



26th Marine Expeditionary Unit

"A Certain Force in an Uncertain World"

Family and Friends of the 26th MEU,

First, Happy 2023! My wife, Amy, and I hope you all enjoyed the holidays and we wish you and your families continued blessings in the year ahead.

These last several months have been extremely busy and very productive for the 26th MEU – over the course of the last several months, we’ve executed the rolling composite of the Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF) and successfully completed several of our advanced MAGTF collective training events associated with our deployment work-ups. And, your Marine or Sailor has performed extremely well across the board ensuring our Team remains on glideslope for our final certification event prior to our deployment. I could not be any more proud of the performance of the Team. You too can and should be proud – the disciplined work ethic, “can do” attitude”, and sustained superior performance continues to mark the 26th MEU as the II MEF premier crisis response force of choice. The 26th MEU is recognized as an elite, combat ready, expeditionary rapid response force with a positive command climate and culture of excellence. Your Marine or Sailor is making a difference and actively adding to our Team’s long legacy. In fact, the performance of the 26th MEU during our MAGTF-INTEROP in November, MEUEX I in December, and PMINT and MEUEX II in January truly highlighted this Team’s versatility and showcased the operational capability and flexibility an ARG / MEU provides the Nation as an in-side force capable of supporting missions across the full spectrum of military operations.



As one of only seven standing MEUs, your Marine or Sailor is an essential member of our Team – their hard work during the months ahead is critical to our Team’s success. The road ahead and training requirements over the next several months will be demanding – both for your Marine/Sailor and for all of our families. We have three deliberate planned exercises (including two at-sea training periods) that will test the Team and ultimately set conditions to ensure we are ready and capable of deploying as a MEU MAGTF with the core competencies and capabilities necessary to respond to crises or emergent requirements within the EUCOM, AFRICOM, and CENTCOM regions. With that said, the individual and collective readiness of the 26th MEU – including the readiness of our Families – is essential in ensuring we can fulfil our mission. It is incumbent upon each of us to ensure our families are prepared for the challenges that can be exacerbated by the uncertainties of our training tempo and our upcoming overseas deployment. Our 26th MEU Command Team remains poised to assist our families – even when we are deployed for training. Samantha Stedman (26th MEU Deployment Readiness Coordinator), Erin McKee (MFLC), and Chaplain Long are just a few of the resources and integral parts of our unit, personal, and family readiness program that are available 24/7.

These are exciting times to be a part of the 26th MEU – for more than 50 years, this unit has served as America’s 9-11 with a tradition of operational excellence and professionalism that has marked the 26th MEU as “A Certain Force in an Uncertain World.” Your Marine or Sailor is having a positive impact and making a real difference. Simply stated, the Marine and Sailors of the 26th MEU are winning! SgtMaj Horr and I are extremely proud of this Team and we truly appreciate the support of our 26th MEU Families. Our Team’s success would not be possible without the love and continued support of our Families. It remains my distinct honor and privilege to serve on this great Team – please don’t hesitate to contact me, LtCol Wiese, SgtMaj Horr, or our DRC if you need assistance or have questions about our upcoming schedule.

Semper Fidelis,
Col Dennis “Dolf” Sampson



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FROM THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Greetings 26 MEU Marines, Sailors, and Families:



As I am writing we have all just returned from a well-deserved Christmas and Holiday period and are already deeply into the planning and preparations for our first at-sea period coming up in late January through early February. This follows a great performance during the first MAGTF integrated series of exercises that included Raids, Recon/Intelligence Inter-operations course, and the completion of MEUEXI/RUT. The final exercise in December enabled the team to demonstrate capabilities across the MAGTF with simulated shore-based operations in an austere site. These operations employed forces up and down the coast as far away as Savannah, Georgia as the MEU honed key mission essential tasks for the upcoming deployment. December was a busy month and our next exercise is shaping up to be a great exercise that will demonstrate our ability to integrate with the Navy and continue to advance our MAGTF capabilities.

