

# **2D TANK BATTALION** QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Issue 4-2016

NOVEMBER 2016

## **Message from the Commanding Officer**

Marines, Sailors, and Families of the Ironhorse,

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Since the July publication of our quarterly newsletter the Marines and Sailors of the Ironhorse have maintained a high operational tempo but have continued to sustain the stellar performance that has come to define the character of this battalion. There have been a myriad of challenges that expand the entirety of all we are asked to do as a combat ready tank battalion and it has required the MOS proficiency of each and every Marine and Sailor to get it done. I am extremely proud of what the battalion has accomplished during this quarter.

During the month of August much of the battalion's focus was preparing for the Field Maintenance and Supply Analysis Office (FSMAO) inspection. The FSMAO inspection is designed to measure the battalion's maintenance readiness and operational availability of equipment through inspecting all areas of maintenance, logistics, and supply. This was a collective effort that required a lot of time to ensure the attention

to detail and procedural accuracy demanded by every section. While significant time was invested in preparing for an inspection, every company remained focused on training for combat. Alpha, Bravo, and Headquarters and Service Companies, as you will see in their portions of the newsletter, continued to meet the demands of the battalion and Marine Corps. There were field exercises, rifle and pistol ranges, Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) training, and a 2d Marine Division exercise known as Arrowhead Thunder. Despite a busy month of August, every requirement

was met and done so with impressive results.

September was another busy month that was primarily consumed by the FSMAO inspection. As stated previously there was a lot of hard work and long hours spent preparing for the inspection. In true Ironhorse fashion, the efforts of the Marines and Sailors were rewarded by favorable inspection results and a way forward that will make the battalion stronger. The battalion maintained consistency in its combat training throughout September as well, in particular preparation for Alpha Company's Integrated continued on next page



~ Bn CO with August Marines of the Month

### MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANGING OFFICER CONTINUED

Training Exercise (ITX). As we transitioned into October, the battalion has focused on incorporating improvements to the FSMAO inspection, while simultaneously, A Co deployed to 29 Palms for ITX, B Co conducted fire support training, and H&S Co provided support to the line companies in addition to training combat skills at the section level. This guarter has been especially busy considering that in addition to a detailed inspection and meeting standard training requirements; we still have a platoon from both Alpha and Bravo Companies supporting the 22nd and 24th MEUs, and a platoon from B Co also supporting the Black Sea Rotational Force Combined Arms Company (BSRF-CAC). On a bright note, we were happy to welcome back the Marines from previous BSRF-CAC deployment.

Despite the continued operational demands placed upon the battalion. we will continue to maintain a focus on unit and family related activities designed to strengthen relationships and build camaraderie. We have conducted battalion team building events such as a flag football tournament, dodgeball, and an outdoor adventure triathlon. In addition, on October 27th we had a Haunted Warehouse and Trunk or Treat at the battalion supply warehouse. The next two key events are the Marine Corps Birthday Ball on 2 December and the Holiday Party on 15 December. I sincerely hope you are able to attend these events. For more information on these events as well as Ironhorse Marines of the Month and Spouses Nights please see the 2d Tank Battalion Facebook page.

Please feel free to contact our Family Readiness Officer (FRO), Noreen Towle, for any questions about our Family Readiness Program. She can provide information on how we can support you, or if you are interested, how you may volunteer your time to support the battalion. She can be reached at 910-451-6343 (office), 910-372-2741 (cell), or at

noreen.towle@usmc.mil.

Thanks for all you do to support the Marines and Sailors of the Ironhorse. I am genuinely appreciative of the integral role played on the part of our families and your contributions to our success.

