



# SEMPER PARATI SOUND OFF

## President's Letter

by Pete Hammer

Though economic times have been challenging in 2009, I am convinced that the Marines' cause is "recession-proof." The generosity of time, talent, and financial support bestowed upon our 5<sup>th</sup> Marines in this tough economy has been astounding.



Care Packages Received in Afghanistan

As we approach the holidays and look forward to 2010, our Support Organization must thank all of you for being the "Boots on the Ground" here at home, supporting the "Boots on the Ground" in Afghanistan. You have put a smile on many Marine's faces.

The extent of your Outreach is unparalleled. Some of the special projects that we were able to accomplish for our Marines and their families with your support include the following:

- ▶ Completion of the hardscape for the 5<sup>th</sup> Marine Memorial Park where Marines may barbeque and have picnics and special events. Beautiful bronze seahorses, symbolizing the strength and power of our "Fighting Fifth" are on their way to flank the entrance to the park.
- ▶ The **Yurista/Sukunda** families donated weight equipment for the Combat Fitness Center in honor of **Captain Trevor J. Yurista** who died in Afghanistan October 27, 2008. This facility was an inspiration and dream of this hero and friend of the 5<sup>th</sup>. View the dedication ceremony, held on the 1<sup>st</sup> anniversary of his death, online at [www.DanaPoint5thMarines.com](http://www.DanaPoint5thMarines.com).
- ▶ The remodel of the Battalion meeting room and Command Offices was completed in great part by donations of time and in-kind gifts.
- ▶ 50 sets of golf clubs and balls and a pool table were donated so that our off-duty Marines could enjoy some R&R and friendly sporting challenges.
- ▶ Televisions and furniture were donated to Marines in need of home furnishings.
- ▶ Coffee, food, pastries, and beverages were donated to our Marines by Helping Hands Worldwide, Starbucks and Coffee Importers.
- ▶ Baby & toddler clothing and toys was given to our young families.
- ▶ Cards and letters from grade school children were sent to our Marines in Afghanistan providing a little comfort for the sacrifice of missing their own children.
- ▶ Hundreds of care packages were sent to the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of the 5<sup>th</sup> Marines and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Expeditionary Brigade in Afghanistan to boost morale by providing goodies from home.

Each and every one of you; our companies and corporations; civic, charitable

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## Mai Griffith, Age 8 1/2, Enlists

Young **Mai Louise Griffith**, soon to be 9 years old, used to listen to her grandfather's stories about World War II. He was a pilot and won the Distinguished Flying Cross for his extraordinary achievement while participating in an aerial flight. He was a POW and shot down several times in Europe and then liberated by General Patton.

This special young girl, inspired by her grandfather's heroism, decided to have a lemonade stand and give the proceeds to the Dana Point 5<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment Support Group. On October 3rd, at the 5<sup>th</sup> Marines Car Wash she brought her envelope filled with money (\$46) up to the donation stand and handed it over proudly. Everyone was so touched by Mai's service, that she was promptly marched over to meet the fine Marines who would be the recipients of her hard earned money. While at the car wash, Mai found \$30 on the ground and brought it over to the donation stand to add to her contribution. Not only is she unselfish and thinks of others, but she has integrity and honesty far beyond her years.

On October 12, Mai received a presentation from **Mayor Lisa Bartlett** recognizing her for



Mai flanked by our fine Marines

her support of the soldiers and sailors of the 5<sup>th</sup> Marines. Her parents, the City Council, and residents of Dana Point and the Support Group applaud her efforts.

Would you like to follow Mai's lead? You, too, can help. As you are aware, our military is spread throughout the world defending our freedom and helping those less fortunate than us. Our country's fight against terrorism acknowledges

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## Monarch Beach Sunrise Rotary Donates \$10,000 to our Fighting Fifth

The Monarch Beach Sunrise Rotary has adopted our 5<sup>th</sup> Marines. This year at the Rotary Spring Fundraiser, "Stayin' Alive", a disco-themed evening at the Doubletree Resort in Doheny Beach, several "Wanna be Warriors" made winning bids which translated into \$10,000 for the Dana Point 5<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment Support Group.

