

# 15TH MEU



## FROM THE COMMANDING OFFICER

**Colonel Scott D. Campbell**

Marines and Families of the 15<sup>th</sup> MEU,

Much has taken place since my last letter. Predeployment training is moving forward at a fast pace and our Marines are quickly developing the skills and teamwork required to ensure success during the upcoming deployment. I greatly appreciate your understanding and support as we continue to press through this very demanding predeployment work-up period.

Our training schedule will remain intense, we have two remaining major training evolutions when we will be embarked aboard ship and a number of smaller training events scheduled between those at sea periods.

16 June – 9 July: Block Leave (Command Element)

16 June - 5 July: Block Leave (CLB-15)

23 June - 9 July: Block Leave (HMM-364 (Rein))

16 July – 3 August: Composite MEU Underway Training (COMPTUEX)

15 August – 28 August: Final MEU Certification (CERTX)

29 August -11 September: Block Leave (BLT 3/5)

While these events have been scheduled for some time, there is always the chance that our training schedule will be adjusted due to the availability of the ships or operational requirements, both of which are beyond my control. If our schedule changes, I will pass them along to our Marines and families as soon as I'm aware of them. If you are ever in doubt about our training schedule or what lies next for your Marine, please ask, don't rely on rumors.



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# FROM THE COMMANDING OFFICER

Continued

The Command Element, along with 3/5, HMM-364 (Rein), and CLB-15, have family events incorporated into our predeployment schedule. I strongly encourage you to attend the scheduled family events and stay engaged with the commands of the 15<sup>th</sup> MEU. Just as predeployment training is designed to build a proficient and cohesive MEU team, the family events offer a venue to establish friendships, share information, have fun and prepare for the challenges to come. A couple of the MEU wide family events on the schedule include:

HMM-364 (Rein) Demo Day: 23 June

MEU Family Day aboard USS PELELIU: 12 August

Family Day aboard the USS PELELIU will be a unique opportunity for our families to see one of the ships we'll deploy aboard. The shipboard environment is like no other and seeing how your Marine will live and work will provide an invaluable perspective into

the amphibious nature of our Marine Corps. I look forward to each of these events and the chance to meet the families of our Marines.

I am extremely proud of the 15<sup>th</sup> MEU team and all we have achieved to date. I am equally grateful for the love and support of our families; your support has been a critical component in all of our successes to date and is a crucial to our future success.

Semper Fidelis,

S. D. Campbell

## Voting

During this Presidential election year, make sure your vote counts. You may update your mailing address for voter registration to the ship. If your absentee ballot does not arrive in time, service members can vote using the Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot. <http://www.fvap.gov/faq.html>. For questions, contact the Voting Assistance Officer, 1st Lt Wiggins at [clayton.wiggins@usmc.mil](mailto:clayton.wiggins@usmc.mil).



# SERGEANT MAJOR SAYS

SgtMaj John W. Scott



Greetings Family and Friends of BULLRUSH,

I hope this message finds you well. Let me first begin by thanking you for your fidelity, love and support of the Marines and Sailors of the 15<sup>th</sup> MEU. Through your selfless sacrifice, you continue to be that force multiplier that enables these great men and women who serve the ability to enjoy tremendous success. As it is often stated, we could not do this without your support...thank you!



As we are in the mist of our pre-deployment cycle, it is critical that each and every Marine and Sailor remains focused on their role and responsibilities, both at home and in training. As you have witnessed, training for the upcoming deployment is hard, long and often, but I am proud to say at this point, everyone has performed beyond expectation: from Iron Fist, a bilateral training exercise conducted with the Japanese Ground Self Defense Force, to MEUEX, a series of training missions designed to exercise command and control, and most recently the Realistic Urban Training (RUT) Maritime and Ground exercises, which greatly enhanced our

Maritime Raid Force capabilities. Now we start the formal at-sea periods, which will add the final and extremely important piece of the puzzle, our Navy brethren of Amphibious Squadron Three (**PHIBRON 3**).

I look forward to the opportunity to meet with you at the upcoming pre-deployment brief. The 15<sup>th</sup> MEU Family Readiness Officer, Ms. Rebecca Roman has worked tirelessly coordinating this event to ensure that the families of 15<sup>th</sup> MEU Command Element are armed with the resources available to assist as needed.

Lastly, I am sure your Marine or Sailor will find this tour of duty challenging, yet still a very rewarding experience. Being proactive by taking the time now to solidify those important areas of personal and family readiness are critical to maintaining focus and ensuring the mission success of this command.

Semper Fidelis,  
SgtMaj John W. Scott  
Sergeant Major  
15th Marine Expeditionary Unit



# CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

LCDR David Dinkins

## Taking Care of #1

How important is self care? People who neglect their own needs and forget to nurture themselves are at danger of deeper levels of unhappiness, low self-esteem and feelings of resentment. Sometimes people who spend their time only taking care of others can be at risk for getting burned out on all the giving, which makes it more difficult to care for others or themselves. Taking time to care for yourself regularly can make you a better caretaker for others.

