



SEMPER FI SOUND OFF

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

SPRING 2017



President's Message

There is an old Chinese military proverb, "The more we sweat in training, the less we bleed in battle." Under the command of our new Colonel George Schreffler, our Marines are training rigorously to deploy in response to our national security needs and maintaining

a high state of readiness in their professional development. They must focus on their mission to be that kind of elite fighting force and we need to have their backs so there are fewer distractions at home. Civic organizations such as ours, answer the call to provide resources that bridge the gap between what the USMC provides and the morale-building needs of our Military families.

By doing so, it allows our Marines to focus on their priority of "mission readiness." We understand that it is the families who need encouragement and support since they are the remain-behind force if their loved ones are called to serve.

The Dana Point 5th Marine Regiment Support Group is humbled by our mission and we are inspired by the passion of our Wounded Heroes, Marines, Sailors and families. These remarkable individuals are strong, tenacious and never waver from honor, duty and service. Our Support Organization strives to live up to the legacy of the most highly decorated Regiment in Marine Corps history. Having each and every one of you by our side in our mission of caring for our Brave Defenders is indeed a privilege.

Semper Fidelis, Terry Rifkin, President

Invisible Wounds Need Love and Care

Children in military families experience high rates of mental health issues, trauma and related problems. Multiple deployments, frequent moves, new schools, having a parent injured or die is a reality for many children in military families. Contending with these stressors, military-connected kids carry a unique weight — often invisible, often unacknowledged.

Parents report seeing changes in school performance, children lashing out in anger, worrying, hiding emotions, disrespecting parents and authority figures, feeling a sense of loss, and symptoms consistent with depression from the deployment separation.

What is our solution?

Focused support and resources can help military children be adaptive and resilient. With this in mind, DPSG will be expanding support to our families by providing increased resources for their children.

• **Enrichment Classes:** A family can apply

for their child to participate in special opportunities such as dance, basketball, tutoring, theatre, robotics, music, photography, sports or science.

- **Summer Camp:** Up to \$300 per camper will be offered for a child to select the camp of their choice this summer.
- **Daddy Dolls:** Dolls with Daddy or Mommy's face help to keep children feeling bonded and attached to their absent family member.
- **Back packs:** Provide back-to-school items that are needed and desired for each child and help with the family budget.
- **College Scholarships:** This offering will be available in the near future.

Won't you help? If you are passionate about being part of the solution for building resilience and esteem for our Marine Children **please make a donation of any amount.** All donations are gratefully accepted. You can donate by going to

DanaPoint5thMarines.com or use the enclosed pre-addressed envelope. Children are our future, so let's make sure our 5thMAR kids THRIVE, not just survive!



Joey "Bub" Le Jeune, 4 years old, wanted Daddy in his Birthday photo



Marine Corps Trials

The Marine Corps Trials is an annual adaptive sports event involving more than 325 wounded, ill or injured Marines, Sailors, veterans and international competitors. Organized into three competing teams, participants represent Wounded Warrior Battalion-East, Wounded Warrior Battalion-West, and an international team of wounded warriors from Australia, Colombia, France, Netherlands and United Kingdom.

The Marine Corps Trials promotes recovery and rehabilitation through adaptive sports participation and develops camaraderie among recovering Service members and veterans. The importance of the competition is that it reminds our athletes of their Warrior Spirit and the memories and achievements are long-remembered.



DPSG experienced such a tremendous outpouring of love and support for our Wounded Heroes “Still in the Fight.” The absolute transformation of our Warrior Athletes from the start of the Marine Corps Trials until the end was nothing short of miraculous. It was inspiring to see the Courage, Hope, Perseverance, and Camaraderie amongst the competitors.

Because of wonderful friends and generous Patriots in our Community, our Support Organization was able to provide **1000 Meals for the Brave** during the week long Wounded Warrior Trials at Camp Pendleton. A big Ooh Rah to two of our special Sponsors: Headlands Reserve LLC and the Transportation Corridor Agencies for truly making a difference in us accomplishing our mission. Also a big Ooh Rah to our loyal volunteers who traveled deep into Camp Pendleton to serve the meals and root our athletes on!