Semper Fidelis, LtCol Lance J. Langfeldt Commanding Officer 2d Tank Battalion, 2d Marine Division

### **HEADQUARTERS AND SERVICE COMPANY**

Family and Friends of Headquarters and Services Company:

It is my pleasure and honor to serve as the Company Commander for your Marines and Sailors. Upon checking into 2d Tank Battalion at the end of June, I was handed a proficient, professional company whose hard work has been evident at every juncture during my time here thus far. Though I am not an armor officer, I'm very familiar with N Street, having just moved a couple buildings down from my previous command at 1st Battalion, 10th Marines. For those that aren't familiar, that means I am an artilleryman. Originally tasked to come to 2d Tanks Battalion as the Battalion Fire Support Coordinator, the current manning afforded me the opportunity to manage both billets. I can undoubtedly say that I am extremely impressed with not only the Marines and Sailors that make up this H&S Company, but the family, friends, and support networks that have created an environment conducive for success on a daily basis.

Over the past 6 months, your Marines have been extremely busy with training, administra-

### H&S CONT...

tion, and inspections. One of my first opportunities to observe 2d Tank Battalion in action was during the Battalion Field Exercise in July. Having only had the company for about three weeks and with no tank background to default to, I didn't quite know what proper operations looked like. In lieu of my breadth of knowledge, I relied on the Marines and Sailors of the company. I was nothing short of impressed. During the field exercise we trained hard alongside our reserve counterparts and increased the already high level of proficiency that my predecessor had so adamantly talked about.

While many would see the end of the exercise as an opportunity to relax, this company, with your support on the home-front, looked forward to the fast approaching FSMAO inspection that some of you may have heard so much about. This two week inspection combed through our maintenance and readiness record keeping procedures for reporting up through the highest echelons of the Marine Corps. With the hard work and preparation that your Marines and Sailors put in, our inspection went extremely well and every effort paid off.

Moving forward, we focus on continued proficiency and unit cohesion. Over the next few months we will be sending Marines to courses to help facilitate training in the battalion while taking a stair step approach to some of the combat oriented training that we will partake in after the first of the year. In keeping with the "work hard, play hard" mentality, you may have noticed some increased athletic competitions and morale, welfare, and recreation events within the battalion. These events have been well earned and play an integral role in forging the bonds common to all successful units throughout the history of our organization.

It is my pleasure to command this company and I look forward to meeting you all over the coming months. I can't thank you all enough for what you do for the Marines and Sailors of this company and I look forward to your continued support as we propel the battalion to future success.

Semper Fidelis, Capt Justin M. Medeiros H&S Company Commander 2d Tank Battalion. 2d Marine Division



## **ALPHA COMPANY**

By the time this newsletter has reached you, your beloved Marines of Alpha Company are in Twenty Nine Palms California conducting some amazing live fire training. This past quarter has been packed with great training for your Marines preparing them for the Integrated Training Exercise (ITX) 1-17.

In July, Cpls Sawyer, Glon, West, Green, Mosley, and Schutz attended the Tank Commanders Course. This course trained those Marines in the basic tactics and gunnery skills that will be required of them to be Tank Commanders in the near future. Also in July the Marines qualified with the M9 pistol

## ALPHA COMPANY CONTINUED

and conducted our annual Combat Fitness Test (CFT).

August was a very busy month for Alpha Company. The company conducted their annual rifle qualification shooting tables I-II at Stone Bay and III-VI at range L-5. These rifle tables reinforced the USMC mantra that "EVERY Marine is a rifleman" no matter what MOS they hold. A Marine Corps Martial Arts Course was conducted in August belting up Marines to the Gray and Green belt status. 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon supported the School of the Infantry-East's Advanced Infantry Course and 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon supported the Infantry Unit Leasers Course. These field exercises enhanced our effectiveness at operating with infantry units in urban environments.

Last but not least September finalized our preparation for ITX 1-17 with a trip to Fort Stewart, GA to use the Close Combat Turret Trainer. This simulator gave Alpha Company the ability to execute platoon and company level exercises in a simulated combat environment. The Tank Commanders and Gunners also had the ability to practice the use of close air support and call for fire via the Supporting Arms Virtual Trainer, (SAVT) and Combined Arms Staff Trainer, (CAST). This gave our Marines the opportunity to practice the procedures neces-



sary for success out at ITX. 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon had the opportunity to go out to Onslow Beach and conducted Amphibious Operations with a Landing Craft Unit. This exercise trained the Marines in the skills vital to mission accomplishment in an amphibious beach landing with their tanks. We culminated the month with a Company Field Exercise (CoFex) on Camp Lejeune. During this CoFex the Marines executed platoon and company offensive, defensive, and breaching exercises crucial for success at ITX.

