



November 2011

A message from the Commander's spouse to family members:

Dear Families:

You sent in some great holiday traditions to share with us. I laughed, I smiled, and mostly I just wondered how I could start some of them at my own house. We have some very creative families in our Command.

These traditions anchor us and give us roots. The word "tradition" itself derives from the Latin tradere or traderer literally meaning to transmit, to hand over, to give for safekeeping. Traditions are the special things we do and look forward to as a family that keep us close. Here are some of the traditions you sent in that are making memories for your families:

Lynda Fullem: Each Christmas Eve my daughters and I watch "A Christmas Story" – the funny movie about the little boy who dreams of having a Red Rider BB gun. Then I let Megan and Kelly each open up one present. They are 18 and 22 and they still enjoy it.

Jeanne Bergerud: We have celebrated Christmas in many different places, but the tradition we do hold on to is that we open one gift on Christmas Eve and the rest on Christmas morning. This was a blending of our two family traditions when we got married.

Vicki Burrow: Our family attends Christmas Eve service, and then we open one gift when we get back home. We also have made it a neighborhood tradition to have a reindeer train party complete with chili and hot chocolate :)

Priscilla Johnson-Miles: Both Thanksgiving and Christmas mornings we like to take homemade chocolate chip cookies and other goodies to the Marines on duty at MCSC and the Marines standing guard at all of Marine Corps Base Quantico's gates. This Thanksgiving will be the third year in a row that my aunt, uncle and all my cousins will be at our home for the holiday feast. It's becoming a regular tradition in our family. I roast the turkey and Bill handles most of the rest of the meal. One of our cousins always brings his famous bean casserole, too. We have a great time eating good food, watching the parade and football on TV, sharing stories and doing lots of laughing. We also love to decorate for the holidays, and we probably have nearly 50 bins in the garage full of holiday decorations and ornaments. Plus, every Christmas Eve we visit the Mount Vernon Inn for lunch or dinner, and we always purchase the newest Mount Vernon ornament for our tree before we depart.

Lisa Reddy: The Reddy Christmas traditions vary a little by where we are stationed but always include special foods like sweet potato casserole and Christmas Eve mass. We are blessed to be stationed close to our families at this time, so we attend Christmas eve mass with Peter's family followed by a special dinner party for friends and family at Peter's sister's home. Christmas Day is then spent in Richmond with Lisa 's family, which includes a birthday celebration for Lisa's dad.

I can't believe November is already here, but it is a wonderful month filled with holidays, traditions and celebrations. Two November holidays we love to celebrate are Veteran's Day and Thanksgiving Day.

Veteran's Day on Nov. 11 originated from World War I. We honor veterans of all wars, conflicts and active-duty service each year on this day. Doing something as simple as writing a short card or note to a veteran is a simple but nice way to say thanks.

Thanksgiving Day is Nov. 24, and every year we pause on this holiday to give thanks for all the blessings and goodness in our lives. We cook, eat, laugh, talk, play, watch afternoon football and maybe even a parade on this day. It is a day we look forward to all year that we enjoy with our family and friends.

My kids cook (with a little bit of Mom's help!) our family meal every year on Thanksgiving. They choose special recipes to make, and Dad prepares the turkey. We sit down later that evening together for a tasty Thanksgiving feast. We are always so proud of this meal, and it is one of the meals we enjoy most all year. This is another Kelley family tradition we love.

Remember, though, that November is more than holidays. A lot of special days occur that we celebrate. Did you know that Nov. 10 is Marine Corps Day? This day celebrates the birth of the U.S. Marine Corps. We love our Marines!

Many of us will attend our Marine Corps Ball on Nov. 12 at the Renaissance Hotel in Washington, D.C., to honor our Marines. It will be a wonderful evening and will highlight some of our Marine Corps traditions.

November has other celebrations, too. This month celebrates Aviation History, Child Safety Protection, International Drum, National Adoption Awareness, National Epilepsy, National Model Railroad, National Novel Writing, Native American Heritage, Peanut Butter Lovers, Real Jewelry and National Sleep Comfort.

