



QUARTLY

Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2026

FROM THE ASSOCIATION LEADERSHIP

As we begin a new year, we extend our sincere gratitude to every Marine, family member, and supporter who continues to stand with the 1st Battalion, 5th Marines Association.

Our purpose remains unchanged: to preserve the legacy of 1/5, honor those who served and sacrificed, and support our Marines and their families—past, present, and future. As a newly established 501(c)(3) nonprofit, this year marks an important step forward in strengthening our organization and expanding our impact.

Whether you wore the uniform, carry the memory of a Marine, or support our mission, you are part of the 1/5 family. We are proud to move into this year together.



Preserving the Legacy – A History of the Battalion

For generations, 1st Battalion, 5th Marines has answered the nation's call with unwavering courage and distinction.

From the frozen hills of Korea to the dense jungles of Vietnam, and through the hard-fought battles of Iraq and Afghanistan, the Marines of 1/5 have consistently upheld the highest traditions of the United States Marine Corps.

Their legacy is written in sacrifice, brotherhood, and an unbreakable commitment to mission and country.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- 2026 Cateran Yomp
- Hart family fundraiser
- Master Gunnery Sergeant Jamil P Alkattan Retirement Ceremony
- "Returning Home" fundraiser

ASSOCIATION NEWS

- Website Updates
- Gold Star Family Message
- Voices of Freedom Interviews

RESOURCES

- Project New Day
- Mental health Resources
- Life Ingredients with Robert Irvine: Issue #31

WEBSITE UPDATE

The 1st Battalion, 5th Marines Association has officially moved to our new website: <https://1stbattalion5thmarinesassociation.org>. With our recent designation as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, we've made important updates to better serve our members and supporters. Please update your bookmarks and check back often so you don't miss announcements, events, and opportunities to stay connected.



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2026 Cateran Yomp

Army Benevolent Fund's Cateran YOMP – June 6-7, 2026

["Click Here to Support the 1/5 Association Yomp Team"](#)

The Cateran YOMP is more than a physical challenge through Scotland's breathtaking Cairngorm Mountains—it's a journey of healing, purpose, and connection. Participants push themselves to hike 22, 36, or 54 miles in 24 hours, but the true impact isn't measured in miles. It's measured in the conversations that happen along the way. In the moments when one veteran helps another push forward. In the quiet understanding between strangers who've walked similar paths in service and sacrifice.

In 2025, the Robert Irvine Foundation proudly sponsored 65 participants to take part in this transformative event—joining thousands of other allied veterans from across the globe. Together, they faced the elements, conquered the terrain, and found strength not just in themselves, but in each other.

This is the power of the YOMP: a global community walking side by side, building resilience, forming bonds, and proving that no one has to walk alone. When you support this mission, you're not just helping veterans complete a hike, you're helping them rediscover purpose, connection, and hope.

We are proud to announce this year's team who will be representing the 1st Battalion 5th Marine Association.



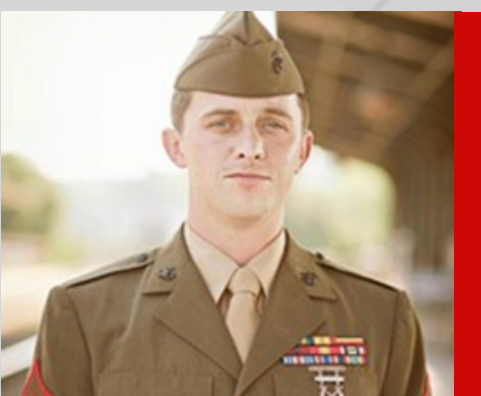
Cpl. Ryan Ackerman served honorably in the U.S. Marine Corps from 2001–2005, joining the Corps just weeks before the 9/11 attacks. After completing the School of Infantry, he was assigned to the highly decorated 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, Alpha Company, deploying to Iraq for the 2003 invasion, the 1st Battle of Fallujah in 2004, and stabilization operations in Ramadi in 2005. These three consecutive combat tours forged resilience, loyalty, and a lifelong commitment to service, while also leaving lasting emotional and mental scars.



Capt Edgar K. Menze, USMC (Ret.) served in the United States Marine Corps from October 1999 until his retirement in May 2023, completing nearly 24 years of distinguished service. Enlisting as an infantry Assaultman (MOS 0351), he served with 1st Battalion, 5th Marines and deployed with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit in 2001 and again in 2003 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

His personal awards include the Purple Heart, two Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medals, two Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medals, and the Combat Action Ribbon.