Looking ahead, the Company is currently at ITX conducting the most superlative training the Marine Corps has to offer its' Marines. Once we return, I am looking forward to the Marine Corps Ball, Dec 2, at Myrtle Beach. The Ball is always a great time. Sarah and I are looking forward to seeing everyone there.

As always, I must say thank you for continuing to support your Marine and allowing Alpha Company the ability to train to the highest levels of mastery. I am extremely proud and inspired by everything your Marines have accomplished the past three months.

Thank you again for your continued support.

Capt Brent Goddard II Alpha Company Commander 2d Tank Battalion, 2d Marine Division

## **BRAVO COMPANY**

#### To the Brawler family,

I am Capt Ted Ehlert and I assumed command of the company on September 16th from 1stLt Andrew Geisler, who is to be commended for his leadership over the preceding months. It is exciting to return to a tank battalion after a few years out of the community, and an absolute privilege to have been entrusted with the responsibility of leading the Marines and Sailors of Company B.

Arriving when I did afforded me the opportunity to reflect upon the company's achievements over a very busy summer: Second Platoon deployed to Eastern Europe, where they are participating in some unbelievable training with numerous North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) partners, a role in which they are representing the United States honorably; Third Platoon transferred to a new command for their upcoming Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) deployment, but continue to work alongside us and remain part of the family; the company completed rigorous training in the Georgia heat at Fort Stewart as part of ARROW-HEAD THUNDER and represented the battalion at Fleet Week Nashville, while relying heavily on First Platoon to support numerous training events for other units aboard Camp Lejeune.

We also welcomed several new members to the family, including the Marines of Company C who had been deployed with the Black Sea Rotational Force (BSRF) before returning as full-fledged Brawlers, and recent joins including 2ndLt James Daughtrey, LCpl Matthew Grant, and PFCs Calvin Phillips and Cody Perez. We also had the honor to promote several Brawlers to the leadership ranks as noncommissioned officers: Corporals Eric Boyd, Jr., Troy Freeman, Dylan O'Donnell, and Anthony Georges.

The greatest privilege of leadership is honoring the performances of our Marines and Sailors, and I ask you join me in congratulating our September "Iron Horse of the Month" Cpl Ryan Gallagher, October "Iron Horse of the Month" Cpl Paul Faupel III, and our Marine of the Quarter LCpl Jared Shepard, who was also selected as the battalion's Marine of the Quarter.

As the holidays draw near, I hope to meet as many of you as can join us at the 241st Birthday Ball on December 2nd, the battalion's Holiday Party on December 15th, and future events.

Thank you for all you do to support us.

Capt Ted Ehlert Bravo Company Commander 2d Tank Battalion, 2d Marine Division



- Bravo Brawlers expanding their tactical knowledge with a battle study of the American Civil War taught by a historian of the 26th North Carolina.

### **Chaplain's Corner**

So, the day has arrived... I'm writing my final newsletter article for 2d Tank Battalion. This is a bitter-sweet task. Although I'm ready to move on to the next challenge that the Navy Chaplain Corps has in-store for me, I also don't really want to leave Tanks. This Sailor has come to love the Marine Corps Tanker community (which includes other Marines and Sailors besides the Tankers).

2d Tank Battalion has allowed me to not only grow as a chaplain, but to thrive as well. The support the entire battalion has shown for me and my ministry has not been equaled by any other unit I've served with. Thank you for an absolutely wonderful 18 months!

In mid-January, my replacement will arrive from Japan. Chaplain Thevenin is not only a superb Chaplain, but is also a good friend of mine. We deployed in the same amphibious ready group in 2013/14. I have witnessed his ministry first-hand and can honestly say that 2d Tanks will be in good pastoral hands with Chaplain Thevenin. I've already told him how blessed he is to be coming to 2d Tanks and he is eager to meet you and serve along-side you.

