

U.S. Marine Corps Forces

Europe & Africa

Fall Edition 2012



UNIT, PERSONAL AND FAMILY READINESS QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

SAVE THE DATE

**USMC Volunteer
Focus Group**
Oct 23

LINKS Mentor Training
Oct 24

**Marine Forces Africa
Spouses Coffee**
Nov 6

**Marine Forces Europe
Spouses Coffee**
Nov 9

SMP Turkey Day Feast
Nov 16

Winterfest
Dec 1

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Find out how to join
the Family Readiness
Team. Page 5

Marine & Family “End of Summer” Cookout

Marine & Family Day is an event that every Marine and Family member looks forward to every year. At the end of the summer, Marines and family members from all over Stuttgart came together to enjoy great food, entertainment, contests, and lots of fun for kids.

This year the Family Readiness Team held a BBQ Rib Grilling contest and the competition was fierce. We have some very talented grillers and the visiting Boeblingen Fire Department enjoyed a little of each. The winning ribs were cooked by Cpl Terrell and enjoyed by everyone.

After serving up grilled burgers, hot dogs, and all the trimmings, we indulged in the desserts provided for the Baking Contest. There were more than 20 entries and all were outstanding following a hearty BBQ. The first place winner was none other than our two time champion of baking, Mrs. Paula Robinson with her fruit cream pie. The judges, single Marines with a taste for sweets, thoroughly enjoyed sampling each dessert before announcing their favorite. Then they wanted to taste them one more time to be sure.

The kids, big and small, enjoyed a yard sized inflatable obstacle course, bounce house, cotton candy, and face painting. In less than three hours, our face painter created over 60 fantastic designs on young faces.

It takes a lot of coordination and planning to put on events such as Family Day. In the end, it's always worth the hard work to see everyone enjoying a meal, kids playing, and see all having a great afternoon.

Our next big event, WINTERFEST, is scheduled for December 1 at the Swabian Events Center.

Mark your calendar, it's going to be a Merry occasion!



For resources and event information go to eMarine at www.emarine.org

MARINE FORCES EUROPE

Marines, Sailors, Civilian Marines and Family Members,

Debbie and I are delighted to be able to continue our service with the Marine Forces Europe team. I have enjoyed and benefited from recent trips to Stuttgart and Grafenwoehr in August and to Georgia last week. My thanks to all for the hard preparatory work to make the visits a success. Debbie and I look forward to seeing familiar faces and new faces alike when we join you at the Birthday Ball in November. We had a fantastic time last year and are excited to share another year of Marine Corps tradition with the MARFOREUR and MARFORAF family.



BGen (Select) Jim O'Meara, the new Deputy Commander for Marine Forces Europe and Marine Forces Africa, and his wife, Angela, joined this summer. They come with years of experience and great energy to continue to improve our command as well as our family readiness. We're happy to have them aboard.

I would like to thank the spouses of Marine Forces Europe for their continued support of their Marines and the command's mission. Your Marines put in long days to achieve our mission. That would not be possible without your devotion to the Corps and your daily readiness and flexibility, particularly being stationed outside of CONUS.

In light of recent events, we all need to remember that emergencies and crises can happen anywhere and at any time. With that in mind, we encourage you to think about your emergency plan. Family Care Plans are a requirement for all Marines. I commend every Marine for designing a Family Care Plan that suits the needs of his or her families. These plans play a significant role in assuring our families are taken care of in the event of our absence. Please notify the Family Readiness Officer when any of your contact information changes. This will assist us in keeping you informed with critical information during any emergency. The contact information Marines provide will be kept secure, will not be shared, and will be used only for official Family Readiness purposes.

In closing, I would like to thank the Marines of MARFOREUR for a successful command turnover this past July. Change can be difficult to manage, but you have persevered and moved forward with our critical missions, amidst several changes that have occurred over the past few months. Everyone's collective effort contributes to the overall success of our command. I look forward to continuing to serve with and for you. We'll see you the week of 10 November. Happy Birthday Marines!



Semper Fidelis,
Lt. Gen. John M. Paxton, JR
Commander
Marine Corps Forces, Europe

MARINE FORCES AFRICA

Marines, Sailors, and Family Members,

As the new Commander of Marine Forces Africa (MARFORAF), I am honored to have the opportunity to serve with you! My wife, Cindy, and I are looking forward to getting to know you over the coming months and year.



Thank you also for the warm welcome I received during my initial visit in September. I especially want to thank the outgoing commander, LtGen Paxton, and the MARFORAF Marines for enabling a smooth transition to my new duties.

During my visit, it was a pleasure to meet the staff and see the excellent work they have done to support exercises and operations throughout the African continent. With such a small footprint, it is impressive to see the range of activities conducted to provide stability, security, and crisis response capability with our partner nation forces.