As the deployment nears, I encourage you to take time for yourself. I know the idea of self care may conflict with your idea of what it means to be a great leader at work and home, but taking care of yourself is essential to our success as leaders, spouses, and parents. Amidst all the requirements and tasks, make time to care for yourself so that you may better serve and care for others.

Take time to care for your whole self-body, mind and spirit:

**Body-** Whether you're a RECON Marine, spouse, or mom, take care of your body. Small strides toward getting rest, a healthy balanced diet, regular exercise and combating destructive habits will make you feel better and assist you in accomplishing the many tasks at hand. At home or afloat, taking care of your body is crucial.

**Mind-** Like taking care of your body, take time to do those things that ease your mind and add to your quality of life. Take a casual stroll, read a book, take a college course, take a bubble bath, journal your thoughts and feelings or join a book club. Develop a healthy regimen of taking the time to do those things that will improve your quality of life and help you cope with all of life's challenges.

**Spirit-** Akin to taking care of your mind, take time for your spirit. Read something that feeds your soul, congregate with people of like beliefs, join a community that will support you, pray, meditate, worship and take a little time each day to nourish who you are deep down. Now is a great time to seek out and find spiritual practices and disciplines that will enrich your quality of life, add meaning and community and make you much more resilient.

The bottom line is to take care of yourself. By taking care of yourself, you'll be doing us all a huge service. Be intentional and you'll be better off and more prepared to serve and care for others. Neglecting self care will rob you and those around you of your best you. You matter and so do your needs.

Start taking care of #1 today,

Chaps



# THE FRO KNOWS

REBECCA M. ROMAN



Greetings 15<sup>th</sup> MEU Service Members and Loved Ones!

Summer is here, the kids are out of school, and the training schedule is in full swing. The reality of the upcoming deployment has now settled in and each family's list of "To Do's" is likely growing. When faced with considering the legal, logistical, medical, and financial plans that need to be established, it is easy to become stressed or overwhelmed.

Emotions running hot (or cold) are a natural part of the emotional deployment cycle. As the denial from the "Anticipation of Loss" has ended, phases of "Detachment" may be setting in. It is not uncommon to see relationships undergo increased fights or increased withdrawal as the deployment work-ups become more consuming. Understanding and knowing where you are at in the emotional deployment cycle can help facilitate communication between the service members and loved ones during this time. Taking a LINKS (Lifestyle, Insight, Networking, Knowledge, & Skills) class can help you better understand these emotions and ways to cope with them. To help couples stay connected, our Battalion Landing Team (BLT), 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines, is offering a Couples Seminar on the morning of June 22. This workshop is in addition to base offerings such as CREDO retreats, counseling services, and more. For children 5-12, the Warrior Kids Series is a great place for them to interact with other children who are experiencing the deployment cycle. I encourage everyone to get with their FRO and see which resource could be the right fit for you.

Along with taking time for yourself and your relationships, deployment stress can be mitigated

by getting organized and getting a plan. Deployment checklists are available or you may make your own. Setting small goals and tasks to accomplish can make the deployment preparation more manageable. Family Care Plans (NAVMC Form 11800) can also serve as a guide to help go through the items you may want to cover when thinking about emergency planning. To ensure that loved ones are provided for in times of unforeseen circumstances, Base Legal offices can provide critical information and assistance in obtaining the appropriate documents needed to care for your specific family needs, whether that may be a Special or General Power of Attorney, Living Will, etc. Base legal can be reached at (760) 725-6172. Whatever the case may be (illness, natural disaster, etc), emergencies, like deployments, can not be avoided. However, families do have the opportunity to plan safe guards for when they do happen. If you find yourself in a situation and need assistance, please reach out to your Family Readiness Officer so she may provide you the tools and resources to assist you through those times.

The contact information for the Family Readiness Officers are as follows:

3/5: Kim Reese  
[kimberly.reese@usmc.mil](mailto:kimberly.reese@usmc.mil) (760) 763-1260

CLB-15: Jewel Williams  
[jewel.williams@usmc.mil](mailto:jewel.williams@usmc.mil) (760) 763-4016

HMM-364: Holly Lane  
[holly.lane@usmc.mil](mailto:holly.lane@usmc.mil) (760) 763-1465

Regards,  
Rebecca (Becky) Roman  
Command Element FRO  
760-429-5385  
[rebecca.roman@usmc.mil](mailto:rebecca.roman@usmc.mil)



## STAYING CONNECTED

The Public Affairs Office provides authorized and official news stories and photos at [www.facebook.com/15thMarineExpeditionaryUnit](http://www.facebook.com/15thMarineExpeditionaryUnit).