“Events such as this provide me an opportunity to experience the positive impact they have on our veterans, and helps identify additional opportunities we can implement into our association to further serve our warfighters, and help them heal.”



Sgt. John-Christophe (Chris) Lehmuth served honorably in the U.S. Marine Corps from 2000-2009. Originally aligned to become an Aerial Navigator he was reassigned to the infantry after the events of September 11, 2001. He was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, Alpha Company where he served as a SAW Gunner, Team Leader and Squad Leader. He was also an Assault Climber and Maritime Navigator. Chris deployed to Iraq in 2003 for the invasion and then again in 2004 for the 1st Battle of Fallujah in April. He built unbreakable bonds while serving with his brothers while they were challenged and battle hardened.



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Staff Sergeant Jason Soucy served honorably with 1st Battalion, 5th Marines (1/5) during his active-duty career from 2001 to 2025 and with 1st Battalion, 25th Marines while in the Marine Reserves from 2006 to 2012. He joined the Marine Corps and was in recruit training during the events of September 11, 2001, at which time he realized his military career would be a demanding one. Following completion of infantry training, he reported to 1/5 and immediately volunteered for the Scout Sniper platoon. He successfully completed the rigorous month-long indoctrination process, followed by Scout Sniper Basic Course and many other courses to include the Advanced Scout Sniper Instructor Course. During his time with 1/5, Staff Sergeant Soucy deployed in support of the initial invasion of Iraq in 2003, Fallujah in 2004, and Ramadi in 2005. Upon returning from Ramadi, he transitioned from active duty and pursued higher education at Northeastern University. During and after his studies, SSgt Soucy continued his service with 1/25 in Massachusetts during which he deployed to Helmand Province, Afghanistan, in 2011. Additionally, he later deployed as a Department of Defense civilian to Nangarhar and Kabul, Afghanistan, in 2013 and 2015.



Master Sergeant Jason Black served in the United States Marine Corps from 1995-2021, with a break in service from 1999-2003. During his career he served as an Infantry Rifleman, SAW Gunner, Squad Leader, Platoon Sergeant, Platoon Commander, Company Gunnery Sergeant and Operations Chief, completing 10 military deployments, with tours to Iraq twice and Afghanistan three times. He served with distinction in the esteemed 1st Battalion, 5th Marines from 2003-2011, serving with both Charlie and Headquarters & Service Companies, first as Squad Leader and then leading the Battalion Commander's Personal Security Detail.



LtCol Dave Denial served honorably in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1991-2025. He enlisted in the United States Marine Corps in June 1991. After completing his entry level training, he served in 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marines and the 6th Marine Regiment. He received a commission in 2001. After completion of Basic Officer training and the Infantry Officers Course, He was assigned to 1st Battalion, 5th Marines. During his tour, he served as a Rifle Platoon Commander, Weapons Platoon Commander, Weapons Company Executive Officer, and Officer-In-Charge of the Iraqi Security Forces aboard Camp Ali, Ar Ramadi, Iraq. He participated in OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM during three combat tours in Iraq, various exercises, and a unit deployment to Okinawa. This assignment left an indelible mark in his development as a Marine, and the bonds forged here remain strong today. The men of this unit are forever connected by the events they experienced together in a critical time, in the "hour of need" and the "moment of truth" they filled the time with actions commensurate with the legacy of that storied unit.



Sgt Doug Steinbach served in the United States Marine Corps from 1999-2003. After completing the School of Infantry at Camp Pendleton he was assigned to Alpha company 1st Battalion 5th Marines. While with Alpha company where he served as a mortar man and also spent a year and a half as a water survival instructor at the San Mateo training tank. While with 1/5, he deployed to Okinawa Japan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003. Sgt Steinbach is extremely honored to have the opportunity to represent 1/5 and the Robert Irvine Foundation at the 2026 Cateran Yomp. He's looking forward to reconnecting with some of the men he served with as well as meeting other veterans and hearing their stories as well as enduring the physical and mental challenges of the Yomp.



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UPCOMING EVENTS



Donate to the Hart Family

It is with heavy hearts that the 1/5 Community mourns the loss of one of our own, Shane Hart—a war fighter, public servant, and brother whose dedication to others never wavered. Shane lived a life of service. Whether in uniform or among his brothers and sisters, he carried himself with integrity, quiet strength, and an unwavering commitment to protecting those around him. He was someone you could count on as loyal, dependable, and deeply human.

His passing is a profound loss to our community and a painful reminder that even the strongest among us can carry unseen battles. Today, we honor Shane not only for his service, but for the man he was and the impact he had on everyone who stood beside him.