With the support and blessing of **Col. Patrick Malay**, the genius of **SgtMaj. Robert Thielen**, the resources of the USMC and Camp Pendleton, and the assistance of dozens of our finest Marines, a once-in-a-lifetime experience was brought to the civilian world. Rotarian and friend of the 5<sup>th</sup>, **Patty Vogan**, strategically maneuvered her Vistage CEO group of 16 executives to buy one of the auction items which allowed them to utilize their business skills to "stay alive" in simulated combat situations.



SgtMaj. Robert Thielen and 5<sup>th</sup> Marine supporter Patty Vogan "boogie" at the Rotary "Stayin' Alive" Fundraiser



Support Group President Pete Hammer receives \$10,000 donation from Monarch Beach Sunrise Rotary President Linda Knox-Hess

MBSR is the Support Group's largest donor to date. Thank you Rotary for giving such a huge boost to our coffers so that we may continue our support and outreach endeavors for the Marines who are putting their lives on the line for our freedom.

Visit [www.MonarchBeachRotary.com](http://www.MonarchBeachRotary.com) to learn more.



Vistage CEO group fighting for their lives on base at Camp Pendleton

## New Commander for the Fighting 5<sup>th</sup>

On July 14, at Camp San Mateo aboard Camp Pendleton, **Colonel Patrick J. Malay**, the former commanding officer for 5<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment, 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division, handed the regimental colors to **Colonel Willard A. Buhl**, the new commander of 5<sup>th</sup> Marines, during a change-of-command ceremony.



Col. Patrick J. Malay passes the colors to Col. Willard A. Buhl

Marines of the mounted color guard saddled their horses and the sound of bagpipes was playing as the ceremony began. More than 200 friends, family members, Marines and sailors were in attendance for this special occasion on the Camp San Mateo parade deck aboard Camp Pendleton.

"To the Marines and Sailors of this incredible regiment, and to the Marines and their families who I have served with now and in the past, I have one promise to you and that is that I will give you my very best, every day, now and forever.

"Thank you for your special trust and confidence," Col Buhl said, "and for giving me the honor to stand here as the new commander of the 'Fighting Fifth'."

The Support group knows that the Marines are in good hands under Col Buhl. We look forward to partnering with the Colonel and assisting in any way we can.

## Excerpts from a letter from the 1/5's Outpost Geronimo, Nawa District, Afghanistan:

Dear Family and Friends of 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 5<sup>th</sup> Marines,

Your Marines and Sailors continue to do a phenomenal job turning this one-time Taliban stronghold into a picture of what success in a counterinsurgency looks like.

We continue to make improvements to the district and bring this area closer to self-sufficiency. Schools have opened, a local clinic has begun to operate, foot bridges have been installed over many canals, multiple roads have been improved and made safer for travel, wheat seeds have been distributed to help curb poppy production, a local Nawa Council has begun to form, and those that want to harm us and derail these efforts are being killed, captured, or marginalized. These efforts will continue until the Taliban no longer has any latent support, and the government of Afghanistan has firm control of the district's security and is fulfilling the basic social contract with the people.

They are writing the next chapter in the long and proud history of our Battalion, Regiment, Division, and Corps and will be able to look upon their actions here with pride for the rest of their lives. I am amazed at the progress we have made, and am awed by the skill and dedication shown by our Marines and Sailors. Our work is far from over, but we are well begun.

Continue to pray for our success and safety, and know that you are in our thoughts.