[www.eMarine.org](http://www.eMarine.org)

Official Communication regarding the Marines and the deployment will be passed from Commanders to Family Readiness Officers and available on each unit's eMarine site. This site is secured and also provides limited access to authorized users. To gain access, your Marine/Sailor must subscribe, "invite family members", and then invitees may subscribe. Help us protect Operational Security, the service member's safety, and family member's personal safety by keeping deployment information, dates, locations, photos, etc off of social networking sites (Facebook, Twitter). Use your FRO and eMarine to discuss or share questions or concerns.

### Care Packages

Sending Care Packages is a great way to stay connected during deployments, whether providing letters, personal hygiene items, favorite snacks, etc. As usual, items such as pornography, alcohol/drugs, flammables/explosives are banned. In addition, you may now not send items with Lithium batteries through the USPS. Most electronics have lithium batteries (cameras, laptops, ipods). Carriers such as FedEx and DHL are currently unable to send these items to ships. For a complete list of USPS rules, visit [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com). To get free flat rate packaging kits, call (800) 610-8734.

### Toll Free Numbers: FRO Updates

Call (866) 676-0662

Command Element: Press Option 8

3/5: Press Option 9, 9, 3

CLB-15: Press Option 5, 1, 3

### Calling Cards

Service Members will have designated areas where they can wait to use phones and call home. Special calling cards from AT&T that work on ship will be sold only aboard each ship during the deployment. Regular international calling cards will only work when service members are on shore.

Moto Mail: [www.motomail.us](http://www.motomail.us)

Some Marines may not have easy or regular email access. Send letters electronically that get printed and sent to Marines as mail on ship through Moto Mail.

# EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS



**Earthquake &  
Fire Safety Kit:**  
[http://www.ready.gov/  
build-a-kit](http://www.ready.gov/build-a-kit)

**Base Emergency Updates**  
**(760)725-9045**  
**or**  
**(866) 430-2764**

Sign up for updates at [http://  
entry.inspironlogistics.com/  
camp\\_pendleton/wens.cfm](http://entry.inspironlogistics.com/camp_pendleton/wens.cfm)



## Financial Emergencies:

Contact the Navy Marine Corps Relief Society (NMCRS) at (760) 725-5337 to help build your budget today. The NMCRS also offers interest free loans of up to \$3000. Service Members can sign pre-authorizations with their Command or the NMCRS.

Red Cross Messages: (877) 272-7337

**When to send:** In the event an IMMEDIATE family member has died, is critically ill, or their child is born.

**When not to send:** Minor illness/procedures, not hearing from Marine/Sailor, etc.

**How:** You will need the service member's full name, rank, branch of service (USMC, Navy), Social Security Number, date of birth, deployed unit address.

**Remember:** it is the Commanding Officer's discretion on whether or not a Marine will be sent home for a family emergency.

## River City

The term River City is another name for Reduced Communications, a communication status when all communication is blocked out for an undetermined period of time. It is used to preserve operational security or when a Marine is injured/killed. Remember, NO NEWS IS GOOD NEWS. However, if you are concerned, contact your FRO for accurate information.

FAMILY READINESS WORKSHOPS	LINKS	WARRIOR KIDS	WHO MOVED MY CHEESE?	CACO PROCESS
Call (760) 725-9052 to RSVP or get more information.	11-12 July 28 July 1-2 Aug 11-12 Sept 29 Sept	Pre-deployment 21 Aug from 1730-1900	10 July 11 Sept	21 Aug from 0830-1030

# PROMOTIONS, AWARDS, BIRTHS

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING:

## Promotions

*April*

LCpl Anthony Hendrix

LCpl James Kerr

Cpl Aysia Acfalle

Cpl Kyle Bond

Cpl Carlos Hernandez

Cpl Spencer Hill

Cpl Christopher Howard

Cpl Jeffrey Marstaeller

Sgt Colin Kirkpatrick

Sgt Steven Mitchell

*May*

SSgt Adriana Obogeanu

*June*

LCpl Tanner Stremel

LCpl Ashton Tyler

Cpl Jonson Oimoen

SSgt Scott Owen

SSgt Eric Schmutzer

Capt Benjamin Reading

Capt Justin Smith

## Awards

Captain Murray (3/5): Navy Comm

GySgt Dennies (CLB): Navy Comm

Sgt Coolbaugh (CE): Navy Comm

## Births

Rylie Mearelle. Golden : 13 April 2012

Noah James Latham: 23 April 2012

Loretta Grace Meadors: 25 April 2012

Ellie Shannon Jones: 21 May 2012

Lilliana Elizabeth Marie Vilakis: 22 May 2012

Skylar Jade Lovercamp: 29 May 2012

