



26TH MEU

A FORCE IN READINESS

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A close-up, high-contrast portrait of a young man in a Marine dress uniform. He is wearing a black leather garrison cap with a gold emblem. His eyes are light-colored and looking directly at the camera. He has a serious expression. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. On the left side, there are faint, large-scale circular emblems, likely the Marine Corps emblem.

You will **protect** the defenseless.

You will always do **what** is right.

You will never have to ask if **you've** made a difference.

You will never be given anything that isn't **earned**.



FROM THE COMMANDER

COL. FARRELL SULLIVAN



Marines, Sailors, and Families of the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit,

Greetings. By way of introduction, I am Colonel Farrell J. Sullivan, the Commanding Officer of the 26th MEU. My wife, Marta, and I are supremely honored and overjoyed to re-join the 26th MEU family. We departed the MEU in July of 2011 with fond memories of the strong bonds that were forged and proud to have been part of a unit that rose to the challenges it faced. Marta and I are joined on this tour by our four sons who range in age from 6 to 12 years old and yes, they keep us busy. We welcome those who have recently joined the 26th MEU family and I thank those who have been part of the MEU family for the last deployment.

The MEU returned from a 7-month deployment in late April 2016. During that deployment, the MEU distinguished itself while conducting operations that ranged from countering the Islamic State in Iraq to engagement missions throughout the Middle East, Africa, and Europe. We are currently in a period of 'dwell' where the tempo will be significantly reduced compared to the pre-deployment preparation period. The 26th MEU has earned a well-deserved respite and can plan to deploy again in the winter of 2017/2018.

During this dwell period, our focus will be on building a solid foundation of readiness and resiliency. This means preparing Marines and Sailors to accomplish the missions they will be assigned while forward deployed. Among other things, this preparation includes sending Marines and Sailors to qualify with their weapons, to attend professional education opportunities and other courses to expand their skill sets, to learn lessons from units like ours that are currently forward deployed, etc. It also means assisting Marines and Sailors in preparing families to successfully endure the challenges of deployments, changes of duty stations, and the other obstacles that military families face.

In addition to collectively improving our readiness and resiliency, there are several key things that are very important for all of us as we move forward together. First, practicing two way communications in order to provide accurate information and address uncertainty. Second, we rely heavily on volunteers and value those volunteers who have experience. We are always looking for energetic, general and/or specialized volunteers that want to share their time and talent. Whether you have one hour to give or can devote an entire year, we "Want You"! Third, our exceptionally talented Family Readiness Officer, Ms. Lisa Castleberry, stands ready to provide information and referral to assist Marines, Sailors, and their families with the breadth of resources provided in our local community.

For more information on upcoming events, volunteering or to address any concerns you might have, please do not hesitate to contact Lisa. She can be reached at 910-450-6471 or at lisa.castleberry@usmc.mil. I look forward to meeting you personally at an upcoming event.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Farrell J. Sullivan".

Farrell J. Sullivan



FROM THE SERGEANT MAJOR

SGT. MAJ. BRETT SCHEUER



Marines, Sailors, and Families of the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit,

The 26 MEU team has been very busy, and the Marines and Sailors continue to work very hard. I greatly appreciate their dedication, motivation, and service to our country and Corps. They are all truly great Americans!

In September, a select few of our Staff Non-Commissioned Officers, Non-Commissioned Officer, and I conducted a Professional Military Education (PME) battle site trip to Belleau Wood, France. The purpose of the trip was to enhance unit cohesiveness, small unit leadership, and the continued education for our Marines and Sailors about our rich history and the legacy of the Marines that fought during World War I. The battle of Belleau Wood was a pivotal turning point during the war and is where the Marines were given the name "Devil Dog" by the Germans for their incredibly fierce fighting spirit.

We must continue to train hard, and be prepared and ready for whatever mission that may occur. In this business you never know what is around the corner. With that said I understand the military way of life is not always easy and is equally as hard on our families. Once again, I can't thank all of our family members enough for your sacrifices, support, and understanding. I greatly appreciate your efforts and role in supporting those that serve and protect our great nation. We are unable to focus on mission accomplishment and unit readiness without your help.

Feel free to contact me anytime if you have any questions pertaining to our enlisted Marines and Sailors. I will always do my best to help resolve any problems, or answer any questions that you may have. You may contact me at commercial (910) 451-0038, or by e-mail at brett.scheuer@usmc.mil. I look forward to seeing everyone at our upcoming Marine Corps Ball on November 17, 2016 in Wilmington, NC.

