get ready for the beginning of our deployment. As pre-deployment comes to a close we know the warriors of the Battalion are well trained and ready to push forward. The training has been intense since the holiday break. I appreciate the low number of mishaps, something I always attribute to proper leadership and exemplary role models within our Battalion. Safety while traveling, or safety on the many ranges and exercises I have witnessed, has been a constant and I am grateful.

Monday night we had the 1/1 pre-deployment brief and I was able to speak to many family members and hear concerns as well as gestures of gratitude for the hard training. Renee and I have lived many times such as these where training is intense and seems to never end. I consistently lift up the families of these Marines as you bear the brunt of these long days and nights away from family. As we close in on our deployment date we lean forward making sure the Marines are trained in the latest information from unsafe areas around the world. I resound the statement that it is the home front that keeps the balance and the motivation only a spouse or family member can provide. I appreciate you all.

As promised in the brief the other night, Renee and I extend our hand of experience to you, whether spouse or family member, before, during and after the deployment and provide a contact for any need that may arise. Renee and I are connected to volunteer groups who can provide help just about anywhere you may go while 1/1 is deployed. Please take advantage of Renee's sage advice and call or contact her at anytime.

Phone: 910-459-9457

e-mail: reenehenry2001@yahoo.com

As always I am proud to serve the Marines of BLT 1/1 and look forward to the day I stand among them in whatever challenge may await us as we begin our travels with the 13 Marine Expeditionary Unit.

Semper Fidelis,

SgtMajor Jonathan Henry



ALPHA COMPANY NEWS

Dear Families and Friends of Alpha Company “Team Mech”,

As our pre-deployment leave came to an end early last month, I hope all of the families of Alpha Company enjoyed the time they spent with their Marine/Sailor. Leave always goes by fast. Pre-deployment leave flies by even faster.



During the month of January, Alpha Company was in full gear preparing for our upcoming deployment. This included finishing the majority of our administrative requirements and conducting some final field training. In terms of administrative tasks, our Marines completed wills, power of attorney, and took care of final medical/dental work. If your Marine/Sailor has not sat down with you and gone over everything you need to know while he is deployed, I highly encourage that you have him do so soon. We have worked diligently to identify any last-minute tasks, but only you and your family know if there are any remaining issues. If there is any way we can help, please bring it to the attention of your Marine/Sailor’s chain of command.

In addition to meeting our administrative requirements, the company has also continued to refine our tactical skills in the field. We did this during a company and then battalion field exercise. Although this training has prevented our Marines from spending time at home for a few nights, it has been of great importance in getting us ready for deployment. As you may know, we have to be ready to execute a wide array of missions while we operate as part of the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit. Thus, it is critical that our Marines are trained in the most up-to-date techniques our fellow Marines are using around the globe. This has been our focus during our remaining weeks stateside. I’d like to thank you for the sacrifices you make so that we can ensure your Marine/Sailor is as best prepared for deployment as possible.

Thank you to those spouses that attended the Family Readiness Brief. I hope you were provided with useful information that will help you while your Marine/Sailor is deployed. Again, if there are any critical things you and your family identify as needing to happen before we deploy, please address this with your Marine/Sailor’s chain of command so we can help address these issues as soon as possible.

As the deployment nears we will keep everyone informed as best as possible. Please understand that our schedule is fluid and we are always prepared to deal with last minute adjustments. Again, we will try to make sure your families are as well informed as possible.

I hope you all enjoy our upcoming “96.” Hopefully your Marine/Sailor does something special for you on Valentine’s Day.

Congratulations to the following Marines and their families on their promotion:

Capt Guiney

1stLt Schmoll

LCpl Morrell

LCpl Murphy

Semper Fidelis,

Capt. Lucas Balke



BRAVO COMPANY NEWS



Dear Families and Friends of Bravo Company,

First and foremost, I'd like to wish the "Raider" family a Happy 2011. I hope this year brings everyone joy and prosperity. This newsletter marks the last update the families and friends of Bravo Company will receive while we are still in the Continental United States (CONUS). I know it has been a demanding training cycle on both the Marine/Sailor and the family, but I assure you that all the training was crucial and necessary to prepare for whatever mission lies ahead. Without question, Battalion Landing Team 1/1 is the best trained combat arms unit in the Marine Corps, which will only ensure mission success when we are forward deployed.

The first week of January began with the culmination of some well deserved holiday leave. I hope Santa Claus was nice to everyone, and your New Year celebration afforded you the opportunity to share good times and laughs with family and friends.