So have fun this month. Work hard, play hard and love and honor those around you. Celebrate life! Enjoy each and every day.

Gobble! Gobble!

Traci Kelley

From the desk of the Family Readiness Officer

By Gerard "Mac" McManus

With the leaves changing color in full swing, temperatures dropping and even a threat of snow, I thought I'd throw in a couple of more changes coming your way.

eMarine

Presently, I am in the process of "constructing" the NCSC version of the new Marine Social Website, eMarine. eMarine is the Marine Corps' latest effort to enhance communication between the Command, the Marine and the families of Marines. It is like Facebook and is NOT like Facebook at the same time.

eMarine will be THE place where Marines, Civilian Marines and their families can get the latest information of what is going on in the Command, in the local area and within the Marine Corps all at the same time and at the same place. Having gone through two days of training and now working on constructing the site, I have to admit that I am excited about its potential and am looking forward to launching it in the very near future. My hope is to first make it available to the Marines and their families and then to our Civilian Marines. For the Marines it will be necessary for them to update their MOL account because I will be transferring much of that information into the new eMarine system. Once that is complete I will put out the call for the Civilian Marines to provide me with their names and birthday month so I can register them. Once you are registered into the system you will have access to eMarine and all the interesting sites contained there.

Birthday Ball child care

For this year's Marine Corps Birthday Ball we hope to try something new for child care, using the services of the Child Development Center on base. For this to happen we will need a minimum of 15 kiddos signed up for the evening. For six hours the cost is \$30 for the first child and \$24 for each additional child. For eight hours it is \$40 for the first and \$32 for each additional child. If you think you may be interested in using these services, contact me at (703) 432-3861 for complete details as soon as possible so I can get a headcount. Remember, we need 15 kiddos for this to take place.

PG15 Open House

Product Group (PG) 15 held an open house Oct. 18 for their families as well as for the entire MCSC Family. It was a lovely fall day and the folks at PG15 went all out to display their wares and share their story of who they are and what they

do. About 200 folks showed up to view their static displays, get a ride in a HUMVEE and then get a hands-on feel for what it is like to try to detect improvised explosive devices using the latest in detection gear.

This was the first event of its kind instigated by the Families On Point. We want to facilitate activities that will bring members and families together as we all learn more about all the activities MCSC is involved in. Next up: Contracts on Feb. 14. Plan now to attend.

Christmas and Holiday Social

Just a reminder that this year's Christmas and Holiday Social will be held from 12:30 to 4 p.m. Tuesday Dec. 20 at the Clubs of Quantico. We will be having many of the same activities as last year, including the reindeer train ride. There will be many games and prizes as well as the main door prize. Mark your calendars and plan to attend. Great food, great fellowship and great fun! The perfect way to start off your Christmas and holiday season.

MC&FP October 2011 eMagazine - Preparing for the Holidays

The October 2011 edition of the Military Community and Family Policy (MC&FP) eMagazine provides resources and information about maintaining healthy and strong relationships throughout the holiday season and beyond. This edition also focuses on Domestic Violence Awareness Month resources and information, highlighting the reporting options for victims of domestic violence that enable them to seek help in a manner they choose and promote their safety.

National Military Family Association newsletters

Click on the links to read the latest electronic newsletters for [Military Family Topics](#), [The Voice for Military Families](#), the [Monthly Bulletin](#) and [Spouse Club eNews](#), all published by the National Military Family Association.

Military Child Education Coalition E-News

Click [here](#) to see the newsletter for friends of the Military Child Education Coalition.

Veterans Day deal for vets

APPLEBEE'S RESTAURANT - All veterans and active-duty military eat free from a limited menu on Veterans Day, Nov. 11.

CHILI'S - Veterans and active-duty dine for free from a special limited is item menu on Veterans Day.

GOLDEN CORRAL - Military Appreciation Monday free dinner will be available from 5-9 p.m. Nov. 14. Military retirees, veterans, active-duty, National Guard and Reserve are all welcome.

HOOTERS - All veterans and active-duty eat free. The free entrees must be selected from a special Veterans Day menu.

KRISPY KREME - All active-duty, retirees and veterans get a free donut on Veterans Day. Be sure to call ahead to verify your local franchise is participating.