Brett C. Scheuer





MARINES PROVIDE RELIEF TO HAITI FOLLOWING **HURRICANE MATTHEW**

Story by Capt. Jordan Cochran and Staff Sgt. Robert Durham

JEREMIE, Haiti - Aircrafts deployed in support of Joint Task Force Matthew, fly toward Jeremie, Haiti, Oct. 10, 2016. JTF Matthew, a U.S. Southern Command-directed team, is comprised of Marines with Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force – Southern Command and soldiers from Joint Task Force-Bravo's 1st Battalion, 228th Aviation Regiment, and is deployed to Port-au-Prince at the request of the Government of Haiti on a mission to provide humanitarian and disaster relief assistance in the aftermath of Hurricane Matthew.



PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti – Elements of the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit, along with sailors from Expeditionary Strike Group 2, disembarked from USS Mesa Verde (LPD 19) Sunday to assess storm damage to the Republic of Haiti's infrastructure and provide initial capabilities for future disaster relief efforts.

Haiti requested assistance from the United States after the Category IV storm, Hurricane Matthew, tore through the region causing severe flooding and displacing citizens here already struggling from a massive 7.6 earthquake in 2010 and recent epidemics of water and mosquito-borne illnesses.

Approximately 300 Marines began the journey here less than a week ago, armed with food, water and medical supplies to assist U.S. Southern Command, which has a Special Purpose Marine task force based in Honduras. An additional 500 Marines, aboard the USS Iwo Jima, are nearing the Haitian coast to accompany the Mesa Verde and provide follow-on sustainment capabilities. The task force's primary mission centers on responding to government requests for aid in parts of Central and South America, which has a higher operational tempo during hurricane season.

"While most organizations would take weeks just to organize an effort like this, it has taken the MEU only a few days," said Lt.

Col. Ralph Hershfelt, executive officer for the 24th MEU.

The role of the 24th MEU and the amphibious ships involved during this operation is to rapidly respond with critically needed capabilities to deliver assistance and aid to areas the government of Haiti deems necessary.

The Marines and Sailors will work in coordination with USAID, the government of Haiti, other international partners and non-governmental organizations to provide relief to the people of Haiti as requested by their government.

"Our main concern is to rapidly reduce the suffering of the victims of Hurricane Matthew and provide a stable platform for follow-on forces from the MEU to operate from during this operation, said Hershfelt. Our Marines and sailors are extremely motivated to help the people of Haiti in whatever way is needed the most. With many affected areas of Haiti so close to the coast, we bring the unique ability to operate simultaneously from the sea, ashore and in the air."

The 24th MEU is one of seven Marine Expeditionary Units operating globally. Each MEU is equipped for a variety of missions focused on rapid crisis response. Each MEU consists of a command element, air assets, land assets and logistical capability allowing expeditionary amphibious delivery of approximately 2,500 Marines anywhere in the world within hours.







Corps expands new grassroots technology to help commanders tackle suicide

Story by Mathuel Browne, Marine Corps Systems Command

The Marine Corps is investing in the health of Marines with a new force preservation tool to proactively combat suicide and identify at-risk service members.

The Integrated Clinical Management and Risk Mitigation System is an automated electronic risk assessment tool that gives commanders better visibility into the wellbeing of their Marines. By tracking factors like deployment history and military discipline, the system calculates individual risk scores for identified Marines and recommends resources to the commander to maintain and improve overall unit health and readiness.

“One of the challenges commanders and Department of Defense leadership face is suicide,” said Marvin Wallace Jr., project manager for the ICM-RMS Force Preservation Program Tool at Marine Corps Systems Command. “Right now, when dealing with high risk individuals, leadership must use a paper copy of the incident to evaluate how to help that service member. With the new ICM-RMS application, the commander gets a better information link with his medical officer to gain a better understanding of the problems his Marines face.”

ICM-RMS was developed by II Marine Expeditionary Force, 2nd Marine Regiment’s Operational Stress Control

and Readiness Team in 2011 to consolidate and share information that may indicate a need for command intervention.

“ICM-RMS gives me, as the leader, the full picture of the health of my Marines,” said Lt. Col. Reginald McClam, acting commanding officer of 8th Marines Regiment at Camp Lejeune, N.C. “The system is fairly simple to use, connects with former commands to fill gaps of previous events, helps develop long-term metrics and assists us in executing our mission at the macro level.”

“There is a manpower tax associated with having select high-ranking officials additionally tasked with managing the



The Marine Corps is investing in a new fleet application designed to assist command leadership to proactively combat suicide and identify at-risk service members. The Integrated Clinical Management and Risk Mitigation System is automated electronic risk assessment tool that tracks factors like deployment history and military discipline, and then calculates individual risk scores for identified Marines improving overall unit health and readiness. (U.S. Marine Corps photo illustration by Cpl. Daniel A. Wetzel)

system and its sensitive information,” McClam added. “So, it’s important to note that it will only be as good as the commander’s support of it.”

ICM-RMS is used by command-level Force Preservation Programs to identify and assess risk factors in Marines enrolled in the program, and connect them with vital resources for assistance. The FPP provides commanders a clear, formalized process to increase unit readiness by optimizing the potential of every Marine.