I'm off to Naval Air Station Sigonella, Sicily, Italy in the December/January timeframe. I'll be taking-over as the Air Station's Command Chaplain. It is an accompanied tour, so my family will be joining me in this three year endeavor. I know... I know, three years on a Mediterranean island that has a San Diego-like climate will be a rough tour, but I'll take one for the team. All joking aside, it will be a challenging billet, but with the manner in which 2d Tanks has guided and developed me as a Staff Officer and a Chaplain, I should be OK. I'll be around for the Marine Corps Ball and the Battalion Holiday Party, but then its "fair winds and following seas." And although I will be leaving 2d Tanks, I will be taking with me the joyful memories of having served alongside some of the finest Marines and Sailors in the United States Marine Corps.

With love and affection, may God bless and Simper Fi,

Chaplain J. M. Constantine 2d Tank Battalion, 2d Marine Division



# 2D TANK BATTALION UNIT AND PERSONAL FAMILY READINESS PROGRAM

Volunteerism promotes cohesion, collaboration and community within a unit. 2d Tank Battalion is actively recruiting new volunteers.

Volunteers are the glue that holds our Unit and Personal Family Readiness Program together. Being involved brings added benefits to our Marines, sailors and their family members while building a positive, proactive community.

Our official volunteers go through three trainings: Family Readiness

Volunteer training, Lifestyles, Insights, Networking, Knowledge, and Skills, (LINKS), and Personally Identifiable Information training. We also have event volunteers who do not have to go through training but provide support to unit events.

If you are interested in volunteering in either an official or unofficial capacity please contact the FRO to get started. Finally, a big THANK YOU to all our current volunteers for supporting our events and functions.

We greatly appreciate all you do!



# **SPOUSE'S CORNER**

HOW TO MANAGE YOUR MONEY DURING A DEPLOYMENT TO REACH FINANCIAL SUCCESS...OR HOW CAN YOU MAKE THAT DREAM POST DEPLOYMENT TRIP A REALITY

#### **Article by: Aileen Santos**

Deployments are challenging in so many ways. Our spouses are gone for multiple months, we miss them, we hope they are safe and we wish we could explore those new places



with them – or maybe that's just me. We juggle taking care of kids, jobs, school, volunteering and anything else we have to do, while wanting to keep the Homefront in order to make it easier for our spouse to focus on what they need to do. That can be emotionally challenging.

We can find ourselves on an emotional rollercoaster from "Yeah! I got this! Nothing can stop me today!" to "What?! We still have 3 months left on this deployment?!". A whole other challenge we might face is managing finances with our spouse in another country or on another continent. Even though this might seem like a minor issue considering the fact that we miss our spouse SO much, struggling financially can create tension in relationships and make the deployment more challenging than it already is.

So what are some strategies you and your spouse could follow before, during and after the deployment to reach financial success?

#### Before - Fail to plan and you plan to fail

I know, I know, sounds like something your spouse learned at Basic School or work and now won't stop saying ... But there is truth in this simple statement. Either you have a plan for financial success or chances are it won't happen. Before your spouse even leaves for the deployment there are a few items to check off your financial To-Do List.

Take advantage of the free resources available to you through the military and other organizations that help you create a financial plan – your **budget**. The Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society (NMCRS) offers budget counseling one-on-one sessions with a caseworker and other financial education. MCCS also offers a Personal Financial Management Program with classes on car buying, investments and the option to schedule individual appointments with a Financial Advisor. Every Dollar offers budget templates and an App to track your estimated and actual expenses. Knowing exactly how much money comes in each month and where every dollar goes throughout the month allows you to really come up with a strategy to reach those financial goals you might have (aka that post deployment trip I can't wait for). These are just a few resources to help you get started.

When setting up your budget, make sure to pay yourself first – savings towards an emergency fund, retirement savings and other financial goals you might have. Also, include a fun category – money for your spouse to explore the countries visited during the deployment, money for you to go out to dinner with friends or treat yourself to a massage after an especially long week or anything that brings you joy.

