SEMPER FI SOUND OFF

The newsletter of the Dana Point 5th Marine Regiment Support Group FALL 2026

President's Message

Aloha friends! Summer is traditionally a time for rest and relaxation, but while the Regiment has been deployed, our team has been exceptionally busy.

We remain fully engaged in the upkeep and improvement of Camp San Mateo. Working side by side with our Marines, we have been painting, cleaning, renovating, and updating Task Force San Mateo. We have also replaced and refurbished signs and mementos that serve as tangible reminders of a continuing legacy of Honor, Courage, and Commitment. Additionally, we take immense pride in maintaining the beautiful and powerful Memorial Garden.

Our summer events kicked off on June 8th with a fantastic turnout at our 17th annual Combat Golf Tournament at the Arroyo Trabuco Golf Club. This event was an incredible success thanks to our dedicated donors, players, volunteers, and, most importantly, our Marines and sailors.

From there, we rolled right into a series of community events:

- **The Stars, Stripes, and Sounds Festival** at Lantern Bay Park, honoring America's 250th anniversary.
- **Shakespeare in the Park** the very next week.
- **Dana Point Concerts in the Park,** where we participated for six consecutive Sundays.

While these events require a tremendous amount of effort, they are critical to our fundraising goals and our vital mission to keep our Fighting Fifth in the hearts and minds of our community.

Speaking of fundraising, we were incredibly blessed to benefit from a special evening at Jack's Restaurant on July 29th. Jack Loconsolo has been a wonderful friend to the Fifth since our inception and graciously donated a portion of his proceeds from dinner, take out, and gift card sales on that day.

Our support operations didn't stop there. We hosted a a pampering spa day for our Marines and their spouses, as well as a beautiful Baby Shower for the families of our Fighting Fifth. It is our absolute honor to support our Marines in uniform, as well as the families who serve so dedicatedly from home.

We have no plans to slow down. We are excited about the remainder of the year as we anticipate the safe homecoming of the Regiment. By serendipity, this aligns perfectly with the dedication of the *Returning Home* monument at Heritage Park on October 28th. We sincerely hope you can join us for this historic occasion.

Before we know it, the holidays will be here—my favorite time of the year. As many of you know, the holiday season is a busy period for us, spanning from Thanksgiving activities to Holiday Magic and so much more. I am always deeply motivated and energized by our collective effort to bring joy to our dedicated men and women in uniform and their families.

Every contribution makes an immediate impact. Because our organization is run entirely by volunteers and no one takes a penny for their efforts, every single gift goes directly to our mission.

I would like to close by thanking you for your generous gifts of time, talent, and treasure, which form the bedrock of our continuing mission to serve those who serve. I also want to extend my gratitude to our amazing Board of Directors. These patriots, with the unwavering support of their families, give of themselves so fully day in and day out.

God bless each of you with health, happiness and Aloha.

Semper Fi, Christian Asis, President

A Powerful Tribute

From **Tuesday, October 27 – Friday, October 30**, we are grateful to our generous sponsor, Anduril Industries, for bringing the *Remembering Our Fallen* National Memorial to Heritage Park. The local street will be blocked off for four days for this compelling exhibition.

This extraordinary traveling exhibit features 35 towers honoring over 5,500 service members who have fallen since 9/11. It also pays tribute to those lost in training accidents and to those who later succumbed to the wounds of war, including PTSD. The alignment of this memorial with our dedication of the *Returning Home* monument *(see page 2)* will profoundly deepen the meaning and impact of this special time.

New Recruits on the Way!

Our DPSG Baby Shower was filled with smiles, laughter and a whole lot of love as we celebrated our Marine Moms-to-Be — and the New Dads joined in the festivities, too!

There was lunch, games, prizes, arts & crafts and plenty of fun. But the biggest surprise came when our expectant families saw what was waiting for them — laundry baskets overflowing with baby essentials, goodies and gift cards, PLUS cases of diapers for the newest little members of our Marine family! Because anyone who has ever had a newborn knows there is no such thing as too many diapers!