As the "Raiders" came off of leave, we transitioned into an intense 12-day cycle of meeting all of our pre-deployment requirements. Everything from gas chamber qualifications to Record of Emergency Data (RED) updates were our primary focus during this period. Fulfilling these requirements can be mentally challenging and frustrating; however, completing these requirements are essential to ensuring that each Marine/Sailor's affairs are in order while he is deployed.

Upon completion of the litany of pre-deployment requirements, Bravo Company executed the Battalion's 5th Field Exercise (FEX). During Battalion FEX V, the company transitioned through a 3-day package that included mounted and dismounted counter-IED training and urban operations in Kilo 2 Combat Town. The training was superb and it provided the Marines/Sailors a much needed refresher on some of the previous combat skills that somewhat atrophied during the (3) at sea periods.

The following Marines were promoted during the month of January:

Gunnery Sergeant Steven D. Oldham
Sergeant Javian D. Balfour
Corporal Steven A. Bargas

The following Marines received the Good Conduct Medal during the month of January:

Sergeant Daniel T Hirsch	Sergeant Laurent H. Lecointre	Sergeant Daniel Villa	Corporal Adam D. Kyle
Corporal Steven M. Lancaster	Corporal Cody A. Odom	Corporal Samuel L. Richards	Corporal Thomas R. Sterett
Corporal Seth C. Robinette	Corporal Jarrett D. Thompson	Lance Corporal Lucas C. Carnes	Lance Corporal Thomas M. Olson
Lance Corporal Rudy Salazar JR			

The following Marines joined Bravo Company during the month of January:

Staff Sergeant Curt E. Woodard
Staff Sergeant Jeremy H. Miller
Corporal Christopher N. McElrath

In February, the company will execute Battalion FEX VI. Similar to Battalion FEX V, the training will focus on certain combat skills that we must possess to ensure success in operations across the globe. The "Raiders" will return to the Infantry Immersion Trainer (IIT), which is one of the most realistic, urban training environments on Camp Pendleton. Upon completion of Battalion FEX VI, we will conduct some much needed live fire training. When the live fire training is complete, we will prepare to execute our flight to Hawaii and begin what will be an excellent journey. I want to personally thank everyone for your love and support of Bravo Company. We feel the same...and could not do what we do without you.

Semper Fidelis,

Capt David Godwin



CHARLIE COMPANY NEWS



Dear Families and Friends of Chosen Company,

January has flown by and we are on the final stretch before our deployment. Fresh back from three weeks of much needed leave, Chosen Company jumped into one final push to prepare our Marines for the next seven months. With an emphasis on training for potential combat missions, we have focused our efforts on a few basic skills: Counter-Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), vehicle-mounted and foot-mobile patrolling, and

operations in urban environments. I know we have kept your Marine or Sailor in the field more than you would like, but the need to refresh these critical skills is essential. The enemies of our country are many in number, numerous in country of origin, and committed to fighting against us in whatever way they can. As your nation's force in readiness, it is imperative that we are ready to fight them on our terms. Make no mistake about it: your Chosen Company warriors are well trained, well prepared, and well led. Our small unit leaders (from the fire team leaders up) are focused, disciplined, and able. When we set sail across the Pacific Ocean, we'll be up to any task our nation can throw our way.

In conjunction with training, we have focused on our pre-deployment administrative requirements to ensure that your Marine and Sailor is ready to leave the United States for seven months without needing to worry about his personal affairs. While time has been limited, the platoon leadership has worked diligently to ensure that your Marine or Sailor has his emergency contact information up to date, his power of attorney and will complete, and his finances in order. Understanding that there will always be last minute changes and individual instances where additional time is needed, I have given platoon commanders and platoon sergeants increased authority to release Marines during the work day to take care of specific issues. In addition, the weekends from now until deployment should be completely work-free, and the 96-hour liberty for the 12th through the 15th of February is scheduled for all members of the company. I encourage you to take advantage of this time, and do not hesitate to contact me or 1stSgt Bilenski at 760-763-4498 if you are having difficulty getting something accomplished. We will make every effort to get your Marine or Sailor the time he needs to ensure he is ready to deploy.