Speaking of that emergency fund, I volunteer at NMCRS and we usually recommend to have an emergency fund of \$1,000 – 2,000. Keep that money in a separate account both you and your spouse have access to, but do not use on a regular basis. What is the emergency fund for and why do you need that? The Deployment Curse is real and as soon as my husband left for his deployment both our pets got sick and I faced vet bills we didn't plan for in our monthly budget – but thanks to our emergency fund, I was able to pay for, without having to pull out that credit card. An emergency fund is supposed to help you be prepared for those "unexpected" expenses (that still seem to happen to most of us eventually) like a car repair, the washer or dryer (or both) dying, a Hurricane warning being issued and you wanting to leave the area, etc.

Set financial goals – a post deployment trip, a new car, family visits... - that will help you stay on track throughout the deployment, because you share a common goal you look forward to and that keeps you motivated. Financial goals can also be a certain amount in your savings account you would like to reach or retirement savings.

Make sure you have all the paperwork you might need in your spouse's absence to take care of any possible issues. Have a Power of Attorney that allows you to deposit and withdraw funds and other bank transactions on your spouse's accounts. A General Power of Attorney will usually also allow you to file taxes for your spouse if he

continued on next page

or she is gone during Tax Season. Your spouse can also sign a Pre-Authorization form at NMCRS, just in case you need financial assistance during the deployment.

Check the expiration dates on your spouse's bank cards. Will they expire during the deployment? If so, go to your local branch and ask for a new card that won't expire while being somewhere where it might take weeks to receive mail. While you are at your local branch, let your bank know about your spouse's upcoming deployment so the bank does not block cards when used abroad. This can also be done online or over the phone for most financial institutions.

Come up with a strategy on how your spouse has access to funds. Maybe that means using one account solely for your spouse with a pre-determined balance available at any given time, maybe that means taking out a certain amount of cash each week/month, or maybe you prefer using a credit card with a certain limit to make sure you stay within your budget.

Check with your service providers if they offer discounts for military members or during a deployment. Our phone provider allowed my husband to cancel his number for the duration of the deployment, which saves us half of our phone bill each month. Car insurance premiums might go down when only one person drives the car for a couple months. Some banks offer reduced interest rates on credit cards during deployments. Contact your providers to find out what they offer and you may be surprised how many savings you can receive when you just ask.

#### During - It's ok to slip sometimes, as long as you stick to your budget the rest of the time

Sometimes, no matter how committed to your budget you are, there might be an occasion where you do not stick to it perfectly. It is ok to slip sometimes, just make sure to go back to your budget as soon as you realize that happened. No one is perfect and it takes practice and time to get better.

Before spending money on those boots you really want, it helps to consider whether those are a need (as in "It is freezing and I do not have any closed shoes, because it was hot until November!") or a want (as in "Those boots are cute, they would look great next to my other ten pairs.") You get the idea J Asking yourself about need or want before purchases helps you save money that you could use after your spouse gets back to go to that fancy restaurant you have been wanting to go to for a special date.

Communicate with your spouse on how you both are doing financially. Check your accounts to make sure you are aware of the available balance, which bills have already been paid for and whether there are any fraudulent transactions on your account. Travel can make you more vulnerable to fraud and it is important to monitor your finances and talk to your spouse about them. Keep each other motivated and accountable by tracking your savings goals. My husband and I really would like to go on a trip after he gets home. Thus, we have a shared board of travel destinations, restaurants we want to try and attractions we want to visit. Being able to visualize what we save for makes it so much easier to not buy that extra pair of boots.

#### After – Reward yourselves and set up a new budget

You did it! Your spouse is finally back home! Enjoy the time together and relax! A few days after the homecoming and falling in love all over again you should take inventory on your finances. Have you reached those goals you set yourselves prior to the deployment? Did you – for the most part – stay within your budget? Chances are you did (since you had that plan ready to execute), so go ahead and reward yourselves. Go on that post deployment trip you have saved up for, plan a special fun date or whatever it is that will bring you both joy! You deserve it, you both worked hard, got through the deployment and are finally back together! Also, it is helpful to set a new budget, one that adapts to you being in the same house again and not having extra expenses abroad. Now that you have done it before, it is easier and you might actually enjoy the process by now after seeing great results.

