



SEMPER FI SOUND OFF

The newsletter of the Dana Point 5th Marine Regiment Support Group

WINTER 2015

President's Message



Some people spend an entire lifetime wondering if they made a difference in the world. But, the Marines don't have that problem.

—Ronald Reagan, *President of the United States; 1985*

As civilians, **YOU** can make a difference in the world of our Marines, Sailors and their families through the support and outreach of our seasonal heartfelt missions. The holidays are a perfect time to not just say the words "Support our Troops." Let's actually do it! As one member of a grateful nation, you can step forward and accept the challenge of creating **HOLIDAY MAGIC** for our American Heroes.

Here is how YOU can help:

- ✓ **Sponsor a Marine** or family member for Thanksgiving Dinner at Waterman's Harbor Restaurant in Dana Point. Just \$35! Because our Marines are the nation's crisis response team, many can't go home for the holidays.
- ✓ **Donate a toy** for a Marine child.
- ✓ **Donate a gift card** for a single Marine or a Marine family.
- ✓ **Consider making a tax-deductible donation** on our secure website DanaPoint5thMarines.com or utilizing the enclosed postage-paid envelope for any of the above programs.

Civic organizations such as ours answer the call to provide morale-building services not covered by our Marine Corps. This allows our Marines to focus on their priority of "mission readiness." The families need encouragement and support since they are the remain-behind force when their infantry spouses and loved ones are called to serve. This holiday season is a time of giving. Won't you answer the call?

Semper Fidelis, Terry Rifkin, President

Who wants to volunteer?

Our red shirts can be spotted at every community event. The volunteers wearing them reflect the highest ideals of service. Our "Boots on the Ground" volunteers are loyal, patriotic and steadfast. Whether they raise their hands and step up for our **Car Wash, Baby Shower, Concerts in the Park, Christmas with Santa, Thanksgiving Dinner** or a **Family Day**, our special volunteer "Friends of the 5th" truly make a difference.

Who would like to join the working party?



Welcome Aboard to our New Sergeant Major

SgtMaj Chuong T. Nguyen was born in Saigon, Vietnam. He arrived in America as a refugee in 1988 and enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1993. He wanted to serve in the Military because he felt that America gave him the freedoms that his parents envisioned for him and it was his turn to give back to America. His career began with the School of Infantry at Camp Pendleton training as a rifleman, and progressed with honors to multiple deployments in Okinawa, Japan, Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, Australia, and Operation Iraqi Freedom and then Afghanistan. SgtMaj Nguyen moved through his training and service with honors and meritorious service. His personal decoration and awards, along with SgtMaj Nguyen's initiative, perseverance and dedication to the Corps, make him exemplary in the Fighting Fifth Marines and we honored to have him with us.





Our Comrade-in-arms Retires

Pete Hammer has been at the helm of the Dana Point 5th Marine Regiment Support Group for over eight years. In 2008 he was part of the incorporation of our non-profit organization. For over five years he was at the tip of the spear as President and CEO, driven to make DP5thMRSRG the gold standard amongst non-profit organizations such as ours. Three years ago, Pete felt comfortable handing over the reigns of the Presidency and became Chairman of the Board.

Due to his age, health and his desire to spend more time with Willa and his family, Pete has decided it was the right time to “retire, not “resign” from the Dana Point 5th Marine Regiment Support Group. Additionally, Pete feels that his objectives have been accomplished and he wishes to have a singular focus as the new Commandant of the Marine Corps League–South Coast Detachment.

Pete had a distinguished Military career and was a Marine Captain, an F-4 Phantom Radar Intercept Operator, and flew close air support missions in Vietnam. His honors include his selection by the Monarch Beach Sunrise Rotary as a Rotary International Paul Harris Fellow and Honorary Member. He was also selected as the Dana Point Chamber’s 2011 Citizen of the Year, and in November of 2012, the Soldiers of The Sea, Band of Brothers Beer Stein Award recipient for distinguished service to our Marines, Sailors and their Families.

We can feel nothing but gratitude for Pete’s selfless service through all these years. It has been an honor to work so closely with Pete and though he will not be far away, he won’t be part of our everyday operations. His tenure as Chairman will be until the end of the year. He will always be our respected friend and loyal supporter.



Gratitude from a Military Family

“My wife Nicole, our two sons Lincoln and Bentley and I came to 5th Marine Regiment in 2011, starting off at 1st Battalion, 5th Marines where we were first introduced to the patriotic support from the adopted communities. After my transition to Headquarters Company, Nicole and I have had the privilege to meet members of the Dana Point Support Group. The patriotic support from everyone involved really shows that our adopted community is proud of what we do as members of the military – especially in the Fighting Fifth Marines! Through various events such as Thanksgiving Dinners, Holiday Parties, Baby Showers, Family Days, and numerous others, having an adopted community that truly cares so much, and asks for so little in return is amazing. Service above self is something that the 5th Marine Regiment believes in, and having a supportive community that shares that belief is no coincidence.