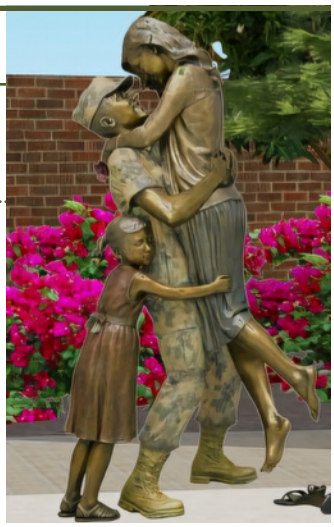
These baby showers are about much more than gifts. They are our way of letting our young Marine families know that while they serve our country, there is a community here that cares about them, supports them and celebrates life's biggest moments right alongside them.

A huge THANK YOU to our wonderful volunteers and our Friends of the Fifth whose generosity helped make this special day possible. A special thank you to:

Stanley W. Ekstrom Foundation • Katrina Foley, OC Supervisor 5th District • Daughters of the American Revolution • Furnishing Hope Linda Black • It's All About the Cake • Order of the Eastern Star, Chapter 523 • Keenan • Assemblywoman Laurie Davies 74th District

And to our Moms and Dads-to-Be — congratulations! We can't wait to welcome all those adorable new additions to the Fighting Fifth family!

Dedication Ceremony for *Returning Home*



WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28 • 10:00 A.M.

Heritage Park • Old Golden Lantern • Dana Point

After many years of planning in the creation and a strong partnership with the City of Dana Point, we are pleased and proud to announce the dedication of *Returning Home*, an inspiring new landmark at Heritage Park. With the City's investment in significant park improvements, this beautiful setting will become a place of honor, reflection, and remembrance for generations to come.

Returning Home is a timeless tribute to the courage, resilience, and selfless sacrifice of not only those who wear the uniform, but also the families who serve beside them on the home front. These "Homefront Heroes" provide the unwavering strength, love, and support that make every homecoming possible.

While inspired by the proud legacy of the 5th Marine Regiment, this monument honors the brave men and women of the United States Marine Corps and all branches of the United States Armed Forces. It stands as a lasting symbol of service, sacrifice, hope, and the enduring bonds that unite military families and the communities that proudly support them.

This remarkable tribute is truly a nationwide collaboration. Each component is being expertly crafted by artisans across the country:

- The **bronze sculpture** is being created in Loveland, Colorado
- The **benches** and **granite tablet** are being crafted in San Diego, California
- The **bronze donor plaques** are from Chicago, Illinois
- The **engraved commemorative pavers** are being produced in Carlsbad, California

Perhaps the most heartwarming news of all is that Colonel Flynn, Commanding Officer of the 5th Marine Regiment, is expected to "return home" from deployment in time for the monument's dedication. His homecoming will make this celebration even more meaningful, perfectly reflecting the spirit and purpose of the *Returning Home* monument.

The public is invited to join us for this historic occasion.

It is not too late to be part of the legacy—you can still join the mission!

If you would like to do a bronze plaque or brick paver, we will start another round of elements in the park starting in 2027. Contact Terry Rifkin pastpresident@danapoint5thmarines.com.

From the Outback

Stronger together. Col. George Flynn and Marines with MRF-D 26 support the 84th Anniversary of the Battle of Guadalcanal, honoring historical sacrifices and reinforcing regional partnerships.

Friends and families of the Fifth Marine Regiment,

Greetings once again from Down Under! The Regiment remains deployed in Darwin, Northern Territory, Australia, continuing to serve as the command element for the Marine Rotational Force – Darwin Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF). We have been extremely busy, and the Marines have done an outstanding job out here and I wanted to take a moment to thank you all and share what we've been up to.

As the calendar turns to September we continue to provide forces in support of exercises in Indonesia, Tahiti, the Philippines and throughout Australia. It has been a full-on sprint throughout this deployment, and we have every intention of sprinting through the finish line as we wrap this deployment up.

We have already started re-deploying a few Marines and in the coming weeks, our focus will turn to the safe and efficient redeployment of the force with flights starting early September and continuing throughout October. With our return, we are very much looking forward to supporting the *Returning Home* monument dedication at Heritage Park at the end of October.

