



2026

Newsletter - 3rd QTR

FROM THE ASSOCIATION LEADERSHIP

Warm Greetings 1/5 Tribe,
As we close out another dynamic quarter, the 1/5 Association Board is honored to bring you our Q3 2026 Newsletter. This issue is packed with the vibrant history and ongoing legacy of our Battalion, brought to life through the powerful personal stories captured from our veterans, active-duty Marines, and community over the past few months. These accounts serve as a timeless reminder of the unbreakable bond, resilience, and spirit forged in the 1st Battalion, 5th Marines.

Thank you for your continued support, dedication, and service to our community. Grab a cup of coffee or a cold beverage, enjoy these remarkable stories, and let's get ready to welcome our deployment force back home soon!



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.

CURRENT EVENTS

-What's Happening at the Battalion?

- On the Pacific Coast Trail with MSGT Jason Black

SPOTLIGHT

- Dr. Chris Meek: Keeping Our Nation's Promise

-The Story of Noah Pippin and Family

-The 251st Marine Corps Birthday in Las Vegas

-Membership Annoucement

NEW CHAPTERS

-Project New Day with Jeremy Wilson

-Life Ingredients with Robert Irvine

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE BATTALION?



The midday tropical heat pressed down on Balabac Island, heavy and thick enough to feel like armor. Off the coast of the Philippines, the rotor washes from MV-22B Ospreys kicked up red dust into the dense tree line as the first wave touched down. Leaping from the tail gates with weapons raised, the infantrymen of 1st Battalion, 5th Marines—the storied “Make Peace or Die” unit—immediately fanned out to lock down the airstrip.

For the past 8 months on their 2026 deployment, 1/5 served as the tip of the spear for Marine Rotational Force – Darwin. Forward-deployed to Northern Australia, they weren’t just training for a static battleground; they were mastering the modern, rapid art of distributed maritime operations across the scattered islands of the Indo-Pacific.

Driving this relentless tempo were 1/5’s command leaders, LtCol Mark Saville and SgtMaj Aaron Diaz. Their steady leadership, combat mindset, and unwavering commitment to the Marines set the tone for the entire battalion. From setting the operational vision to walking the lines in the dust and heat, their command presence ensured 1/5 operated at the absolute peak of lethality and readiness. Executing key terrain defense was second nature to the battalion now. Back in December 2025 at Camp Pendleton, they had tested Range 710A during their Marine Corps Combat Readiness Evaluation, charging through trench breaches, firing live missiles, and calling in emergency medevacs until every drill felt like second nature. That brutal California prep work under LtCol Saville and SgtMaj Diaz’s guidance paid off instantly.

During Exercise Balikatan, 1/5 worked seamlessly alongside Philippine and Australian allies, integrating their squad tactics with long-range HIMARS precision fires to hold key waterways. Just weeks later, elements of the battalion were deep in the equatorial humidity of Indonesia for Exercise Super Garuda Shield. There, squad leaders swapped jungle warfare strategies and urban combat drills in the field alongside Indonesian Marines, South Korean troops, and Japanese Soldiers.

Back at their hub in Darwin, the battalion constantly pushed its own operational limits. They broke down into agile, independent strike groups, maneuvering across isolated terrain while laying down heavy live-fire coverage—from 81mm mortars to anti-armor Javelins. By the end of their rotation, 1/5 hadn’t just patrolled the Indo-Pacific; they had woven themselves into the fabric of the region’s top alliances, leaving behind a proven standard of modern battle readiness. A massive OOH-RAH to ALL Geronimo Marines and Sailors through an unforgettable rotation with distinction, grit, and distinction.

Fair winds and following seas as you wrap up this epic deployment and begin the journey back home. Thank you for your incredible dedication, grit, and tireless service across the Indo-Pacific. We appreciate you keeping that fear fresh in our enemies’ minds!

THE STORY OF NOAH PIPPIN AND THE FAMILY THAT FOLLOWED HIS TRAIL

As we approach another anniversary of the passing of our 1/5 Marine brother Noah Pippin, we pause to honor his memory, his sacrifice, and the enduring strength of the family he left behind.

Noah was a warrior—a Marine of the 1st Battalion, 5th Marines who served honorably through three tours of duty in Iraq. He carried the quiet discipline, grit, and deep resilience forged in combat. Like many who have stood in the crucible of battle, Noah held quiet burdens and sought solitude in the majesty of the natural world.

In September 2010, that journey brought the 30-year-old veteran into Montana's Bob Marshall Wilderness—a massive 2,400-square-mile expanse dominated by the dramatic, 1,000-foot limestone cliffs of the Chinese Wall. Equipped with his Marine resolve and survival gear, Noah pushed deep into the high country. On September 15, 2010, roughly 18 miles from the wilderness perimeter, he crossed paths with Vern and Donelle Kersey and their young son Trevor. Solitary and steady, Noah spoke briefly with them on the trail.

