

## Dear Family And Friends

On September 12, 2009, the Thundering Third held a Family Day at Lake O'Neil on Camp Pendleton. From bounce houses and obstacle courses, a paint ball shootout at the OK Corral, to the "Thundering Third Two and a Half Day Band" performance on stage, the memories of the day were one of a ringing success. The event was attended by the many dedicated family members and Marines from our battalion.



The event started at 1100. Upon arrival the families were greeted and guided by Marines volunteering to support the event. The cars were parked in military-like formations and the families were then escorted into the peninsula area of Lake O'Neil. There, the guests were immediately greeted by our beautiful and friendly wives to have them sign up for our Family Readiness network and to provide the guests free tickets for the raffle drawing later on. Opening remarks were offered by the Commanding Officer, LtCol Watson about the importance of building bonds that extend to our families. LtCol Watson was accompanied by his wife on stage.

A testament to the fact that behind all successful married Marines is a better part of them – their wife - Mrs. Watson filled in the gaps of information left out by the CO as he attempted to quickly push the Marines to chow.

With one of the three favorite past times of Marines (chow, mail and libo) now open, the families were rewarded with delicious offerings of mac and cheese for kids to a choice of BBQ beef, chicken or pull pork sandwiches, all accompanied with coleslaw and baked beans. While lunch was still being served, the serene environment was interrupted by a riotous gathering and clamorous noises coming from the northern gate. Our instinct was to call the react force and employ the guardian angels. But a quick assessment of the situation identified that the Sergeant Major had assumed his position in the dunk tank and was taunting all the Marines. Despite the fact that we think he secretly rigged it, the SgtMaj was dunked repeatedly.

At 1230, the families gathered for the free raffle giveaway. Thanks to generous donations from select members of our family community, Mr. Miller and Mr. Yarborough, the lucky winners received iPods, gift cards, bicycles, a hand saw, tools and much more. We are sincerely appreciative of the selfless generosity demonstrated by so many.





With so much to do that day, the most important event that took place was strengthening the bonds of our 3/1 family. The backbone of our battalion and the main stay for support while our Marines are training or deployed were there in force. While Marines have hard jobs, the unsung, at times unappreciated family members quite often have the harder job. From our spouses, to our moms and dads, to our friends and close loved ones, they are the ones that demonstrate an unwavering, limitless, patriotic love for us all and our Nation. We truly hope that all of our families enjoyed their time. Whether it was a short stay or you closed down the party, the day was for our families as a small token of our tremendous appreciation of them.