Additional highlights since the last newsletter include: 1) Completion of the Amphibious Warfare Commander's Course; which enabled the MEU and PHIBRON-8 to work side-by-side to develop SOPs and understanding across the spectrum of warfighting functions. 2) Completion of the ARG/MEU Staff Planning Course; which brought the team together in Norfolk with Navy counterparts to exercise integrated planning for crisis response. 3) SNCO & Officer Social; a brief get-together with each element (ACE/GCE/LCE & CE) to celebrate compositing to officially form the MAGTF. 4) Barrack Bash; a send-off at the 26 MEU barracks for our personnel as we exited the field and transitioned to leave and liberty.

As I stated in the last newsletter, READINESS remains paramount as we continue to prepare for this summer's deployment. This next quarter will bring additional training and periods away from home and the time to be prepared is now! I continue to encourage building relationships with the friends and peers you have met as the MAGTF has come together. Take advantage of the upcoming town-halls and workshops to enhance this network and build the resiliency necessary to enable this team to succeed at home and in our future deployment. Thank you for the continued hard work and dedication you and your Marine/Sailor have continued to demonstrate and my best wishes as we enter into the new year.

Semper Fidelis,

Josef Wiese
XO, 26th MEU



OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT



The 26 MEU Operations Team is winning! We are boresight focused on warfighting, and making the MAGTF better every day. We are excited about all of opportunities in front of us, as we execute our pre-deployment training program (PTP) over the next six months. The team will operate in many new and engaging environments as we grow together, while training for our upcoming deployment. During our PTP we will operate from ships out to sea as well as sites ashore throughout the Eastern United States as we hone our skills as a single warfighting organization. It is a great time to be on the MEU and build the trust and confidence of the Marines and Sailors standing to our left and right. We've seen the MEU Operations Team grow from a little more than a dozen to over 50 Marines and Sailors. This team is responsible for the planning and execution of MEU events, and they do a great job. The Operations Team has a wide range of special skills to include Force Protection, Cyber Operation, Air Operations, Medical Planning, and list goes on. As you can imagine there a very few dull moments in Operations, and I just want you to know how proud I am to be part of this team that is focused on problem solving and making the MEU better across the board.

The Marines of the 26 MEU Operations department have been thriving and no event showcased their efforts like the MEU Exercise (MEUEX) I. The exercise was a pivotal event for the MEU, as we come together to form a single warfighting unit. MEUEX I exercised the full range of MEU operations in realistic urban environments through Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina. It couldn't have been a better first test for the 26 MEU MAGTF, or a better performance from the Operations Team. Special recognition is also due to Capt Kayla Colledge. She was the Marine tasked to the lead the planning for MEUEX I, and she exemplified the MEU's principles of Leadership, Attitude, and Warfighting while putting together a great exercise for the whole team.

LtCol Jeremy "Hawk" Hawkins
26th MEU Operations Officer



Awards & Promotions

Congratulations to Cpl Christopher Cpl Raheen Dukes for being selected as the Noncommissioned Officer of the Quarter and LCpl Lena Walker for being selected as Marine of the Quarter for 4th Quarter FY 2022.

October Promotions

LCpl Haowen Li	LCpl Kelin Waller
LCpl Tanner Westort	LCpl Aung Lin
Cpl Kenneth Barnes	Cpl Timothy Cofflet
Cpl Mateuse Dosanjias	Cpl Thomas Golebiewski
Cpl Andrew Pinaula	Cpl Eh Shee
Cpl Christian St. George	Cpl Bryson Wessendorf
Cpl Kaleb Wilson	Cpl Brendan Zaleski
Sgt Aishya Jefferson	Sgt Arthur Spackman
Sgt Cody White	SSgt Faustino Garciasilva
MSgt Emanuel Nanjeackson	



November Promotions

LCpl Caden Voss	Cpl Cody Grimes
Sgt Arne Bye	Sgt Alexander Hermann
Sgt Brian Ortizcoimbre	Sgt Carson Radcliffe
Sgt Isiah Rivas	SSgt Christian Miller
SSgt Nicole Scafidi	SSgt Amberle e Martinez