It was also an honor to be the guest speaker of the 2012 Theater Marine Conference dinner. It was great to meet the Marines from the greater Stuttgart area, as well as those that visited from the African and European continents.

During my visit, I was fortunate to meet with many of the spouses and volunteers associated with the family readiness program. I cannot overemphasize the importance our spouses, family members, and volunteers play in supporting our Marines and our mission. Your service and devotion to our Marines is truly appreciated.

Cindy and I will be back in Stuttgart in November. We are especially excited to see you all as we celebrate our 237th Marine Corps birthday together. We also plan to make time for family readiness events so we can get to know you better and to hear what's on your mind.

Again, I'm honored to be part of the MARFORAF family. Thank you for what you do, day in and day out. You are making a positive difference for our Marine Corps, U.S. Africa Command, and our nation in these dynamic times.



Semper Fidelis,

Major General Raymond C. Fox

Commander

Marine Corp Forces, Africa

MARINE FORCES EUROPE & AFRICA

Marines, Sailors and Families of MARFOREUR and MARFORAF,

Thank you very much for the warm reception that my wife Angela, son Aidan and I have received upon our arrival. Your efforts, warm smiles and daily sacrifices are very much appreciated.

To those who worked diligently generating all those initial in-briefs I want to ensure that you are aware of how much they assisted me with learning both areas of responsibility, and I thank you for all that you have done and continue to do.

Having recently witnessed the benefits of our Sponsor Program I can say we are on the right track. Early and continuous information flow to inbound personnel and their families is essential. Our goal must be to ensure the move is not overwhelming and the multiple in-processing requirements are made as easy as possible to navigate. Since improvement is always continuous, I've asked our Headquarters Company to continue to refine the program and to initiate a new feedback assessment survey. For now, the first area of improvement I plan to tackle is a goal of completing all check-in requirements within five working days. In this light, I would like to ask all of the newly arrived Marines and spouses to please contact the Family Readiness Officer if you have suggestions for improvement. Your input matters!

Realizing social media is THE communications system of today, we have recently taken a new look at our social media venues. We are looking for ways to enhance our communication with our Marines and families. Our FRO has established a Twitter account to push information out quickly. (Twitter@FROEuropeAfrica) We will continue to use our Facebook pages to post information about resources and events, but would like to engage our members in conversation. I would really appreciate your feedback concerning how we can continue to improve our flow of information. Please visit these sites. Such inputs as to the kinds of information you would like to see or hear would be helpful. Also, we will continue to use the eMarine as an electronic bulletin to post information as well as our two websites to post photos from our events and information which may not be available to the general public. Please note that eMarine is password protected. If you do not have an account, I recommend getting in touch with the FRO to establish your account.

Last but not least, we will host the Marine Corps Family Team Building Training Team from Quantico later this month. The trainers will discuss a Marine Corps initiative taking place meant to revive the volunteer programs across Marine Corps installations. The trainers will also be teaching LINKS Mentor Training. If you would like to be a part of these events, please contact the FRO for more information. Her contact information can be found throughout this newsletter. Volunteers for our Family Readiness Team are needed so please let our FRO, Kathy Nelson, know if you have an interest!

Again, thank you for all that you do each day, to the many sacrifices made by our families to support our efforts and for the warm welcome Angela and I have received!



<http://www.facebook.com/MARFOREUR>

<http://www.facebook.com/MARFORAF>

Semper Fi

BGEN (Select) J. Scott O'Meara

Deputy Commander

Marine Corps Forces, Europe

Marine Corps Forces, Africa

Unit Volunteer Opportunities

Looking to volunteer? Get involved.

We are looking for a few good volunteers.

Hospitality: Welcome new families

Morale Support; Assist families during crisis or emergency

Information and Referral: Learn local available resources

Event Planning: SMP Thanksgiving Luncheon, Winterfest

L.I.N.K.S. Mentors: Trainer for LINKS, class coming in November



Marine Corps Family Team Building Focus Group: On Tuesday, Oct 23, a focus group will be conducted to assist in reviving a volunteer program for Marine Corps Family Members. If you would like to contribute to the focus group, provide ideas, voice your concerns, and be involved with creating a new volunteer program, please contact the FRO at the email listed below. Your input could effect the future of volunteer programs for the Marine Corps.