Navy Lt. Cmdr. Yaron Rabinowitz, operational psychologist at Marine Special Operations School at Camp Lejeune, N.C., was one of the original

creators of ICM-RMS.

“What is really unique about ICM-RMS is that it was not originally intended to be used by the whole Corps,” said Rabinowitz. “It was created at the grassroots level to assist the commander in making the right call for a Marine in need. Because the system was adapted at the local level, we are confident of its capabilities.”

In August of this year, ICM-RMS became a program of record at MCSC to expand and integrate the web-based capability enterprise-wide. MCSC will manage the information technology element to integrate the system across the Marine Corps network. All personally identifiable information will

be managed by the Commandant of Marine Corps Safety Division to ensure it remains secure.

“I want to be sure that we are clear that ICM-RMS will be secure,” said Sheri Stefaniga, lead for Total Force Information Technology Systems at MCSC. “In order to serve the full fleet, MCSC is placing the application on an encrypted section of the Marine Corps Enterprise Information Technology network, and the information is locked down with different privileges.”

ICM-RMS has been classified by the Marine Corps as an urgent universal need. Accordingly, MCSC is planning to deploy the system across the Corps over the next 14 months.



MY FAVORITE TIME OF YEAR

Lisa Castleberry | Family Readiness Officer



Happy Fall Y'all!!

This has got to be one of my favorite times of the year, the temperature getting cooler, the leaves changing color and plans for the holidays being made.

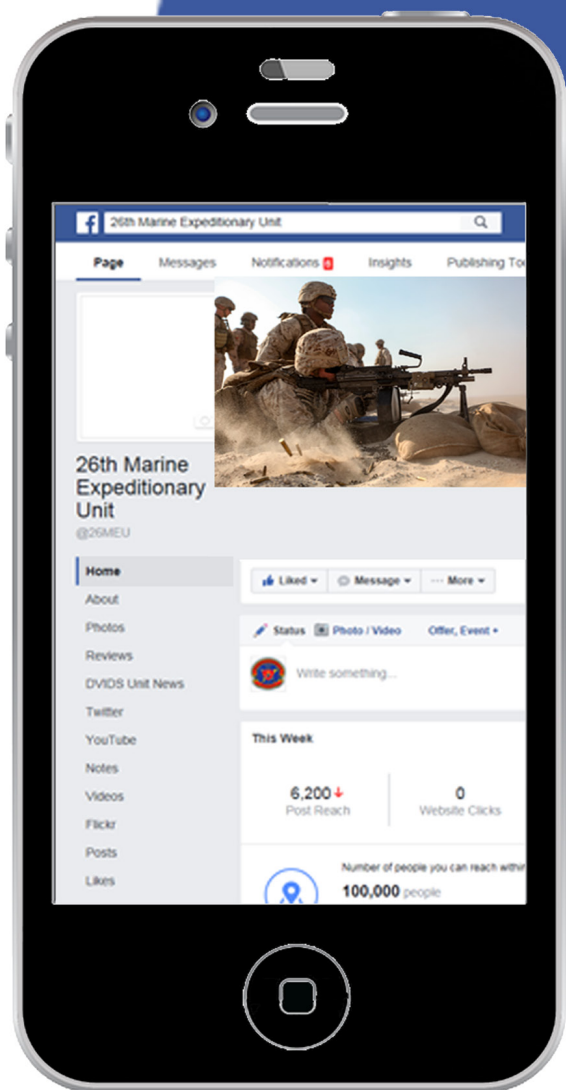
We had a large turnover of personnel this summer and I am extremely grateful to be getting to know many of you on a more personal level. Through phone calls, emails, and especially being able to meet folks in person we are really starting to feel like a family. We have had some fun events (Meet the CO & Sgt Maj, and the Harvest Fest & Chili Cook-Off) and I am really excited about the Marine Corps Ball coming up! We will have at least one unit event every other month as well as some social events so if you haven't been able to make it to one yet, I hope you can make it to one coming up. This is really a great way to get to know the other spouses and family members. All the events will be announced in my weekly e-mail messages along with other local events and resource links.

In case you didn't know, we have a Facebook group that we encourage you to join. "We LOVE the 26th MEU" is a casual, social outreach club providing support, friendship, and FUN for folks who love the 26th MEU! The group is "closed" but all you have to do is request to join and we will make sure you get added. This group is separate from the official unit readiness information but we work together to support the Marines and families of the 26th MEU.

If you are not receiving regular email messages from me, please send me an email from your preferred email address and I will make sure that you are added to my data base. Once I receive it, I will reply back to let you know I have received it. Since information changes, I ask that if you change any contact information to please let me know.

If I can be of any assistance, please don't hesitate to contact me.


Lisa Castleberry



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