Awards for the Quarter

Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal
SSgt Christopher Kane

Certificates of Commendation

Cpl Raheen Dukes
LCpl Lena Walker
Cpl Joshua Penrod
Cpl Leniyus Sullivan
Cpl Andrea Gomez

Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal

Cpl Luis Rosadorojas
Capt Kayla Colledge

December Promotions

LCpl Kenneth Zeigler	Cpl Marcos Cruz
Cpl Matthew Fecteau	Cpl Jeimiel Reyesavila
Cpl Roberto Gonzalesalvarez	Cpl Juan Sanabria
Cpl Raleigh Santana	Sgt Daniel Darnell
Sgt Jocelyn Matta	SSgt Joseph Carr



26th MEU

Marine Corps Birthday Ball November 9, 2022



Leadership, Attitude, & Warfighting

26TH MEU SECTION SPOTLIGHT

S-1



Greetings Family and Friends of the 26th MEU,

This has been a busy fall and early winter for the 26 MEU S-1 as the section on boarded and welcomed new Marines and Sailors during the formation of the Command Element and the composite of the Marine Air Ground Task Force team for deployment. At the 26th MEU, the S-1 section manages personnel accountability, Awards, Promotions, Orders/Directives, Defense Travel System, Casualty Affairs, Government Travel Charge Card Program, the Transition Readiness Program, and has been focused on the manpower management of the force in preparation for deployment.

As we progress through our Pre-deployment Training Program and into our deployment, I want to ensure that Marines, Sailors and their families can always take advantage of the Voting Assistance Program, Victim Witness Assistance Program and Exceptional Family Member Programs through the S-1. As we prepare for training and deployment, it's a Marine Corps requirement that Marines and Sailors update their Record of Emergency Data, Family Care Plan and Service Member's Group Life Insurance (SGLI) and ensure its accuracy.

The Record of Emergency Data and Family Care Plans can be updated using Marine Online.

For the member to access the SGLI Online Enrollment System (SOES), the member needs to login to <https://milconnect.dmdc.osd.mil/milconnect/>, sign in, and go to "Manage my SGLI." Once at the SOES- SGLI Online Enrollment System webpage, read the information and click Continue (SOES guides member through the election process). "Confirm and Certify" before exiting SOES, to ensure SGLI beneficiary designations are stored in the system.

A resource for Wills and Power's of Attorney in our Command is the Staff Judge Advocate section.

Please see the following for any questions and support:

Major Blake Peltz: timothy.peltz@usmc.mil

Capt Bruce Hilty: bruce.hilty@usmc.mil

Corporal Bordes: nhadeije.bordes@usmc.mil

Over the last several months, the S-1 (and Special Staff) has welcomed the following new Marines:

- Captain Bruce Hilty- Deputy Staff Judge Advocate
- Gunnery Sergeant Lakeetha Johnson- Administrative Chief
- Corporal Gary Hooper - Administrative Specialist
- Corporal Rebecca Lainez - Administrative Specialist
- Corporal Eh Shee - Administrative Specialist
- Corporal Christian Trujillo - Administrative Specialist
- Corporal Raheen Dukes - Administrative Specialist
- Corporal William Teresinski - Administrative Specialist
- Corporal Nhadeije Bordes- Legal Clerk

On October 1st, we celebrated three promotions within the section as Cpl Shee, Cpl Teresinski and Cpl Trujillo became Non-Commissioned Officers and earned their "blood stripes." That month Cpl Hooper was named the "Honor Grad" of his Corporal's Course. Cpl Dukes attended the Marine Corps Martial Arts Instructor Course and was name "Iron Man" of the Course. Cpl Dukes' is going to pay dividends across the MEU as an instructor.

Additionally, the following Marines recently earned the following Marine Corps Marital Arts Program belts:

Brown: Cpl Shee, Cpl Teresinski and Cpl Trujillo

Green: LCpl Walker

To conclude Cpl Dukes and LCpl Walker were named the 26 MEU NCO and Marine of the Quarter!