Vern Kersey, a former smokejumper with a trained eye for high-country weather, recognized the sudden warning signs of an impending, severe mountain storm. Knowing how fast conditions can turn lethal, Vern immediately forced his family to head down to lower elevation early the next morning.

The very next morning—September 16—a fierce, early blizzard slammed into the mountains, catching Noah high on the trails near the Chinese Wall. For nearly two years, the wilderness held its secret despite extensive search efforts. Initial assumptions suggested he might have gone in unprepared, but when search and rescue teams used precise grid searches and lost-person science to locate his site in August 2012, the evidence proved otherwise.

Sheriff Leo Dutton of Lewis and Clark County confirmed that Noah fought the elements with the resourcefulness of a Marine. Found with him were his map, sleeping bag, water jug, poncho, sidearm, remaining food, and a small music player. He had not been careless; he was caught in an extreme weather shift and ultimately succumbed to exposure high near the rock faces.

In September 2013, three years after Noah walked into the wilderness, his family set out on a 50-mile journey into the Bob Marshall to bring him home in spirit and see the land through his eyes. For a family that was not accustomed to wilderness camping, entering such rugged, unforgiving terrain was a major undertaking. But love, duty, and brotherhood bridged every gap:

-The Foot Hikers: Noah's younger brother Caleb, middle brother Josiah, and sister-in-law Ashley hiked the entire 50 miles on foot, grinding through the elevation alongside Vern, Donelle, and 14-year-old Trevor Kersey—the very family who had been the last to see Noah alive.

-The Horse Pack: Noah's parents, Rosalie and Mike, hiked over 14 miles before taking to horseback with local outfitter Larry Lautaret and assistant Jay Sandelin, whose pack horses carried the heavy gear so the family could complete the trek.

-The Search Support: Just a week prior, Sheriff Dutton and two deputies rode in to sweep the area further, gathering final evidence and preparing the way for the family's safe arrival.

THE STORY OF NOAH PIPPIN CONTINUED...

When the Pippins finally stood at the secluded mountain rock near the Chinese Wall where Noah spent his last moments, they reached the end of a long, painful trail. They stood in one of the most pristine places on earth—gazing at the exact jagged peaks, alpine timber, and open Montana sky that Noah saw in his final hours.

They brought their son and brother home in their hearts, leaving their own footprints beside his. Noah Pippin died as he lived—a Marine of the 1/5, strong, prepared, and standing tall against the elements in the majestic wilderness of God's creation.



SEMPER FIDELIS, BROTHER. NEVER FORGOTTEN.

FROM THE FRONTLINES TO THE PACIFIC CREST TRAIL: FOLLOWING MSGT JASON BLACK'S JOURNEY

The 1/5 Association is proud to recognize MSgt Jason Black (USMC Ret.) as he embarks on an extraordinary journey along the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT)—a grueling 2,650-mile trek stretching from Canada to Mexico through some of the most breathtaking and demanding terrain in America.

Winding through California, Oregon, and Washington, the PCT crosses 26 national forests, 7 national parks, and 5 state parks. Completing it demands deep preparation, resilience, humility, and raw determination—qualities Jason has demonstrated throughout his life and military service.

A Track Record of Resilience

Long-distance endurance and pushing physical limits are nothing new for Jason. Just last year, he successfully conquered the entire Appalachian Trail. He also represented our community abroad, teaming up with the Robert Irvine Foundation and the 1/5 Association to take on the famous Cateran Yomp in the Scottish Highlands—pushing through rugged terrain to complete an incredible 54 miles in under 24 hours. Now, he brings that same unstoppable drive to the PCT.

While this journey is his to walk, he isn't walking it alone. He carries with him the encouragement of family, friends, and a community that believes in seeing one another through every challenge.

You can track Jason's progress live on Instagram via his handle [@blacjak76](#).

Each week, Jason shares photos, trail breakdowns, and field notes from this amazing adventure, leaving readers eagerly awaiting his next update. Every post kicks off with a meaningful quote tailored to his recent leg of the trail, paired with a catchy tune to set the vibe, and followed by his signature witty, detailed notes straight from the field.

A Message to Our Brother

Jason, we wish you safe travels, favorable weather, strong legs, and unforgettable moments along the way. May each mile remind you of the strength you've built, the friendships you've made, and the purpose that keeps you moving forward.

We're proud to follow your adventure and look forward to celebrating every milestone on the trail. Safe travels, Brother—we'll be cheering you on from the first step to the last.