In 2014, the 5th Marine Regiment started to gear up for another deployment to the Middle East as the Command Element for the first iteration of the Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force-Crisis Response-Central Command. This deployment had an estimated 70% of Marines/Sailors on their first deployment, which can create stress in young families. The community outreach and support from the members of the DPSG, who adopted the SPMAGTF Command Element, was evident even before we deployed. I can’t tell you how many minds were put at ease just knowing that our families were going to be taken care of while we were forward. Through combined efforts in the Dana Point area, Marines and Sailors were adopted for the deployment and received literally hundreds of boxes while deployed. Nicole, along with other spouses, received numerous emails inviting her and the children to events while we were gone. Everyone knows that being gone for the holidays is a tough time, but having

such a loving community step in and make the holidays more bearable through their support is something that must be experienced to understand.

Our deployment shifted midway through due to the start of Operation Inherent Resolve, which moved Marines and Sailors back into Iraq. Morale of those Marines and Sailors sky rocketed after we started receiving “staple items” that could be sent forward into Iraq to make life a bit better for those serving at the tip of the spear. It wasn’t just the boxes that meant so much to the Marines while deployed – receiving letters in the mail from elementary school students brought smiles to everyone’s faces. This deployment was very fast, and had a very high operational tempo, so at times it was hard to stay in touch, but knowing that our families were taken care of by the local community, specifically the members of the DPSG, eased our minds.

Support didn’t end on the deployment. The first faces I saw when we returned on the parade deck were the members of the DPSG. No matter the time, no matter the place, it is always heart-warming to see the smiles of the DPSG members when returning from deployment.

Life is about meeting people, and the experiences we create. The relationships that we have built with the members of the DPSG community are ones that Nicole, Lincoln, Bentley and I will cherish for a lifetime.”





Upcoming Support and Outreach

THANKSGIVING

Our Dana Point 5th Marine Regiment Support Group is working alongside of some wonderful



community friends to sponsor a special day of gratitude for our Marines, Sailors, and Families on Thanksgiving Day, November 26. Damian Collins will once again open the doors of the beautiful Waterman's Harbor Restaurant to share holiday hospitality with our troops. Joining him will be his parents, John and Diane Collins, who will be our gracious hosts for this annual event.

Waterman's Harbor Restaurant will be serving the traditional turkey dinner with all the fixings and dessert. Families enjoy the fun which will include great raffle prizes and a big screen television for the Turkey Day games. This Thanksgiving Dinner is open to ANY of our Wounded Heroes, Active Duty Marines, Sailors and their families.

With our Fighting Fifth Marines being the Nation's 911 Responders, an element of our Marines always need to remain at Camp Pendleton. So, not everyone gets to go home for the holidays. We especially hope to host our Single Marines and our families left behind by those deployed.

Will you sponsor a Thanksgiving Dinner for an American Hero and his family? For just \$35 per person, you can say "Thank You" to those who have given so much for our country. **Go to DanaPoint5thMarines.com, click on the Thanksgiving Banner and contribute!**

HOLIDAY MAGIC

Toys for Military Children: It's time to create some holiday magic for our Marines, Sailors and Families! We know Santa never disappoints! We hope his workshop will be filled with toys for the small children and lots of gift cards for our Marines and families again this year. Purchase a toy for a Military child and drop it off at any of our ten Holiday Magic locations. For a complete list of drop off locations, **go to DanaPoint5thMarines.com and click on the "Holiday Magic" tab.**



Operation Gift Card: Donate to Operation Gift Card for the holiday party for Marines and families. Gift cards are especially needed for our teens, single Marines and families. Gift Card suggestions:

Gas Cards * Walmart * Toys R Us * Albertsons * Ralphs * Target * Sears * Movie Tickets * Fast Food: McDonalds, Carls Jr., Burger King, etc. * Best Buy * Costco * iTunes

You may purchase gift cards and mail them via the enclosed self-addressed envelope or **visit our website at DanaPoint5thMarines.com and click on the "Holiday Magic" tab** to make a secure, fully tax-deductible PayPal donation to support these needed Outreach efforts.