Congratulations to these Marines on their promotions and their individual performances!

As the operational tempo increases, I am impressed by the S-1 Team, and we are postured to increase the capabilities and administrative readiness of the entire MEU.

Semper Fi,

Captain Sean Andrascik

Adjutant, 26 MEU

26TH MEU SECTION SPOTLIGHT CONT.

S-6



Greetings Friends and Family,

I am Major Tim Keithley, I have the honor of serving with your Marines as the Communications Officer of the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit. I have been with the unit since 2020 and the last few months have been busy and exciting in the Communications Section as we prepared for the composite of the major elements of the MEU and extensive training to prepare the unit for deployment.

In September we bid a fond farewell Master Sergeant Jeffery Wiltse. Retiring after 22 years of faithful service and more than 18 months as our Communications Chief. We are extremely for all he did for our team and our nation. We then welcomed a new Communications Chief, Master Gunnery Sergeant Jim Gibson. Just a few weeks later, 51 Marines from 8th Communications Battalion joined our family to round out our capabilities. They are led by First Lieutenant Abbie Kizer, Gunnery Sergeant Kristopher Golden, Gunnery Sergeant Craig Merkel and Gunnery Sergeant Joshua Alvis. They hit the ground running, conducting equipment transfers, exercise planning, and communications training side-by-side with our subordinate elements.

We have also had a team of Marines led by SSgt Daniel White, who have been working with the sailors aboard the USS Bataan to set up the complex communications systems critical to our ability to coordinate with Marine and Joint forces and our International partners. Together with our Amphibious Communications Detachment, led by Captain Jebidiah Naudet and GySgt Peter Garcia, they have our shipboard networks ready to go months before the MEU would normally begin setup.

Just after Thanksgiving, we supported a series of overlapping exercises at sites across Camp Lejeune and culminating in our first, pre-deployment exercise, MEUEX I. Upon their arrival at Bogue Field our Marines had communications up and providing remote services to distant units within just a few minutes. Their swift action and attention to detail enabled the MEU to execute two training courses while simultaneously setting up the MEUs Main command post for MEUEX I. The Main is our largest command and control node and the team really came together to make it happen quickly and enabled the MEU to successfully exercise capability to conduct everything from a non-combatant evacuation operation, to a raid against an adversary stronghold.

We had the privilege to promote several of our Marines this quarter. Please join us in congratulating the following Marines on their well-earned promotions; Sgt Isiah Rivas, Cpl Matthew Fecteau, Cpl Gonzalez Álvarez, Cpl Grimes, Cpl McGraw, Cpl Sanabria, Cpl StGeorge, Cpl Barnes, Cpl Cruz, Cpl Wilson, Cpl Oley, Cpl Pinola and Cpl Santana.

LCpl Bonilla and Cpl Jenkins both received Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medals for their outstanding job performance and support given to every Marine and Sailor across the MAGTF.

Master Gunnery Sergeant Gibson and I are impressed at how capable our team is already and we are excited to see what else your Marines accomplish as we prepare to deploy over the next few months. We would also like express our gratitude to all of you supporting our Marines from behind the scenes, we couldn't do all this any other way, Thank you and Semper Fidelis!



Leadership, Attitude, & Warfighting



MEUEX 1

December 11 - 21



CHAPLAIN'S CORNER



Dear 26th MEU Family,

Happy New Year! I pray that you were able to have a warm and restful holiday season!

WHAT'S NEW

The Religious Ministries Team (RMT) of the 26th MEU Command Element consists of a Chaplain and a Religious Program Specialist. Religious Program Specialists (RPs) are sailors in the Navy, like the Chaplain and provide assistance and security to the Chaplain. In October, the RMT said goodbye to RP2 Sean Richardson, and welcomed RP2 Tristan Hawkins.