8th Annual Combat Golf Tournament

Join us June 12th for the most fun you’ll ever have at a golf tournament!

Play **COMBAT GOLF** • **SPONSOR a MARINE AND WOUNDED WARRIOR** • Purchase **GOLF BALL DROP** tickets **FOR A CHANCE TO WIN \$5000**

Letter from Combat Golf 2016 HOLE-IN-ONE WINNER!

Dear Combat Golf Team:

Thank you so much for organizing our 2017 Master’s Trip. I was the lucky recipient of the “Hole in One” prize at your Combat Golf Tournament last year. I’m so glad I purchased the player package that made me eligible for all of the on course contests. A Master’s trip has been on my “Bucket List” for a very long time.

Prime Sports did an excellent job of putting the package together. The package included: Our hotel stay at the brand new Hampton Inn, a Master’s chair and binoculars, shuttle service back and forth to the executive suite right next to the course, and included all food and drink. We had tickets for the practice round which allowed us to see the practice round and part of the Par Three contest. We had a great dinner that evening with Larry Mize a former Masters Champion. The Thursday opening round started with Gary Player and Jack Nicklaus hitting the opening shots and paying tribute to the late great Arnold Palmer. First round heroics put Charley Hoffman at the top of the leaderboard with a 7 under par round in very difficult conditions. We were on the Augusta National grounds the whole day and will never forget the incredible memories. I highly recommend anyone who golfs play in the 8th Annual Combat Golf Tournament and BUY THE PLAYER PACKAGE.- I know that I’m all in. Who knows maybe I can win a trip to the US Open this year! Thanks again for making dreams come true.

Sincerely, Gary Bridge



Lucky Winner Gary Bridge (right) with son Christopher



Hail and Farewell to our Dedicated Board Members

Change is inevitable. On the "Green-Side" at the Command level, we just said farewell to Col Ken Kassner, Lisa and their loveable Ranch Hands. We warmly welcome Col George C. Schreffler III and his lovely wife Kelly to the Grizzly family.

In our own Support Group family, we embrace change as well.

WE HAIL:

Robin Skiles

Director of Support and Outreach

Robin worked for 25 years in governmental and corporate leadership positions, including Vice President of a \$10 billion corporation. She managed global communications operations, including public relations, financial media relations, employee communications, video & photography and crisis management and was a key team member for the execution of Asian and European strategies, product launches, corporate downsizing, including plant closures, financial earnings and executive communication. She is honored and thrilled to be a part of this group and looks forward to helping support all those affiliated with the "Fighting Fifth".

April O'Connor

Director of Base Capital Improvements

April is a resident of Dana Point since 1999. The City Council appointed her to serve on the Planning Commission. For 12 years in her capacity as Chairwoman and Planning Commissioner, April has reviewed development projects throughout Dana Point. April is also an Auction Committee Member for the Saddleback College Foundation and is raising money for student scholarships and funding needs on campus. Her career experience includes a decade of working in the legal field. April is currently a partner and Vice President of Monarch

Design & Management. The company specializes in property management and creative design for large-scale events. April believes volunteering for the Dana Point 5th Marine Regiment Support Group is both a privilege and honor to help Marines and their families.

WE SAY FAREWELL TO:

Doug Chotkevys

Doug retired from his Dana Point City Manager position. During his over 15 year tenure played a large role in developing one of the finest City government teams in the entire State. His sage counsel and leadership will be missed on the leadership team.

Mark and Karen Sutton

With Mark's upcoming retirement as the Building Official for the City of Dana Point and over 40 years of public service, both he and Karen intend to spend more time with grandchildren and travel.

It's never easy to say "Good-Bye" to individuals who have been the heart and soul of an organization. On behalf of all our Marines, Sailors, our Wounded and Families and all the lives they have touched in their service while Directors of DPSG, we thank these individuals for making such a difference to our Boots on the Ground Working Team.

Fair Winds and Follow Seas!