Family Readiness Assistant

The Unit Family Readiness Assistants support the Family Readiness Officer in carrying out the Commanders vision and needs of the unit family readiness program. If you are interested in or have particular talents in a certain area that would be helpful to the unit this may be the position for you.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the FRO at Katherine.nelson@mfe.usmc.mil

SOCIAL MEDIA SAFETY

You should always configure your privacy settings on social networking sites so only people you deem appropriate can view your personal information and photos. Remember, what happens online is available to everyone, everywhere. There is no assumption of privacy for you online. It doesn't end with making sure you understand your basic settings. Online applications you use often have, and share, access to your personal information too: Farmville, Mafia Wars, CityVille, Pandora, SlideShare, DailyMile, Groupon, the Game Center, Foursquare, TweetDeck, TwitPic, the list goes on and on. Although many are good utilities or games, some can load viruses or even use you as an agent to gain access to your friends' and family's accounts.

Be extremely careful when disclosing personal details and don't release personally identifiable information such as your social security number, home address or driver's license number. Even providing your birthday and birthplace can give identity thieves or criminals easier access to you and your friends and family. Criminals use the Internet to gain information for unscrupulous activities. By piecing together information you provide on different websites, they can use that information to impersonate you, steal your passwords, steal your identity, and bring harm to you, your fellow Marines or family members. It's your identity – protect it.

The best way to secure your stuff is to lock the door. The same holds true to securing access to your accounts by always using strong passwords. To protect your online and social media accounts from getting hacked you should set a good, strong password that has at least 14 characters comprised of lower and upper-case letters, numbers, and symbols. As an added protective measure you should also frequently change your passwords.

More information can be found at Marines.mil, THE.U.S.M.C.SocialMediaPrinciples.

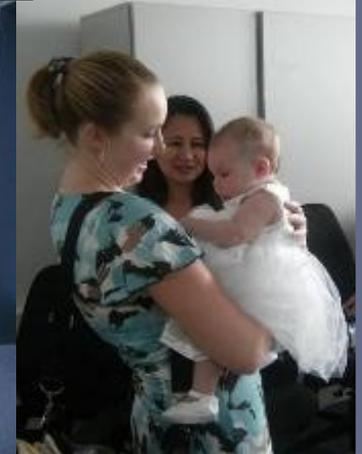


<http://www.facebook.com/FROinGermany>



[Twitter@FROEuropeAfrica](https://twitter.com/FROEuropeAfrica)

WHAT'S GOING ON AROUND MARINE CORPS FORCES EUROPE & AFRICA



Domestic Violence Awareness Month

October has been designated as Domestic Violence Awareness Month in the United States. This month provides an opportunity to review the progress we have made since the passage of the Violence Against Women Act 18 years ago, while reminding ourselves that we still have much to do to ensure that our children and grandchildren grow up in an America free of domestic violence.

Data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics and the FBI show that between 1994, when the law was enacted, and 2010, the annual incidence of domestic violence has dropped by 67 percent nationwide. Between 1993 and 2007, the number of individuals killed by an intimate partner declined 35 percent for women and 46 percent for men.

While this is encouraging, recent data suggest that 1 in 4 women and 1 in 7 men still experience severe physical violence at the hands of an intimate partner.

In addition, estimates are that more than 2 million adults and more than 15 million children are exposed to domestic violence every year, and every day an average of three women in the U.S. die as a result of domestic violence. In economic terms, domestic violence costs our nation \$8 billion annually in lost productivity and health-care costs.

Domestic violence can happen between current and former spouses, current and former boyfriends and girlfriends, people who co-habitate and those who don't live together.

Domestic violence is a problem that affects people of every background, ethnicity, age, ability and sexual orientation.

Of special concern is the impact of domestic violence on children who are victimized by, or who witness, violence in their families or communities.

These children are at a higher risk for school failure, substance abuse, repeat victimization and, perhaps most tragically, for becoming adult victims themselves. By age 17, at least 27 percent of children nationwide have witnessed domestic violence in their own families, and about 15.5 million children are exposed to domestic violence every year. Children who are victims of, or witnesses to, violence often suffer severe long-term emotional and physical consequences.

Let this month of October serve as a reminder to us all that domestic violence continues to be a serious problem in our communities and that we must continue to do all we can to eliminate it from our society.

John S. Leonardo is the United States attorney for the district of Arizona. <http://azstarnet.com>

Women's Self Defense Classes

A potential victim only has a few seconds to decide to fight or become a statistic. Learning a few basic self defense moves can make the difference. Stay connected to our Facebook, eMarine, and Twitter to find out when the next class will be. Thanks to our Marines for volunteering your time to help save a life.



GOOD NEWS!

Army Family Action Plan (AFAP) Conference

Because US Army Garrison (USAG) Stuttgart is a "purple" community with large Air Force, Navy, and Marine populations, all Army Family Action Plan (AFAP) events and operations apply equally to and serves all service members and their Families. Air Force, Navy, Marine, and Army personnel serve side by side on AFAP conferences and in making decisions regarding quality of life issues at USAG Stuttgart. Decisions made at AFAP conferences at all levels have influenced many Department of Defense policies and led to additional Congressional benefits to all service members and Families.