THINK ABOUT IT

Have you ever heard someone say, "There's just not enough time in the day!"? Maybe you've said this before. But, you are indiscriminately given 24 hours every day—that's 168 hours in a week (did you just do the math?). So, think about it: regardless of your title, schedule, or the responsibilities of your job, the time you receive is the same as every other living person on this earth. One of the challenges most of us have is managing our time. Are you a good steward of the

time God has given you? I know I can do better. There are many ways to maximize your time:

- ◆ Take a college course
- ◆ Get into physical shape
- ◆ Read more
- ◆ Participate in your worship community
- ◆ Go out of your way to help others

These are just a few examples, but when you do things to better yourself, you can look back and be thankful for how you have utilized your time. It starts by looking forward, planning, and sticking to it. How will you maximize your time in 2023?

DID YOU KNOW

There is a monthly spouse's potluck Bible Study. The next one will be held on 30 January 2023 at 1800. Call or text Ashton Long at 901-361-6440 for more details. You can also [email her at arlong06@gmail.com](mailto:arlong06@gmail.com).

Psalm 31:15, "My times *are* in thy hand..."



Vocati ad servitium

Called to serve

Chaplain Trenten Long
26th Marine Expeditionary Unit
Office: 910-451-6880
Cell: 910-333-7122
trenten.long@usmc.mil



FAQ

Are chaplains limited to providing only spiritual counsel? No! Chaplains provide confidential counsel through advisement, encouragement, and guidance on any topic and are never limited to conversations about faith and spirituality.

Are chaplains required to disclose certain information? No! Chaplains are not permitted to disclose any information that is given in a confidential setting. Chaplains maintain the highest level of confidentiality and regardless of what is shared with a chaplain, the information must remain confidential, no matter what. For more information on chaplains and confidentiality, see SECNAVINST 1730.9A.

What does a chaplain do? Chaplains facilitate the free exercise of religious faith and practice by providing faith-group-specific services, facilitating religious services for other faith groups, and offering confidential care to all authorized users.

Who has access to a military chaplain? Authorized users have access to chaplains. Authorized users, as defined by SECNAVINST 1730.7E, are military personnel and their dependents, civilian personnel working for the command, retirees, and others in possession of a military identification card.

Leadership, Attitude, & Warfighting





— WHAT IS PMINT? —



Amphibious Squadron Marine Expeditionary Unit Integration (PMINT) is the first at-sea period during the intermediate stage of the MEU's pre-deployment training continuum.

ARG/MEU INTEGRATION
Safe Onload/Offload of Personnel and Equipment
Carrier Qualifications and Deck Landing Qualifications
Rehearsal and Validation of Standard Operating Procedures
Ship-to-shore Movements Via Landing Cushioned Air Crafts and Landing Craft Utility connectors
Mission Essential Tasks:
Command and Control
Visit, Board, Search, and Seizure
Amphibious Assault
Defense of the Amphibious Task Force



USS BATAAN (LHD 5)



USS MESA VERDE (LPD 19)



USS CARTER HALL (LSD 50)

"ALWAYS WINNING"

AMOUNT OF FLIGHT HOURS
300+
First East Coast MEU to embark HIMARS.

POUNDS OF EQUIPMENT LOADED
1.7 MILLION
Over 50 ship to shore movements via Landing Craft Air Cushion and Landing Utility Craft connectors.

MARINES AND SAILORS EMBARKED ONTO BATAAN AMPHIBIOUS READY GROUP WARSHIPS
1,600+



PMINT: It's not about relationships, it's all about relationships

[PMINT: It's not about relationships, it's all about relationships > United States Marine Corps Flagship > News Display \(marines.mil\)](#)

Blue-Green Dream Team: Integrating Navy and Marine Forces Aboard BATARG for PMINT

[Blue-Green Dream Team: Integrating Navy and Marine Forces Aboard BATARG for PMINT > United States Navy > News-Stories](#)

Bataan Amphibious Ready Group/26th Marine Expeditionary Unit Complete Preliminary Integration Exercise

[Bataan Amphibious Ready Group/26th Marine Expeditionary Unit Complete Preliminary Integration Exercise > United States Navy > News-Stories](#)

MESSAGE FROM THE DEPLOYMENT READINESS COORDINATOR



Families of the 26th MEU, Happy New Year, it is my pleasure to continue to work for you and with you!