Additionally, I would like to say thank you for the great turnout at our company's family day on the 28th of January. 1st Platoon's Lt. Dingess and the Marines who helped set up that event did a great job, and it is my sincere hope that everyone had fun. My wife Meredith and I enjoyed meeting many of you that attended with your Marine or Sailor. Meredith looks forward to seeing you at many of the family events that the battalion has planned during the deployment. If you have any questions or issues before or during the deployment, please contact Meredith at mgmsimpson@gmail.com and she will be happy to assist you.

Chosen Company is proud to make the following announcements for the months of January and February:

Promotion to PFC: PFC Miller (3rd Platoon)

Promotions to LCpl: LCpl Foote (2nd Platoon)
LCpl Davenport (3rd Platoon)

Promotion to Cpl: Cpl Debowes (3rd Platoon)

Promotions to Sgt: Sgt Thompson (Weapons Platoon)

Chosen Company welcomes the following Marines to the unit:

Congratulations to LCpl Koulchar and his new wife, Sydni, as well as PFC Allen, LCpls Yanez and Smith and Cpl Weigman, all of whom had weddings in the last month.

As always, please let me know if there is anything Meredith or I can do for you or your family.

Semper Fidelis,

Capt. Neal Simpson



H&S COMPANY NEWS



Dear Families and Friends of Headquarters and Service Company,

January was an extremely important month for Headquarters and Service Company to complete final preparations for the upcoming deployment, load the Navy ships with the Battalion Landing Team's vehicles and equipment, and support important training exercises for the rifle companies.

Following the holiday leave block, H&S Company turned to immediately on ensuring all pre-deployment requirements were met. Although involving very little field time, the days were still extremely long, as Marines completed computer based training, received dental and medical readiness treatment, and finalized personal and administrative issues prior to deployment. The middle of January was focused on preparing the extensive amount of vehicles and gear needed for deployment for inspection and embarkation on Navy ships.

The final week of January involved the mass transportation of vehicles and equipment down to the Navy docks, as well as the full support of the company for a week-long urban training package at the Kilo 2 Combat Town.

February will go by extremely quickly, as there is still much to do to be fully prepared for deployment. I hope that all families enjoy as much time as possible with their Marine or sailor, and that everyone is fully prepared for a successful deployment.

I would like to welcome the following Marines and sailors to the company:

LCpl Joshua D. Craig LCpl Alan T. Negrete

Congratulations to the following Marines and sailors for their promotion:

LCpl Joshua D. Craig LCpl Micah E. Joosten LCpl Alan T. Negrete
LCpl Mariano C. Vera Cpl Nickolas I. Garbee Cpl Steve T. Warren
Sgt Travis M. Pickens

Congratulations to the following Marines and sailors for their awards and recognitions:

Sgt Christopher Brandle-Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal
GySgt Richard Nelson- Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal
Cpl Brandon M. Stanek-Certificate of Commendation
Cpl Kyle Stephenson- Certificate of Commendation
Cpl Darrell Wisseman- Meritorious Mast
HM2(FMF) Dennis Marin – 13th MEU Junior Sailor of the Year
HM3(FMF) Adam Smith – 13th MEU Blue Jacket of the Year
Cpl Brandon Stanek – BLT 1/1 Marine of the Quarter
Cpl Darrell Wisseman – H&S Company NCO of the Quarter

I would like to thank each and every one of you for the outstanding support you give your Marine or sailor, and extend my deepest gratitude for the important role you play in their lives. Please continue to visit the Battalion's Facebook page and Familyreadiness1/1 website for updates on training and the upcoming deployment.

Semper Fidelis,

Capt. James A. Richardson



WEAPONS COMPANY NEWS

Dear Families and Friends of Weapons Company,



During January the company spent most of our time completing the myriad of tasks that are required before a unit goes on deployment. These things make sure that people still get paid, promoted, are medically ready and have everything they need. Paperwork was the focus for the first half of the month. Everyone pitched in, but the Platoon Sergeants deserve the lion's share of the credit. They worked extra hard this month to get everyone ready to deploy. The second half of the month was spent training. Given the uncertain world we live in and the need to be ready for anything once we deploy, we spent several weeks in the field making sure we will be as ready as possible.

February will also see its fair share of training. Live fire and counter insurgency training will sharpen our edge just a bit more. Additionally, we have many tasks left to ensure we safely and professionally get out the door with everything we are supposed to have. Every effort will be made to be respectful of everyone's time. We have a 96 in mid February before we deploy. We are still on track to leave on February 22nd aboard the USS Boxer and Green Bay.

There was plenty of good news in January. Several Marines were married, promoted and recognized for their efforts and hard work.