## WHO AM I?

Born in Phoenix Arizona, I was considered the typical boy, always outside, always playing sports and always getting into trouble. Well, sort of...I never got caught! I loved playing WWI soldiers with the neighborhood kids. Running in and out of houses being built and jumping in ditches.

Today, I stay busy going to Campbell University to complete my degree in International Affairs. I enjoy keeping up on current events and watching sports.

Can you guess Who I Am? If you need a clue, I've never had a hairline and have looked like an old man from birth! Send your guesses to the FRO: <u>Noreen.towle@usmc.mil</u>. The first correct guess will win a \$5 MCX gift card.



### **2D TANK BATTALION SINGLE MARINE PROGRAM**

The Single Marine Program (SMP) serves as the voice for single, unaccompanied Marines and any other single active duty service member in identifying Quality Of Life (QOL) concerns, developing QOL initiatives, and providing recommendations through advocacy, recreational activities and providing recommendations through advocacy, recreational activities, special events and community involvement.

The program encourages single/ unaccompanied Marines to provide input and ideas toward programming for SMP component areas:

- •Quality Of Life (QOL)
- Recreation
- Community Involvement

For more information or to get started with the program, go to http://www.mccslejeunenewriver.com/smp/.

## **PROMOTIONS**

#### **AUGUST PROMOTIONS**

SEPTEMBER PROMTIONS

LCPL	CARTER, TYEK
LCPL	CUATECOREYES, HENRY
LCPL	-
LCPL	HOGAN, NICHOLAS
LCPL	KLEIN, JONATHAN
LCPL	LEACH, KYLE
LCPL	LIETZAU, NATHAN
LCPL	PALARINO, NATHAN
LCPL	PORTILLO, BRANDON
LCPL	RAMOSMONTERROSO, DERRICK
LCPL	SMITH II, DALE
LCPL	TETTE, MICHAEL
CPL	BOYD JR, ERIC
CPL	GASQUE, TRISTAN
CPL	KAMARA, THOMAS
CPL	MCINTYRE JR, WILLIAM
CPL	ODONNELL, DYLAN
CPL	ROBLEDOZAPATA, ALFREDO
CPL	WEST, ZACHARY
SGT	TURNER JR, CARL
GYSGT	RIDDLE, JOSHUA
1STSGT	HAIRSTON, JOSHUA

### **OCTOBER PROMOTIONS**



# REENLISTMENTS

#### AUGUST

LCPL BOYD JR, ERIC CPL STANLEY, ZACHERY CPL JOHNSON, JOHNATHAN CPL SCHUTZ, AUSTIN CPL CLARK, TYROD CPL TURNER JR, CARL GYSGT CHILDRESS JR, DAVID

#### OCTOBER

#### CPL CORTEZ, MICHAEL SGT BEDMAN, THOMAS GYSGT DANIELS II, WILLIE SGT BASQUEZ, FELIPE SSGT BOYETTE, CHRISTOPHER

#### SEPTEMBER

CPL WENINGER, RAND CPL SOLIS JR, JUAN CPL WEST, ZACHARY SSGT JACOBSON, DANIEL SGT FLINT, JEROME



~ Sgt Vasquez and wife, Jenna Vasquez at his reenlistment ceremony.

## **2D TANK BATTALION COMPETITORS**



~ 2d Tank Battalion Flag Football: Team Ironhorse



~2d Tank Battalion Spouses Kickball: Team Tankhers



~ 2d Tank Battalion's Lt Rheiner, 3rd Place for Active Duty Female Marine in the Marine Corps Marathon.



~ 2d Tank Battalion Marines competing in the Marine Corps Half Marathon . From left to right: CWO2 Martinez-Bido, SSgt Luna, Capt Armstrong, Cpl Ortiz, 1stSgt Johnson, GySgt Malella, & CWO2 Jones