OUTBACK STEAKHOUSE - Veterans and active-duty military get a complimentary Bloomin' Onion and non-alcoholic beverage of choice on Veterans Day.

SUBWAY - Free 6-inch subs to active-duty and military veterans on Veterans Day.

TEXAS ROADHOUSE - Free meal from opening until 4 p.m. on Veterans Day. Call ahead for more information.

T.G.I. FRIDAYS - Veterans and service members buy one and get one free Nov. 11-14. Contact your nearest location for more details on their Veterans Day bogo offer.

Circle of Support set for Nov. 5

The Arc of Greater Prince William will have its 17th Annual Circle of Support Conference, an event for families of children with special needs and the professionals who work with them. The conference is set for Nov. 5 at Hylton High School, 14051 Spriggs Road, Woodbridge, Va. For 43 years, the Arc has offered comprehensive services within Prince William County, Manassas and Manassas Park.

Honoring military spouses: Operation Home Cooking

Operation Home Cooking, an initiative recognizing military spouses for the commitment and sacrifices they make everyday caring for their families and supporting their service members, will have its next annual event from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Nov. 5 at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center, 801 Mount Vernon Place, NW, Washington, D.C.

Celebrity Chef Guy Fieri has committed to dedicate an entire Celebrity Theater presentation just for Operation Home Cooking. A long-time supporter of law enforcement and the military men and women serving our country, Fieri has an ongoing Armed Forces Entertainment commitment and has visited bases in the Persian Gulf, Guantanamo Bay and Hawaii as a guest of the Navy. He entertains the troops and inspires the military culinary specialists.

See the [Operation Home Cooking](#) Web site for more information.

Top 10 reasons I appreciate military families

Nov. 1 marks the first day of Military Family Appreciation Month. In honor of the occasion, here is a Top 10 list of the qualities to most appreciate about military families.

Special-needs families offer insight on challenges

Military families with special needs would benefit from better consistency in services, more effective communication and improved health care education.

A military ode to Steve Jobs

Jobs lost his battle with pancreatic cancer Oct. 5, and the world lost a technological genius and visionary who revolutionized the way we use computers and phones, listen to music and, with the introduction of the iPad, browse the Web. The resultant App Store and its vast array of often-addictive games even changed the way we spend (or to some, kill) our time.

Partnership is 'win-win' for spouses, employers

The Military Spouse Employment Partnership is successfully connecting highly qualified, job-seeking military spouses with employers who are ready and eager to hire them, the official who oversees the program said.

Stars 'Join Forces' with First Lady

A few top entertainment industry stars have joined forces with First Lady Michelle Obama to help shine the light on military families and their service and sacrifice.

Dr. Biden: Nation must join to support military children

Two staunch military family advocates spoke on behalf of military children, citing the challenges and stresses they endure to an audience of child support professionals from across the nation.

First Lady, Dr. Biden help to renovate veteran's home

First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden, pitched in alongside dozens of volunteers here to complete renovations on a wounded warrior's home.

Revamped transition program to benefit troops, families

Officials soon will unveil a fully revamped Transition Assistance Program that's aimed at better reaching service members throughout the world, a senior Defense Department official said.

Author offers support to military kids worldwide

Trevor Romain was in his element as he stood among a group of giggling 2nd and 3rd graders at W.W. Ashurst Elementary School.

First Lady announces hiring commitment for spouses, vets

First Lady Michelle Obama, on a visit with her husband to Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Va., today announced a private sector hiring commitment of 25,000 military spouses and veterans as part of the Joining Forces campaign.

Fashion guru to share style tips

Karen is that ever-elusive office style maven who, with seemingly little effort, manages to mix and match prints and patterns, silks and knits, to the envy of the rest of us who are still trying to figure out if our belt, shoes and purse are supposed to match.

Keeping military marriages strong

Marriage is tough enough without tossing in the additional stressors of military life -- frequent deployments, reintegrations, separations and moves, to name a few. But even the toughest military challenges can be weathered with some advance planning and healthy communication skills. And in the process, marriages can grow even stronger.