Semper Fidelis,

*Bill McCollough*

Commanding Officer, 1<sup>st</sup> Bn, 5<sup>th</sup> Marines

*Tom Sowers*

Sergeant Major, 1<sup>st</sup> Bn, 5<sup>th</sup> Marines





## Support the Fight'n 5<sup>th</sup> by logging on to DanaPoint5thMarines.com and Facebook

OORAH!! The [DanaPoint5thMarines.com](http://DanaPoint5thMarines.com) web site continues to grow and provides a wealth of information about our Fight'n 5<sup>th</sup> and how Dana Point folks like you who are doing their part to help support our awesome Marines and their families. If you haven't visited [DanaPoint5thMarines.com](http://DanaPoint5thMarines.com) lately, put down this newsletter and log on now! Here you'll find many great new interactive features, such as:

**Facebook Fan Box:** Become a FAN of the DP 5<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment Support Group. Our goal is to hit 100 Fans as soon as possible, please help us meet that goal.

**Donate Online:** You and your friends can donate to the DP 5<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment Support Group using a credit card or PayPal account. Every dollar counts, so whether you can donate \$5, \$50 or more, please donate online today. All donations are tax-deductible and 100% of your donations will go to support our Fight'n 5<sup>th</sup>!

**Join our email list:** Sure, we all get a lot of email these days, but what email list do you know that supports our Marines who are defending our GREAT country? Just click on the link titled "Join our email List" and enter in your email address. We won't sell or share your info with anyone, just keep you informed about once or twice a month of what is going on and how you can support our Marines.

**We remember:** Last year on Oct 27, 2008, we lost a dear friend and brave warrior, **Captain Trevor Yurista**. A virtual memorial is linked from the "About 5<sup>th</sup> Marines" section titled, "We Remember". Watch a touching video of the Last Roll Call for Captain Trevor J. Yurista (Semper Fi, sir) online now.

The [DanaPoint5thMarines.com](http://DanaPoint5thMarines.com) web site is designed, built, hosted and marketed by BuildingOnline.net, a local international Internet design and online marketing agency. Log on today!



**THE HARBOR GRILL**  
MESQUITE GRILLED SEAFOOD

**DINE AT HARBOR GRILL!**  
Enjoy the Marine Corps Special **Grilled Sea Scallops with Red Thai Curry Sauce!** \$1 goes to the 5<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment Support Group.

37499 GOLDEN LANTERN DANA POINT



The Car Wash was a huge success!



Col. Buhl & SgtMaj. Mack launch an Amphibious Attack



Our Fighting Fifth Marines drafted for Car Wash Duty

### Operation: 5<sup>th</sup> Marines Car Wash

Monarch Beach Sunrise Rotarians and other community volunteers were on the front lines as our 5<sup>th</sup> Marines conducted an Amphibious Assault on all Vehicles (better known as a car wash) at South Shores Church on October 3. Vehicles were temporarily detained until they were washed to a squeaky clean, and then released on their own recognizance.

Complimentary Bar-B-Q pulled pork sandwiches, chips and cole slaw courtesy of *Steer Crazy* were served at the Food Court Mess Hall. Also many yummy deserts, cookies, candy and lemonade were donated by volunteers. The perimeter security was manned by Marine, Police, and Fire Vehicles on static display. Over \$8,000 was donated by local Dana Point residents anxious to participate for our Fighting 5<sup>th</sup>. Said mission was to aid our 5<sup>th</sup> Marines to attend the USMC 234<sup>th</sup> Birthday Ball.

Operation 5<sup>th</sup> Marine Car Wash Extravaganza was a complete success!

Check our website to determine the date of our Spring carwash.

### President's Letter, *contd. from p. 1*

and religious organizations; the City of Dana Point council and staff; plus our Orange County Sheriff and Orange County Fire Authority should be very proud of how they touched the lives of our Marines. A job well done. Oorah!

The holidays are almost upon us and we look forward to making this a very festive season for those Marines who will soon be returning home, and those here at Camp Pendleton who are in the process of preparing for deployment.

Your continued support will allow us to stay the course of our mission to improve the lives of the most highly decorated regiment in the Marine Corps.

