



10 November 2016

A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS

Each year on or around 10 November, Marines gather in groups large and small to celebrate our history, honor the memory of those who have gone before us, and rekindle the bond that unites all generations of Marines. This year, we mark the 241st anniversary of our Corps – 241 years of uncommon valor, innovation, and combat excellence.

Marines, we are part of something bigger than any of us could imagine. Whether you fought in the battles of World War I, in the Pacific during World War II, in Korea or Vietnam, in *Desert Shield* or *Desert Storm*, or in the streets of Iraq and Afghanistan – or you are just starting out on your Marine Corps journey – we are all part of an elite family of warriors. For the rest of your life, the first term people use to describe you will be “Marine.”

When the Continental Congress stood up two battalions of Marines in 1775, a culture of discipline, vigilance, professionalism, and military excellence was born that has characterized our Corps for nearly two and a half centuries. As Marines, we have a profound respect for our traditions and heritage, and for taking care of each other. We know we’re strongest when we’re together as a team. Wherever you are celebrating our Corps’ birthday this year, look around at the Marines beside you and remember the bonds forged in training, in garrison, and in combat. Take this time to reconnect.

We are Marines for life. It’s our responsibility, our duty, to maintain and build upon the legacy of those who have gone before us. What we do today, guided by what we’ve learned from past generations, will determine the future of our Corps. So as we celebrate this 241st anniversary of our Corps, we also look ahead and prepare for our next success. Take pride in carrying our legacy forward.

Happy Birthday, Marines!

Semper Fidelis,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert B. Neller". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "R" at the beginning.

Robert B. Neller
General, U.S. Marine Corps
Commandant of the Marine Corps