When: Oct 31-Nov 1

Where: Swabian Events Center

For more information, please visit: <http://www.stuttgartmwr.com/acs/afap/>

USO FREE LUNCH

Last Wednesday of every month

- 31 October, 1100-1300
- Chili Cook-off

RSVP to Stephanie Norby at: -
snorby@uso.org

12 Weeks of Gifting Contest

- AAFES is counting down the last 12 weeks to Christmas by giving away prizes on the Exchange Facebook page each week! Week 12 will have 12 winners, week 11 will have 11 winners, and so on down to week 1. The closer to Christmas we get, the bigger and better the prizes are! Each week's prizes will be revealed that week to encourage customers to keep coming back to the Exchange Facebook page.
- Contest runs 28 Sept 2012 - 20 December 2012:
- www.facebook.com/aafes.bx.px

Fit for Life.

Fit for Life is a six-month fitness training and tracking program designed to increase fitness levels in the community. Participants will track their miles and/or minutes of aerobic, strength or flexibility activity on an Exercise Tracker Card and earn incentive awards when they reach their mileage goals! Sign up at all fitness centers.

Join USO for a night of free bowling!

- Thursday, 25 October, 1800-2000
- Wear your Halloween costume for a chance to win a prize
- 8 lanes reserved for a scary night of bowling
- USO provides shoes, bowling, and food!

REWARDS



COMMISSARY REWARDS CARDS

Cards are NOW available at your Stuttgart Commissaries... For more information check us out at : www.commissaries.com

Events available for Single Marines

Stuttgart Warrior Pride Challenge Events

- SKYDIVING, OCT 20, ONLY \$100.00, 431-2774
- BRUGEE, Belgium, OCT 20, 30 euro, 431-3505

- Oct 19 DJ Music, Irish Pub, Galaxy Bowling & Entertainment Center
- Oct 20-21 Off-road Experienced Horseback Riding Trip, Outdoor Recreation Center
- The STUTTGART WARRIOR PRIDE CHALLENGE/ the Army Substance Abuse Program is pleased to subsidize E1-E7s, O1 and O2, and WO1-CWO2 for a trip to Belgium and a 2.5 hour leisurely bike tour exploring the cobblestone streets of Brugge and all of the important city monuments. Tour departs USO parking lot 20 October at 01:30, return at 02:00 Sunday. After the bike tour, treat yourself to Belgium's world-famous chocolate, and enjoy this World Heritage site and views of the beautiful canals
- **Oct 25 Warrior Zone Halloween Costume Party, 7-10 p.m. Patch**
- Saturday, October 27, 2012, The STUTTGART WARRIOR PRIDE CHALLENGE/ ASAP is pleased to sponsor E1-E7s, O1 and O2s WO1-CWO2 for a haunted house trip to Burg Frankenstein. Brace yourself for movie-quality horror, or opt for the family day, Sunday Oct 28 for a less scary time. DSN 431 2774/civ. 07031 15 2774
- Friday, November 9, 2012, 9th – 12th – Berlin Bike and Tropical Island Tour - \$475 (ASAP = \$225) Explore Berlin by bike and relax in a tropical paradise – all in one weekend! You will leave on Friday morning by coach and travel to Berlin. Once there you will check into the hotel and then leave for a concentration camp tour. On Saturday you will grab a bike and see the city on two wheels. Bike tour highlights include Checkpoint Charlie, the Berlin Wall, Hitler's Bunker, a watchtower, The Topography of Terror, Brandenburg Gate, and more! On Sunday you will pack your bags and head to an indoor tropical paradise – Tropical Island. Who would have thought that a converted Zeppelin hanger could be this awesome (see <http://www.tropical-islands.de/>)? After breakfast on Monday you will head back to Stuttgart. Price covers round-trip transportation by coach, lodging, breakfast buffets (Sat, Sun, and Mon), concentration camp tour, city bike tour, kombi ticket to Tropical Island (entrance to the Tropical World including the Tropical Rainforest, Shopping Boulevard, Tropical Village, Lagoon, Tropical Sea and the Tropino Club for Kids as well as the Sauna and Spa complex), and guide. 431-2774
- Friday, November 16, **Marine Forces Europe and Marine Forces Africa** volunteers will provide a home-style Thanksgiving dinner to **ALL** of our Single and/or Unaccompanied Marines. Transportation provided to those located at Patch and Kelly barracks. Fill up on Turkey and all the trimmings.

To be added to the "Weekly Updates" from MWR and the Boss Program, go to:

<http://www.stuttgartmwr.com/cys/sf/> and sign-up.