Be sure to give [@blacjak76](#) a follow on Instagram to drop some encouragement in his comments and catch his latest weekly dispatch!



SUPPORTING DR CHRIS MEEK AND KEEPING OUR NATION'S PROMISE

On September 11, 2001, Dr. Chris Meek's life took on a new trajectory. Witnessing the profound sacrifices made that day, Chris embarked on a mission to ensure our country's history is preserved, and our heroes are never forgotten.

What started as sending socks overseas to deployed service members evolved into SoldierStrong—a national movement providing revolutionary technology and vital support to veterans, first responders, and military families. Beyond his work with SoldierStrong, Chris also elevates inspiring stories of leadership, resilience, and service every week on his popular podcast, Next Steps Forward.

Our 1st Battalion, 5th Marines family saw his dedication firsthand when SoldierStrong helped support our 20-Year V15 Ramadi Reunion in Washington, D.C. Their leadership brought our brothers-in-arms back together to honor our shared bond and preserve our legacy alongside our families.

Now, we have an opportunity to return that support.

Dr. Chris Meek has co-authored a moving new book alongside Dave Jarecki and Michael Gier: *Keeping Our Nation's Promise: 9/11 and the Stories That Still Shape Us* (featuring forewords by Andy Card and Leon Panetta).

Rather than focusing solely on the tragedy of 9/11, this powerful book captures the 25-year arc of resilience that followed—sharing deeply personal profiles of service members, first responders, and survivors who chose to carry something forward and shape our nation for the better.

Let's stand behind someone who has spent decades standing by us.

Order your copy and listen to the podcast today:

<https://ournationspromise.com>

1ST BATTALION 5TH MARINES MEMBERSHIP



1ST BATTALION, 5TH MARINES
— ASSOCIATION —

A NEW WAY TO BELONG TO THE

1/5 FAMILY

Something special is coming to the 1st Battalion, 5th Marines Association. We're preparing to introduce an exclusive membership opportunity created for those who want to remain closely connected to the Battalion, its legacy, and the Marines who have carried the 1/5 name.

Membership will offer a unique way to stay involved and support the continued work of the Association, with special benefits reserved for members.



YOUR SUPPORT KEEPS THIS MISSION GOING.

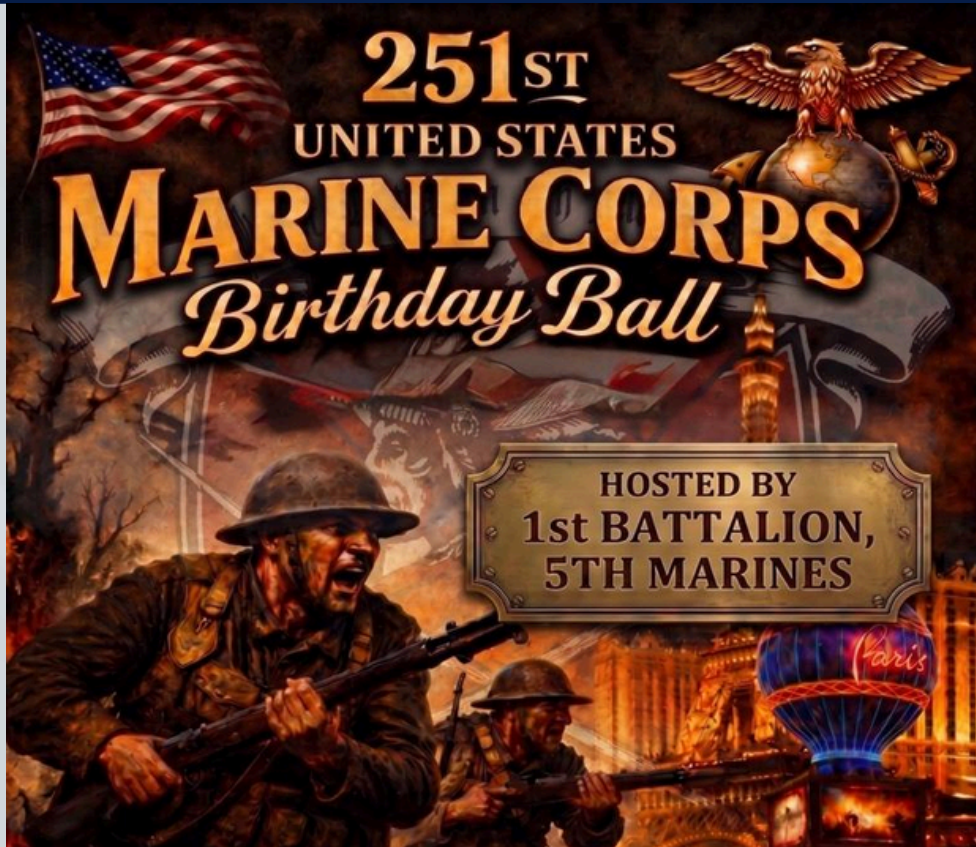
Every contribution helps us continue supporting our Marines, veterans, and their families while preserving the legacy and traditions of 1/5 for generations to come.