The following Marines were promoted this month (current rank shown):

Cpl Blake E. White LCpl William T. Baldwin LCpl Seth C. Toboz

Sgt Garret J. Deffert reenlisted this month

The following Marines were married in January:

SSgt Jason S. Hubbard was married to Catherine E. Hubbard Cpl Elijah M. McQuerry was married to Morgan N. McQuerry

Cpl Christopher D. Hamilton was married to Holly D. Hamilton LCpl Russel E. Patten was married to Cassandra E. Patten

LCpl Ryan P. Jung was married to Lauren W. Jung LCpl Michael R. Richardson was married to Kelly Richardson

Promotions:

The following Marines graduated schools in January:

SERE

Sgt Clayton A. Crouch, Clayton A. Cpl Christopher D. Hamilton LCpl Scott A. Richmond

LCpl Paul R. Maxinoski

Mountain Sniper School

Cpl Diego Hernandez LCpl Vyachelslav S. Vorobyov LCpl Eric M. Mabry (high shooter)

Joint Forward Observer

Cpl Ricky L. Guessford

Mountain Communications Course

Cpl Daniel M. Gordon LCpl Levi J. Rodriguez

Cpl Urbany won the 13th MEU's Meritorious Sergeant Board

Semper Fidelis,

Capt. Chris Niedziocha



FOX BATTERY NEWS



Dear Fox Battery Families,

As our deployment time rapidly closes in on us, I hope you are making the most of the time that you have with your Marine. As a battery, we are in the final stages of preparation, and doing our best to ensure that everything is ready for this float. I am sure that you are doing the same thing in regards to your family preparation.

January found the Marines of Fox Battery ferociously attacking our preventative maintenance requirements to ensure that our gear is prepared and ready for this deployment. The battery also accomplished a litany of administrative requirements for deployment, many of which were aimed at ensuring that our families have all the information and tools necessary to carry on while we are on board ship.

At the end of the month, we changed gears and conducted some in depth counter IED training. The Marines enjoyed the opportunity to do something outside of their traditional MOS' and it proved to be an interesting piece of training.

As we look towards the end of the month, the battery's TRAP platoon will be re-embarking aboard the USS Boxer to conduct some last minute TRAP training in preparation for the deployment. The rest of the battery will be packing up our office and barracks spaces to ensure that the next battery has a clean and organized area to live/work.

I hope you all enjoyed the informative pre-deployment brief. If you were unable to attend, please have your Marine let his chain of command know and I will ensure that he gets a copy of the slideshow. Also, I wanted to remind you of an issue that was covered at the end of the pre-deployment brief; when and where you can say goodbye to your Marine. The Marines of Fox Battery will be picked up at Las Pulgas and driven from there to the pier. You will be able to see your Marine off on the buses, and if you choose, can see them again at 32nd street. I will turn them loose on liberty after all of my equipment and personnel are accounted for, and they will be allowed on base liberty. Please remain flexible on this.

Semper Fidelis

Capt Clarence Loomis



RECON PLATOON NEWS



Dear Families and Friends of the BLT I/I Reconnaissance Platoon,

January was a very chaotic month for the Marines and Sailors of the Reconnaissance Platoon. The entire Platoon was on pre-deployment leave the beginning of this new year followed by core competency focused training. This was compounded by the administrative and family readiness tasks required to setup our Marines/Sailors and their families for success prior to deploying.

Over the past three weeks the platoon has conducted numerous live fire ranges, medical training, and fire support (close air support and indirect fire) exercises. All of these training evolutions were designed to operate as a platoon sized element in an Afghanistan type environment. The platoon rehearsed shooting, moving, and communicating as a platoon with multiple fire support agencies. Medical and counter improvised explosive device training was also incorporated in preparation for deployment. The focus, dedication, and hard work put in by every member of the platoon this late in a pre-deployment cycle has been nothing short of commendable.

February will be full of challenges as we leave family and friends for deployment on the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU). The platoon will be conducting a ground reconnaissance, limited scale raid, and amphibious reconnaissance training package in conjunction with embarking on the MEU. We will take every opportunity possible to win the fight before we get there. I appreciate everyone's patience, dedication, and understanding during this year and a half long workup. Although the work days have been long we must remember Thucydides, lesson from the Peloponnesian War "that one man is much the same as another; and that he is best who is trained in the severest school."