*Semper Fi With Respect,*  
Pete Hammer, President

### Mai Griffith Enlists, *contd. from p. 1*

that freedom is never free; it comes with a huge price, and should not be taken for granted. Your donation to the 5<sup>th</sup> Marines Support Group can help us with our mission to support our soldiers and sailors in harms way and their families they have left behind.



## American Heroes

It is with heavy hearts that we inform our Friends of the 5<sup>th</sup> about the loss of three brave Marines while fighting in Afghanistan for Operation Enduring Freedom.

**Sgt. Bill Cahir**, 40, of Alexandria, VA, died August 13. Sgt Cahir was a journalist embedded with Co. B. He was killed during a firefight with enemy forces in the area west of Aynak village. He left a wife, Renee, pregnant with twins.

**LCpl. Donald Hogan**, 23, of San Clemente, CA, died August 26 in Helmand Province when an IED exploded north of Co. A's Combat Outpost. When the blast occurred Donald was using a metal detector to sweep for mines and IEDs, a duty that takes tremendous courage to fulfill. His final action was warning his fellow Marines of danger when he spotted a wire leading to the IED.

**LCpl. David R. Baker**, 22, of Painesville, Ohio, died October 20. He was on foot patrol in Helmand Province when he was fatally injured by a roadside bomb. He was not married, and his mother and father live in Ohio. LCpl Baker was a member of Weapons Company.

Our thoughts, prayers, and heartfelt condolences go out to families and friends of these dedicated Marines. We will never forget the service and sacrifice of these exemplary men who gave their lives defending the freedoms and liberties of this great nation.

For these men, Duty, Honor and Country are more than words. They were a way of life.



## Lend a Hand to our Fighting 5<sup>th</sup>!

*"Volunteers are seldom paid; not because they are worthless, but because they are PRICELESS!"*  
—Author unknown

Here is an opportunity to give back to our 5<sup>th</sup> Marines who are doing the heavy lifting in the war on terror fighting for our freedom.

Volunteers are the lifeblood of our Support Group Organization. Volunteers are needed who can provide their time, talent, and expertise in whatever measure to accomplish our mission of taking good care of our 5<sup>th</sup> Marines and their Families, whether deployed or here at Camp Pendleton is greatly impaired.

Your service at our car washes; packing and shipping care packages to our troops; baking or volunteering at one of our community events; toting donations out to Camp Pendleton; or other valuable tasks would be greatly appreciated and make a difference.



To find out how you might lend a helping hand, contact Nancy Jenkins, Director of Volunteer Mobilization at [njenkins@cox.net](mailto:njenkins@cox.net). You'll find that getting involved with our 5<sup>th</sup> Marines, their families, and our Support Organization is most rewarding.

*"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others."*  
—Ghandi

**Dana Point 5<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment Support Group**  
**PO Box 471, Dana Point, CA 92629-0471**  
**Donations are gratefully accepted.**  
**Secure donations accepted at [DanaPoint5thMarines.com](http://DanaPoint5thMarines.com)**

## Board of Directors

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## Hail and Farewell to 5<sup>th</sup> Marine Support Group Board

Not only do we have a new Commander of the 5<sup>th</sup> Marines, we also have some changes to our own Support Group Board. We thank all our retiring Directors who helped give birth to our Support Group and though they will no longer be on "active duty", we know their heart will always be with our organization and they will be available for recruitment when time permits.

Many thanks to our Retiring Directors: John Hicks of the Harbor Grill, Jack Loconsolo of Jack's Restaurant, Bob Moore Director South Coast Water District, Frank Tucker VFW Dist.#2 Commander, and Elena Flyer, Wounded Warrior Volunteer and Animal Rights Enthusiast. Our newly elected and incoming Directors include Nancy Jenkins to manage Event Planning & Volunteer Mobilization, SgtMaj. Hank Snyder, USMC (Ret.) of Safe Business Accounting who will be our CFO and Treasurer, Jim O'Neill, Retired, and Alan Wickstrom of BuildingOnline, Inc. who will handle Support Group Public Relations and Website.