I cannot thank you enough for the work the Dana Point Support Group provides for our Marines and Sailors. Many of our young men and women have been serving far from home for the first time, and your generosity and kindness strengthens them for the many difficult things they do each day. The love and support and the care packages you have provided have gone a long way in ensuring our Marines and Sailors know that they are cared for back home. I could not be prouder to lead such a fine Regiment, and I count not be more thankful for your loyal support throughout the years.

Final note – if you happened to tune in for the Los Angeles Rams vs. San Franciso 49ers game on 10 September – there was a good chance you saw the 5th Marines on the field from the Melbourne Cricket Club in Melbourne, Australia. This game was the very first NFL game to be played in Australia and we found ourselves a role to play in the event!

We miss you all and we are very much looking forward to coming home!

Semper Fidelis, Colonel George J. Flynn III, "Grizzly 6"

"Have no fear, the 5th Marines are here!"

Why Are 5th Marines Training in Australia?

U.S. Marines with 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, MRF–D 26, conduct multinational live-fire training in Queensland, Australia. Photo by Cpl. Caleb Goodwin.

If you've ever wondered why Marines from the 5th Marine Regiment are training thousands of miles from home in northern Australia, the answer is much bigger than simply learning to fight in a different environment.

The **Marine Rotational Force–Darwin (MRF-D)** is an important part of America's partnership with Australia and our commitment to peace and security throughout the Indo-Pacific.

Led by **Col. George Flynn, Commander of the 5th Marine Regiment**, the current MRF-D includes roughly 2,000 Marines and other personnel, including California-based **1st Battalion, 5th Marines (1/5)** and **MV-22B Ospreys** from Hawaii.

Training alongside Australian and other allied forces allows our Marines to learn how to communicate, operate and respond together. Building these relationships and developing trust before a crisis occurs can be critical if our nations ever need to respond together. Australia also provides our Marines with challenging training in a strategically important part of the world. The goal isn't simply to train. **The goal is to be ready**.

And This Year, Something Big Happened. This year, MRF-D 26 made history by becoming the first rotation in the program's 15-year history to be certified as a Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force (SPMAGTF). In simple terms, this certification recognizes that the Marines have demonstrated the ability to operate as a highly capable, integrated force—bringing together ground forces, aviation, logistics and command capabilities that can respond when called upon.

For the Dana Point 5th Marine Regiment Support Group, this achievement is especially meaningful. We are incredibly proud of the performance of our warfighters under Col. George Flynn's leadership. Their professionalism, dedication and readiness represent the very best of the United States Marine Corps. And while they may be thousands of miles from Camp Pendleton, our 5th Marines represent all of us. **They train together. They operate together. They stand ready together.**

OPERATION HOLIDAY MAGIC

With the Regiment returning from Australia, we want to make this season festive and memorable for our Marines and their families. **Holiday Magic** will take place from Thanksgiving through the New Year. We aim to make our single Marines in the barracks feel special with a Thanksgiving dinner, games, karaoke, gift cards, and other treats.

Between Thanksgiving and Christmas, our Marines will train in Twenty-Nine Palms, and we look forward to welcoming them back with a grand holiday celebration.

Santa will join us at "Holiday Magic" in late December at Dave & Buster's for a merrymaking event with a catered buffet dinner and game cards for over 350 Marines and their families. Santa's workshop will be filled with toys for small children and lots of gift cards for our teens, single Marines, and families.

Because some of the 5th Marine battalions don't have an adoptive city, "No Marine kiddo is left behind" and we provide toys to children across the Regiment.

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP:

❄ Please Purchase a Toy for a Marine Child

Drop it off at any Dana Point and surrounding city locations that will be listed on our website the 1st week of November.

❄ Too Busy to Shop?

We will do the shopping for you! Donate at DanaPoint5thMarines.com under "Holiday Magic" or mail a check in the enclosed envelope.

Let's remember our military families this holiday season—families whose sacrifices secure our greatest gift: freedom.

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Donations of any size are gratefully accepted!