If you are new to the 26th MEU my name is Samantha Stedman and I am the Deployment Readiness Coordinator (DRC) for the 26th MEU. As a Special Staff Officer of the command, my primary objective is being a link between you and the Command, providing information and referral for services offered on line, aboard the base or in the local community, and focusing volunteer efforts. I will also keep you informed of trainings and briefs that concern deployment related issues. This 26th MEU prides itself on mission readiness and one of the cornerstones of being mission ready is ensuring that our families are prepared. The Marines and Sailors of the 26th MEU work hard every day to ensure that they are ready to deploy with limited notice as a MAGTF in support of crises, expeditionary operations, or other emergent rotation requirements. We understand that the uncertainties of our operational tempo can sometimes be challenging to the families. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me at any time if you have any concerns or questions.

I encourage you to participate in family activities and events. The families within the 26th MEU will be the ones that you can most readily identify with as we go through pre-deployment training and the deployment, so getting to know each other can be quite beneficial. There are a number of ways in which you can make those connections. They include attending informative briefs, volunteering, and being present at family events. The 26th MEU is gearing up for lots of fun events and volunteers are what it takes to make them successful. If you are interested in more information or want to volunteer, please call me and I will let you know just how easy it is to make a big difference for our Marines, Sailors and families.

The 26th MEU Family Readiness Team is always working hard on ensuring our families are taken care of. We are here to keep you informed, connected, and supported.

I look forward to seeing you all at future events!

Semper Gumby,
Samantha Stedman



**26th MEU
Deployment
Readiness Coordinator**



Samantha Stedman

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Email:

samantha.stedman@usmc.mil



Marines.mil

www.26thmeu.marines.mil



Facebook Page

26th Marine Expeditionary Unit



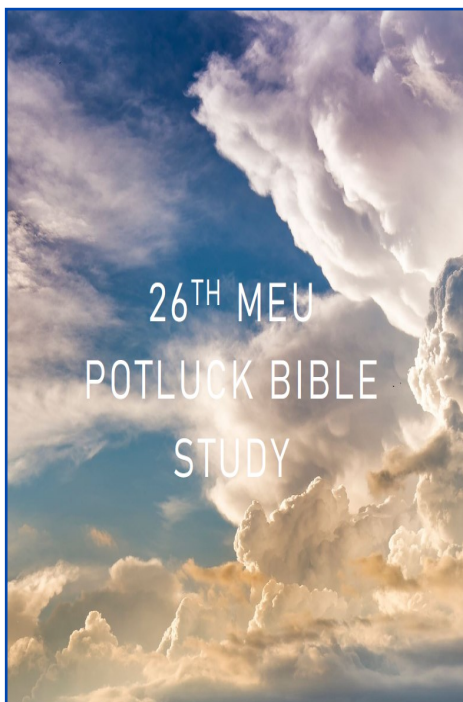
Instagram Page

@26meu



Twitter Page

@26MEU



26TH MEU
POTLUCK BIBLE
STUDY

- **When:** February 28, 2023 6pm-7:30 pm
- **Where:** Ashley Gibson's House-6241 Mississippi St. Camp Lejeune, NC 28546
- **What to read:** Romans 9-10
- **What to bring:** Mexican-themed dish to share
- **Please RSVP** to Ashley Gibson 775-340-4600

COFFEE & TALK
26th MEU Spouses
Morning with the MFLC

Thursday, February 23

Starbucks (on base)
1231 Birch Street
Camp Lejeune
9:30AM - 10:30AM

This is a great opportunity to meet Erin, our Military and Family Life Counselor and meet other spouses.

For questions call or text Erin McKee at 910-734-8656

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