Semper Fidelis,

Capt. Patrick Zuber



ENGINEER PLATOON NEWS



Dear Families and Friends of BLT 1/1 Engineer Platoon,

With the final weeks before the deployment upon us, the training continues to press on. These past three weeks have been extremely successful in preparing the platoon – as well as the battalion – for our deployment.

Given the combat engineer mission of “providing mobility to the ground combat element”, we began in mid-January providing a week of crucial training on metal detectors and movement in a high threat IED environment to the other units within the BLT. This was followed by a week of practical application through a number of different scenarios involving IEDs and counter-insurgency tactics. This current week is the third phase of the same type of training using different scenarios – giving us an opportunity to perfect our skills. The efforts and abilities of your Marines over the course of the training received recognition from the Battalion Commander on down.

In addition to the training conducted with the rest of BLT 1/1, our platoon was able to piece together and hone our skills in the force protection and survivability portions of our job. Throughout the first week of February we employed our support squad along with our combat engineers and built a “combat outpost” consisting of an earthen berm perimeter and three guard towers. Next week our platoon will execute its final training evolution prior to setting sail in order to perfect our own skills in metal detector operations and explosive breaching.

Congratulations to Cpl Teran and Ms. Yvonne Morales on the birth of their daughter, Danika.

Congratulations to the following Marines who were promoted in January.

Cpl Patrick Mullins, Promoted Feb 1, 2011

Cpl Richard Torrez, Promoted Feb 1, 2011

I understand that we have not taken a break other than Christmas leave since late summer last year – but I can assure you that the very best way that I can take care of you and your Marine/Sailor is by training them to the fullest of my ability for any mission we may be called upon to do. We appreciate your continued support as we make our final preparations for deployment.

Semper Fidelis,

LT. Kevin Julian



CHAPLAIN ' S CORNER



Greetings Family and Friends of Battalion Landing Team I/I!

I recently read a quote from Gen. George S. Patton that summed up the burden carried by our Marines and Sailors and accurately explains the intensity with which we have trained for the past year. He said, *"Unless you do your best, the day will come when, tired and hungry, you will halt just short of the goal you were ordered to reach, and by halting you will make useless the efforts and deaths of thousands."* It is a burden that, I imagine, is hard to describe unless you have carried it. As we prepare to deploy, I know that this process can be very difficult for everyone. It is with that reality firmly in mind that I submit this one suggestion, allow lots of room in your heart for grace. Lower your expectations. Your Marine or sailor does not have all the answers and he may not be as focused on your separation as he is on the critical task that awaits him.

We already know that things aren't going to go smoothly; plans will change more than once, communication will go down at times, and everyone will unintentionally say the wrong thing sooner or later. But purposing in your heart to extend grace to yourself and your loved one, ahead of time, will help you to weather the hard times and avoid unnecessary stress and heartache.

Here are a few tips to help you with the challenge of grace:

Accept your differences as blessings.

Be vulnerable about your feelings and avoid letting your defense mechanism dictate your actions.

Allow room in your heart for mistakes. Be quick to ask for forgiveness when you've been critical or harsh.

Use the 24 hour rule. Things usually look different the next day. If you are frustrated, take time before you speak.

Ask yourself, "Will my comments bring resolve or intensify the frustration?"

Seek counsel if you need it.

By way of reminder, you can always contact me with the assurance of absolute confidentiality. That means that nothing we talk about will leave me unless you give me permission to do something for you. I will be deploying with the Battalion so my ship address, when we depart, is charles.owens@green-bay.usmc.mil, please feel free to email anytime if I can be a friend.

In His service and yours,

Lieutenant Charlie Owens
Battalion Chaplain, BLT I/I





Family Readiness Officer (FRO) UPDATE



Dear Families and Friends of I/I,

I would like to thank everyone for their continued patients as the deployment gets closer. I know everyone is eager for as much information as possible as I am. I will always send out information to families as I receive it. All information I pass concerning the unit will be official Command communication. Ensure you are getting information from your Marine and Everyone should have the mailing addresses for deployment at this time. I look forward to meeting many of the parents and extended family members prior to deployment.

DSTRESS



From the everyday stressors of life to the stressors related to combat, stress can affect even the strongest Marine. The DSTRESS Line was developed by the Corps to provide professional, anonymous counseling for Marines, their families and loved ones when it's needed most. Call (1-877-476-7734) today to speak with one of your own.