Till Valhalla, Brother

Shane started his career as an officer with the Daly City Police Department on November 18, 2010. Prior to becoming a Police Officer, Shane was a combat veteran in the United States Marine Corps, 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, serving in the Scout Sniper Platoon. Shane was proactive, professional and caring, all traits that led him to become a beloved leader within the department. He excelled at decision making under pressure, lending to his position as a Team Leader on the SWAT Team and within the Sniper Unit.

After being assigned to the Crime Suppression Unit and San Mateo County Vehicle Theft Task Force, Shane was promoted to the position of Police Sergeant in 2022. Beyond the badge, Shane was a devoted husband to his wife Christina, and he was a loving father to his son Christian. We are asking for donations to support Christina with funeral and memorial expenses. Shane's family has shared that a private memorial will be held for close friends and loved ones.

We will be sharing details regarding the funeral services to honor our brother, Shane Hart, as soon as they become available. Thank you in advance for your understanding and patience as we gather the necessary information.

[Donate to the Hart Family Here](#)



After 25 years, Master Gunnery Sergeant Jamil P Alkattan will be retiring from the Marine Corps! The Retirement Ceremony will be held on March 20th, 2026 at 1200 PST at:

Camp Horno (53 Area) Dental Clinic

Camp Pendleton North
1st Battalion, 1st Marines Parade Deck

Social Gathering after the Event:

1500 to 2000 PST at:

Veterans Association of North County

1617 Mission Ave,
Oceanside, CA 92058

"MGySgt Alkattan Retirement - [Click Here to Attend](#)"



The Dana Point 5th Marine Regiment Support Group (DP5MRSRG) is fundraising for the commission of *Returning Home*, a powerful bronze sculpture by renowned artist Sutton Betti, to be the focal point of this revitalized space. Set against a striking granite backdrop, this breathtaking piece captures a moment of reunion between a service member and their family when returning from deployment—embodying the strength of family, resilience, and sacrifice not just of our military, but those who love and support them, the “Homefront Heroes.”

This monument pays homage to the brave men and women of the United States Marine Corps alongside all branches of the Armed Forces. It stands as a testament to their service and to the unwavering love and commitment of their families.

Please visit here to donate: "[Returning Home](#)"



Association News

Gold Star Family Message

First off, I want to thank everyone for the love you've shown my family and for always including us in these reunions. I still remember our very first one in Las Vegas, when my husband, Sgt. Ramos, and I attended together. It was the first time I met "the boys," and they welcomed me as if we had known each other for years. The laughter, the stories, and the brotherhood they shared were truly beautiful to witness. I'll forever cherish that reunion because I was able to experience it alongside my husband. To see him surrounded by his brothers, full of joy.

Now, every time I attend a reunion, I feel his presence so strongly. Watching everyone together laughing, reconnecting, sharing memories fills my heart. It's like I can see him there, standing among them, smiling and having a blast. My kiddos, Melanie, Irene, and Enrique, have also had the most meaningful experiences at these reunions. The love that fills the room is something truly special. It feels like the extended family my husband left us one that continues to surround us with warmth and support. Every reunion holds a special place in our hearts, but this last one in Washington, D.C. was by far the most memorable. I was sad my oldest daughter couldn't make it since she's in college playing soccer, but I know she's living out her dad's legacy through her dedication and determination on and off the field. This time, my younger two and I had the privilege of spending several days with my husband's military brothers and their families, and it was beyond beautiful. Irene was so intrigued by how much love everyone has for her dad. Even though many of you didn't know us well before, it felt as if we've been part of this family all along. My husband truly left us surrounded by some of the most loving people, and for that, I'm forever grateful.

Hearing stories about my husband, feeling the respect and love everyone still has for him it's incredibly heartwarming. The events were so thoughtfully planned, and visiting the museum to learn about the history and legacy of 1/5 was powerful. Standing at Capt. Edge's gravesite in Arlington National Cemetery was especially emotional. Knowing how much my husband admired and loved him made that moment deeply personal and real. On the final night, during the dinner ceremony, sitting among my husband's brothers and their wives, sharing tears and laughter—it was bittersweet. I know how much he would have loved being there, surrounded by everyone he cared about. But being able to honor him through these reunions is such a privilege. Thank you for being there for our family during our hardest times and still being here for us today. The love and support you've shown do not go unnoticed. We are truly blessed to have you all in our lives. And a special thank-you to the Robert Irvine Foundation for everything you do. These reunions mean more to us than words can express. They remind us that my husband's spirit lives on in the love, brotherhood, and lasting bonds you all continue to share.

