



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
7TH MARINES
I MARINE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE
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In reply refer to:

1754

FRO

29 June 10

To: 7th Marines Regiment Headquarters Families
From: Denise Cullum, Family Readiness Officer (FRO)

Subj: WELCOME ABOARD!

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to the 7th Marines "Marine Family".

YOU are Family! Marine (single or married), spouse, parents, child, sibling, fiancé, girlfriend, boyfriend, civilian staff, friend or with another branch of service attached to the unit. So the term family includes, "YOU"!!!!

Being a family member of an active duty Marine, Sailor, or Unit Civilian is a challenging situation at best. This challenge is multiplied when deployed. It is the mission of the Family Readiness Program to provide you with a communication lifeline, an ear to listen, a heart to empathize, and your primary source to access those tools necessary to successfully meet the challenges of the military lifestyle, no matter where you go or how long it has been. Our program strives to:

CONNECT: *Official communication from Command, answers for your questions, request, information & referral. Insuring that you get the information sent to you for improving your quality of life or showing you where you can find the information you need.*

INVOLVE: *Volunteer opportunities to enhance or begin your leadership, relationship and organizational skills at the level you want to be involved.*

SUPPORT: *Be there when you need us, Solution suggestions, while moving forward!*

PREPARE: *So that you can be READY for the mission(s) ahead*

As your FRO, it is my intention to support a pro-active environment fostering a positive attitude and respect for our diversity. The Family Readiness Program's mission is to provide reliable, practical information, and support to our families. We do this while realizing that the ultimate responsibility for keeping the family informed and ready is the Marine or Service member attached to the unit, not the Command. Our goal is not to take away from the responsibility of the Marine or Sailor. Replacing their responsibility fosters a sense of entitlement and seeks to debilitate. We are here to support, bring cohesion through continuity.

Military Lifestyle: Whether you are new or a seasoned family member, you are encouraged to attend the next L.I.N.K.S. class. This is the first step in getting to know the Marine Corps lifestyle and your new base. If you have attended a class and are still at the same base 3 years later, it is recommend attending again so that you can learn about the changes.

- L Lifestyle** is a way of living and in this case it means understanding the military community and the unique lifestyle it offers.
- I** Marine Corps **Lifestyle Insights** come from experienced Marine Corps spouses who relate their experiences of living the Marine Corps lifestyle, who understand first hand what you are going through and who want to help you understand and adapt to the new culture of which you are now a part.
- N Networking** represents the people you get to know during L.I.N.K.S. and all the others you will meet during your journey in Marine Corps living.
- K Knowledge** is what you will leave with and what will help you understand and navigate the Marine Corps culture.
- S** Is for the new **Skills** you will learn to help you enjoy and thrive in our Marine Corps community.

For our Spouses:

Local: Call 760.830.1696 to register for the next class.

Global: Go to the website below. You must be enrolled in DEERS:

http://www.usmc-mccs.org/display_files/LINKS%20Online%20Instruction.doc

For our Parents:

Contact the FRO for material to be sent via email.

Weekly Communication: The Marine Corp has authorized a web-based program for use to communicate called the Mass Communication Tool (MCT). It is the principal way you will receive information from me. The MCT allows the Family Readiness Officer the ability to send the same message to thousands of people within minutes. If you stop receiving emails, let me know as soon as possible.

There are four types of messages that you may receive via the MCT: Standard, Polling, Quota, and Emergent (non-military).

A **Standard** message includes official communication from the Commanding Officer and information regarding unit events, training/work schedules generally used to keep you informed on activities within the unit and more. This is in the form of the weekly eNews. This format works to get to you the abundance of information (educational, base, community, National, Marine Corps wide news, opportunities from organizations to receive free entry to events or free items and more) in a timely manner on a weekly basis. Remember that this information is sent for you, we don't make a decision whether you should receive it or not. The information is compiled into an easy to navigate format and send to you on a weekly basis utilizing the MCT. This update includes a, "Click & Go" Table of Contents to alleviate you scrolling through the whole document. After reading the information, just go back to the Table of Contents to get to the next one. The weekly eNews update begins with, "Everything 7th Marines", so if you are not interested in the other information you can quickly get update on what is happening at home first!

The second type is a **Polling** message and is sent with the intent of receiving a count on who will be attending or participating in a planned event. This is usually sent to local families.

A **Quota** message is the third type and is used to obtain volunteers who will help plan and execute unit events. This is usually sent to local families.

The fourth and final message is an **Emergent** message. This message may include information on inclement weather, evacuations, or incidents. There may be occasions when the message will instruct you to call the 7th Marines Hotline (800.759.7602 option 6) for further updates. Target audience depends on the message.

If you are not interested, as a spouse, in receiving information from the Command you must complete an, "Opt-Out" form. Your service member cannot complete this for you. This is your decision alone. Contact me and I will send it to you. To stop receiving information as a family member, send an email opting out and you will be removed. Parents and other family members must be enrolled via their service member in order to receive information.

It is important to note that when your service member leaves this unit, the FRO must be informed. There is a process in place to facilitate this but sometimes there are circumstances that circumvent the process. If you continue to receive emails one month after separating from the unit, please let me know so that I can remove you from the list. Removal will happen after verification of the Marine's separation from the unit.

Events: You are welcomed to come out and join any event, at any time, even the, "kid friendly" events. You don't have to have children. Kid friendly means that if you have children you can bring them, if you don't then come yourself. You are welcomed to bring a friend. You are still welcomed even if the focus of the event is on deployment. You may not be deployed now, but one day you may and this will help you then. You may use the information or experiences to help someone else.

Here are the standard monthly events:

Family Readiness Volunteer meeting & Potluck: 2nd Monday of the month @ 6:00pm @ Bldg 1707. This meeting is open to all family members. This meeting is mandatory for Family Assistants. Support volunteers, those interested in volunteering or just want to know what is happening are encourage to attend, also. It is an informal meeting, that features one or two guest speakers (suggestions welcomed), potluck by the families and Command update and sometimes a game.

ALL Family Play Day: 4th Monday of the month @ 6:00 pm. Venue varies. This event is open to all family members. Includes a Pot Luck by the families or meal provided by Command. Great social event!

There are also other educational and social events planned throughout the month. Marine Corps Family Team Building offers great educational opportunities that we attend as a unit or with other units aboard the base.

We have the deployment events that are pre, during and post deployment that prepare us as a unit for impending deployments.

If there is anything that I can do to make your transition to Twentynine Palms a more positive experience please do not hesitate to contact me directly at 760.830.6613 or 760.401.4543 and denise.cullum@usmc.mil.

Our 7th Marines website is: <http://www.i-mef.usmc.mil/div/7mar/default.asp>.

Again, welcome to the Family!

Denise