Purple Heart Memorial Monument

Our 5th Marine Wounded-in-action deserved special recognition for their personal courage shown and sacrifices made. These military heroes represent honor and on February 22nd, 2017 an enduring monument was dedicated in the 5th Marine Memorial Park on George Washington's Birthday to serve as a symbol of the bravery these valiant 5th Marines made in the name of freedom. The Purple Heart is a United States military decoration awarded in the name of the President to those wounded or killed while serving with the U.S. Military.

Col Ken Kassner, then Commander of the 5th Marine Regiment, had a vision that prior to his Change of Command, a Purple Heart Memorial Monument would be dedicated as a permanent tribute at San Mateo, Home of the 5th Marines. Col Kassner was twice wounded in Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. DP5MRSB raised the funds and Director Brian Coty worked along-side with Col Kassner to make his vision a reality. This monument now serves as a symbol of the personal courage and sacrifices made in the name of freedom by all the Fighting Fifth Warriors it represents.



Col Ken Kassner and SgtMajor Chuong Nguyen proudly Dedicate the Purple Heart Memorial Monument to all 5th Marines Who sacrificed life and limb in the line of duty to their Country.



From the Command Post

Dear Friends of the Dana Point 5th Marine Regiment Support Group,

On the third of March Col Kassner relinquished command of the 5th Marines to me. I would like to introduce myself to you and then update you on the rest of the regiment's activities. My wife, Kelly, and I are natives of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, but Camp Pendleton really is our Marine Corps home. We are thrilled to return for my third assignment here. Twenty-two years ago, as a lieutenant, I reported to 2d Battalion, 5th Marines. During that first tour I developed a strong attachment to the regiment and the surrounding communities. I always wanted to return to the regiment, and finally realized that goal.

The regimental headquarters became whole again in January after Col Kassner and the "Alpha" Command Group returned from deployment as the command element of the Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force-Crisis Response-Central Command (SPMAGTF-CR-CC). For those of you learning to speak "Marine" the acronym SPMAGTF is pronounced "S-P-Mag-Taf." The "Alpha" and "Bravo" Commands reintegrated to resume the regiment's mission of preparing battalions for deployment in response to crises around the globe, in support of recurring and pre-planned unit deployments to Australia and Okinawa, and in support of recurring and pre-planned Marine expeditionary unit deployments sailing from San Diego. The regimental headquarters will form and train a new "Alpha" Command to deploy again in 2018 as the command element of the SPMAGTF.

1st Battalion, 5th Marines (1/5) has detached from the regiment and attached to 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) (pronounced "mew") in preparation for deployment this summer. This spring when you see large Navy warships off the coast and landing craft moving from ship-to-shore you will be looking at 1/5 in action.

2d Battalion, 5th Marines (2/5) is deployed and attached to 31st MEU. The battalion has sailed from Okinawa to conduct training around the western Pacific and stand their watch in the region. We will welcome home the Marines and Sailors of 2/5 later this spring.

3d Battalion, 5th Marines (3/5) completed a combat readiness evaluation in early April and is ready to replace 2/5. 3/5 performed a unique role in our Corps for the past several months and will continue to do so until returning from deployment. The battalion tested an array of new technologies and experimented with different squad sizes. The results of 3/5's tests and experiments will help ensure the Marine Corps remains at the cutting edge of combat effectiveness.

2d Battalion, 4th Marines (2/4) returned from Okinawa late last year and reentered the training cycle in preparation for a deployment to Darwin, Australia. The battalion will conduct small unit training, a Marine Corps-level exercise, and a combat readiness evaluation at Camp Pendleton and Twenty-nine Palms during the rest of the year.

Upon returning to Southern California I was not surprised to find everything I enjoyed about the climate, the terrain, and the Marines and Sailors as I remembered. I was, however, overwhelmed to encounter a vibrant spirit of volunteerism in the community. Your service to our warriors and families is exceptional. The Marines and Sailors of the "Fighting Fifth" are proud to be your regiment. Thank you for all that you do.

Semper Fidelis, Colonel George C. Schreffler III



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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.

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