Family Readiness Officer Bids Farewell to her Grizzly and Dana Point Families

Dana Point Supporters and Family of the Fighting Fifth:

It has truly been an honor working with all of you over the last two years. You are such beautifully spirited patriots and the most genuine people I have ever had the pleasure of knowing. The thousands upon thousands of Marines, Sailors and Families of 5th Marines over this short stretch have been forever touched and changed by your generosity of heart, prayers, and support which will continue long after I am gone. I never knew such an incredible community existed, and am moved and inspired daily by your actions and loyalty to all of us. Thank you for everything you have done to make my job more impactful, and for the love you have shown me and my family. I have made the bittersweet decision to leave the Grizzly pack and run my own business allowing me to be home with my children. I have spent countless hours alongside many of you, striving to develop and nurture our brave warriors, and now my heart is telling me to focus that energy on my babies at home. With all the love and gratitude in my heart, THANK YOU for everything. God bless and Semper Fi!

*Cheers, Kristy Turpin, Family Readiness Officer
5th Marine Regiment and SPMAGTF CR-CC*



We say farewell to Kristy Turpin, our 5thMAR Family Readiness Officer. As a military wife herself, Kristy could feel the pulse of our Grizzly families and worked tirelessly to serve our hard-working warfighters and those they love. Her willingness to be a bridge and liason to DPSG assured us that our support and outreach went to the right place and made a difference in the lives of our Marines. Kristy is an amazing woman with talents abounding. We know she will be extremely successful in her own business and her little kiddos and husband will be happy to have her home. Their gain is our loss.



From the Command Post

Dear Patriots of Dana Point,

What a distinct honor it is for me to serve as the newest Commanding Officer of the 5th Marine Regiment. The Fightin' Fifth, as you well know, has a rich and distinguished history. Its reputation as our Corps' most decorated regiment has been seared in the crucible of many wars and crises since its formation in 1917. The opportunity to return to and lead this magnificent warfighting team is a tremendous honor for me, and it's a privilege I don't take lightly.

Nearly a quarter of a century ago, my bride Lisa and I arrived to this storied regiment. Our years in 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines (1992-1995) were a defining moment in what became our life's service to the Marine Corps. During this snapshot of time, we developed an incredibly close kinship to this regiment and the many Marines and families who comprised its ranks. This deep, personal relationship, which has always endeared us to the Fightin' Fifth, makes us all the more excited and proud to return to the team.

One of the most distinguishing enrichments to 5th Marines since our departure 20 years ago is the Dana Point Support Group. You represent the Gold Standard by which all other community organizations are measured. I'm thrilled beyond words to work with you in supporting our Marines, Sailors, and their families. To say the least, the leadership, engagement, and dedication the DPSG regularly invests into this regiment and the welfare of its personnel is beyond impressive. My gratitude for all that

you've done and continue to do for our team surpasses my verbal and written expression. Quite simply, thank you.

In closing, it's worth highlighting that the priority of the regiment remains constant—to man, train, and equip battalions, detachments, and individuals for deployment in support of our national security interests. As I pen this introductory note, 3/5 has deployed to Okinawa, and 1/5 will shortly follow in its wake. The departures of these two battalions also signal the return of 2/5 from its patrol throughout the Pacific theater. Meanwhile, as we say farewell and welcome back our warriors, 2/4 and the Regimental Headquarters prepare for their own deployments later next spring. In the same sense that the business of the regiment continues, I know that the unceasing fellowship and support from the DPSG will endure.

On behalf of Sergeant Major Nguyen—the Regimental Sergeant Major—and me, I would like to express our heartfelt appreciation to Terry Rifkin and her leadership team and to the many patriots of the DPSG for welcoming both of us and our families to the regiment. We eagerly look forward to continuing the proud tradition of community outreach with you and helping to enable the unyielding support you provide to our Fightin' Fifth team.

Semper Fidelis, Colonel Ken Kassner



Meet the new Sheriff in town, Colonel Kenneth R. Kassner, who hails from Texas with his bride Lisa and his four ranch hands

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Learn how your business or company can support our American Heroes and gain the benefits of becoming a Dana Point 5th Marine Support Group Sponsor. For interested company representatives, please call (949) 373-5375.

COMPANIES FOR THE COURAGEOUS

Supported our Wounded, Families of the Fallen, Marines, Spouses and Children

<p>Commandant Level \$10,000 ★★★★★ C2 Imaging California Foundation for Stronger Communities City of Dana Point Eventworks Waterman's Harbor – Stillwater</p> <p>Colonel Level \$2,500 ★★ Armed Forces Retirees Association Stocks Pancake House Forde McGovern & Associates</p>		<p>General Level \$5,000 ★★★ San Diego Gas and Electric Dana West Yacht Club Transportation Corridor Agencies The Strand at Headlands 12th Men Club</p> <p>Major Level \$1,000 ★ Jimmy's Famous American Tavern Union Bank American Legion Newport Harbor Post 291 American Legion Auxiliary Unit 291</p>
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