**With love,
Ramos Family**



MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

The Association would like to remind all of us in the 1/5 family that YOU ARE NEVER ALONE! We will always encourage our brothers, sisters, moms and dads, and everyone else that is associated with this family to reach out when you are having a tough day. There are no battles that we can't win if we fight them together!



Association News

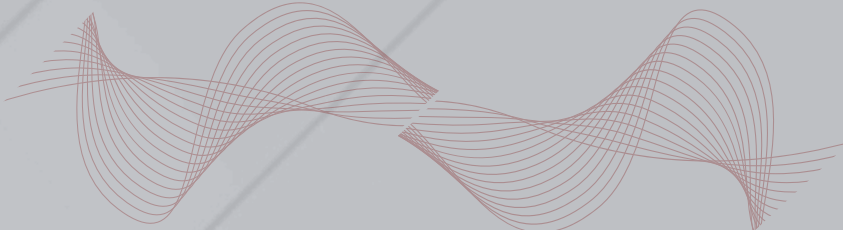
Sharing Our Experiences

As we go through these Reunions, weddings and other ways in which we get together, memories and stories come up, brought up by the combination of the good and the bad. Have you ever wanted to take a minute and write these things down, but just don't know how to go about it? Perhaps you missed out on the opportunity to tell your stories at the Reunion through either the Voices of Freedom or the Robert Irvine Foundation.

Maybe you are just as comfortable sharing your experiences sitting in your house or car. We encourage everyone to share a story or two, instead of keeping it inside. Maybe someone watching will also remember that story or give a different perspective. These are the ways that we tell our stories and keep them alive. Just remember some of these things:

- Once it is on the internet, it is forever.
- Beware your audience. The stories we tell each other might not be an appropriate story or picture to put out there into the world. We understand each other, but the rest of the world may not have any clue what we are talking about or referencing.
- Remember the message of the story. If you go off on a tangent or a rant, the message may get lost in the weeds. Focus on what you are trying to achieve with the telling of the story.
- Write it down. This may help you provide context or realize that the story may lack certain context (locations, names, etc.) and keep you on a linear path of storytelling.
- Look to one of the 1/5 Family to help you make sense of it before putting it out there. Having a second opinion is never a bad idea. Not to mention it can strengthen our bonds across our 1/5 Family. Remember, Our Stories Will Never Go Untold! It is up to us to tell them! Please watch some of our 1/5 family share their experiences at:

Voices of Freedom



PROJECT NEW DAY

A New Mission for the New Year

As we begin a new year, Project New Day is focused on a clear and practical mission: connecting combat veterans who want support with a proven life-coaching program and partnering with organizations that want to help make that support accessible. First and foremost, this program is free for combat veterans. Veterans may participate as individuals or as groups who have served together, with no financial burden placed on them. Our goal is to remove barriers, not create them.

At the same time, we are inviting organizations, communities, and supporters to partner with us in a simple and affordable way. By sharing a very modest portion of the coaching cost: as little as \$200 per combat veteran. Partner organizations make it possible for an entire cohort of veterans to receive high-quality, evidence-based life coaching. Project New Day covers the rest of the costs and manages all program delivery, facilitation, and support.

The program itself is structured, practical, and grounded in neuroscience. It provides veterans with tools to regulate stress, process the past, strengthen emotional control, and move forward with renewed clarity and purpose. This is not abstract motivation or therapy-speak. It is respectful, skill-based, and designed to produce lasting change.

If you are a combat veteran who feels ready for the next mission, a mission of healing and wholeness, we want to hear from you. And if you are part of an organization that would like to partner with us to sponsor a cohort, we would be honored to work with you to make that happen.

You can learn more about the program and partnership model here: [Project New Day Partners](#)

Together, we can build something meaningful, effective, and accessible for those who have already given so much.

Best regards,
Jeremy Wilson
Executive Director
Project New Day
Foundation



<https://projectnewday.foundation>



Robert Irvine – Life Ingredients #31

In Episode #31 of Life Ingredients, renowned chef and longtime supporter of the military community Robert Irvine sits down for a powerful conversation centered on service, leadership, and resilience. A steadfast advocate for veterans, Irvine speaks directly to the values Marines know well—discipline, accountability, and taking care of one another long after the fight is over. His message is a reminder that the warrior mindset doesn't end with the uniform, and that purpose, fitness, and service remain lifelong commitments.