From the everyday stressors of life to the stressors related to combat, stress can affect even the strongest Marine. The DSTRESS Line was developed by the Corps to provide professional, anonymous counseling for Marines, their families and loved ones when it's needed most. Call today to speak with one of your own. A Place to call for those with the courage to answer our nation's call.

- For any stress related issues including work, personal, relationship, financial and family
- Available 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- Anonymous counseling provided by trained professionals
- Exclusively for Marines, their families and loved ones. A service provided by the Marine Corps

If you have any immediate concerns during our training cycle, you can call the Battalion Officer of the Day at 760-763-1439 or you can call me at 760-760-429-3514 (cell). You can also reach me via email at: rick.andersen@usmc.mil.

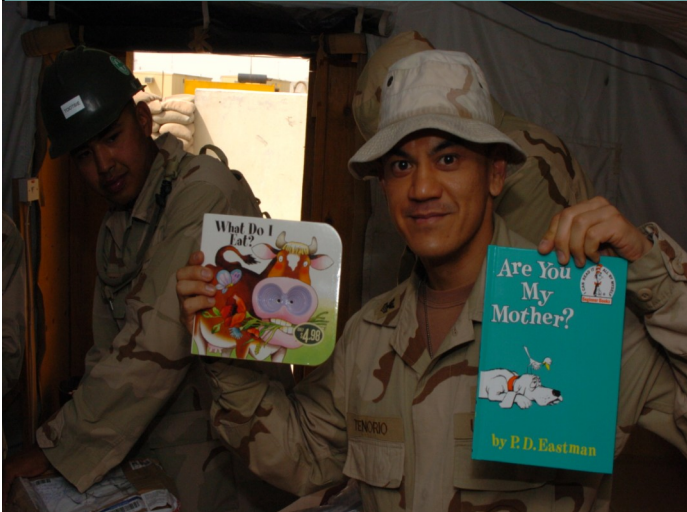
Semper Fidelis,

Rick Andersen



UNITED THROUGH READING® Update

The families of BLT 1/1 can stay connected in a very special way during our upcoming deployment through reading aloud on DVD! We are proudly participating in United Through Reading throughout the deployment. Simply by reading a few age-appropriate books for your children, your Marine or Sailor will be in your living room in no time.



If Dad is deployed for the birth of his child, or if Mom is leaving a toddler for overseas duty, participation in United Through Reading is a great way to start the bonding process. Seeing your face and hearing your voice on a regular basis assures your child that you are okay and helps your child learn the rhythm of your voice.

Please remember, this program isn't just for Moms and Dads; everyone can participate. If you have nieces, nephews, little brothers or sisters, grandchildren, or any other child in your life who you know will miss their special Marine or Sailor, plan ahead by packing books to send along with your DVD. Are there any favorite stories your child has? Don't forget to pack that book. Remember to consider any holidays or special events that you will be missing while deployed. Celebrate with a recording of your loved one reading a storybook for that special occasion. (When you pack a book, also try to pack a mailing envelope or package for your Marine to return the book in, so he doesn't have to hunt for one to fit your book on ship). All Sailors and Marines with the BLT are encouraged to participate in this positive quality of life program and can get more information about it, and set up times to begin recording by visiting their ship's Chaplain.

Also, we are conducting a Book Drive for the Command's library of children's books. The books collected will be available to anyone who would like to participate in United Through Reading throughout the deployment. These books from the book drive will stay with the camera for everyone to use. **Please bring a gently used children's book (ages 0-12) to any of the Message from the Heart/Build a Bear events in early March or have your Marine bring them to the Chaplain's office before deployment.**

To learn more about United Through Reading, visit www.unitedthroughreading.org or contact Fontaine Parker at 760-505-9816 or Fontaine@HeroOnMyArm.com.

Educational and Emotional Benefits

- Children's self-esteem grows as they experience the security of having a parent or other caring person read aloud with them.
- Research has shown that reading to children in the early years stimulates brain growth and leads to greater success in schools.
- Reading aloud explores a child's curiosities and interests.

Important Contact Numbers

BN OOD	760-763-1439
BN Chaplain	760-763-1414
BN FRO	760-429-3514
MCFTB	760-725-9052
Marine and Family Services	760-725-3400
Military One Source	1-800-342-9647
Base Information	760-725-4111
PMO	760-725-3888/763-2077/2075
Naval Hospital	760-725-1288
JRC, Vehicle Registration	760-725-2106
Sato Travel	760-725-4396
Relocation Office	760-725-3802