DETAILS WILL BE ANNOUNCED SOON.

Watch for your opportunity to become part of something truly special—reserved for the 1/5 family.

MAKE PEACE OR DIE

CELEBRATING 251 GLORIOUS YEARS OF THE MARINE CORPS!



From the sun-scorched, high-tempo grind of overseas deployment to the neon-lit horizon of Las Vegas, the Marines and Sailors of the 1st Battalion, 5th Marines are coming home. They return not just with missions accomplished and dust on their boots, but just in time to raise a glass together for the 251st Marine Corps Birthday—a homecoming celebration forged in the relentless spirit of the unit.

This year, 1stSgt Christopher Harris will remind the Geronimo family, that celebration carries a weight far deeper than an evening in Las Vegas. It is an echo of our 1/5 legacy.

On June 6, 1918, during the brutal opening hours of the Battle of Belleau Wood, the 1st Battalion, 5th Marines faced an impossible task: capture Hill 142. Led by Captain George W. Hamilton, 1/5 stepped out of the tree line and advanced directly across a wide, open wheat field swept by direct enemy machine-gun fire. They did not hesitate. They took the strategic high ground by noon, securing the crucial ridge that allowed allied U.S. and French forces to press the main offensive.

The victory came at a heavy cost—16 officers and 544 Marines killed or wounded—but it etched 1/5 into military history forever. It was there, on that bloody ridge, that the battalion helped earn the title that still defines us today.

From the wheat fields of Belleau Wood to the modern battlefields of today, the thread remains unbroken. As 1/5 gathers in Las Vegas to celebrate 251 years of Semper Fidelis, they will do more than honor our past—they will renew the standard, carrying forward our legacy, and set the example for those who follow. We honor every Marine who took the hill before us, celebrate the warriors returning home today, and send a clear, unwavering message to anyone who would test our resolve.

The 1st Battalion, 5th Marines remains ready, lethal, and forever striking fear into the minds of our enemies.

Semper Fidelis and Make Peace or Die!!

PROJECT NEW DAY

NEW 12-WEEK COHORT STARTING TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29 @ 7 PM ET

The Project New Day mission has always been straightforward:

1. Create a model to help thousands of people realize their best lives at no cost to them. (2022–23)
2. Prove the model to our satisfaction. (2024–25)
3. Scale the model. (2026 and beyond)

We are now in Step 3: Scaling the Model.

That means bringing Project New Day to hundreds—and ultimately thousands—of people at no cost to participants, courtesy of Mike Sinyard, founder of Specialized Bicycle Components.

As you may remember from my last update, we now have 45 mission-aligned coaches trained and ready to help.

We've also reached several exciting milestones. We met with the Veterans Spouse Network and put together our first spouse cohort, which is now underway. We've also launched our LinkedIn campaign, and through that outreach, additional organizational partnerships are in the works.

Could the Project New Day Program help you or someone you love?

If you are a combat veteran, combat veteran spouse, Gold Star Family member, or Family of a Fallen Combat Veteran after service and are interested in learning more, please reach out directly to Ryan Ackerman or Jeremy Wilson. We are happy to answer any questions you may have.

Please don't miss out on this empowering coaching—we want everyone to have the support they deserve.

Take a look at our Outcomes and Testimonials page and see what participants have experienced. [CLICK HERE](#)

Project New Day is not therapy and not a support group. Our program starts from the idea that healing can involve more than treating symptoms or addressing individual issues. We help participants learn how to fundamentally reorganize the way they navigate and relate to themselves, developing greater understanding, connection, compassion, and harmony within. The program brings together evidence-based, life-improvement methods in a structured toolbox format, giving participants practical approaches they can continue using in their everyday lives.



Jeremy Wilson

Executive Director

jeremywilson@projectnewday.foundation

[PROJECT NEW DAY](#)

WORKOUTS, RECIPES, MOTIVATION

LIFE INGREDIENTS

with ROBERT IRVINE

Leg Day,
Grilled Chicken,
ISSUE #35 Stress Management



LIFE INGREDIENTS

with ROBERT IRVINE

Shoulders / Abs,
Ribeye Steak,
ISSUE # 36 Motivation



LIFE INGREDIENTS

with ROBERT IRVINE

Full Body,
BBQ Ribs,
ISSUE #37 More Motivation

