



MCIEAST-MCB Camp Lejeune



249th BIRTHDAY BALL

Saturday, November 9th
Marston Pavilion, Camp Lejeune, NC





SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

Cocktail Hour – 1700 to 1800

Ceremony – 1800 to 1900

Invocation

Commandant's Message

Entrance of the Official Party

National Anthem

Entrance of the Cake

General Lejeune's Birthday

Message Cake Cutting

March Off

Guest of Honor Remarks

Dinner & Dancing – 1900 to 2200





CEREMONY PARTICIPANTS

Adjutant

2ndLt Thomas Lewis

Narrator

GySgt Suzanne Starnowski

Chaplain

CAPT William Riley

Color Guard

<i>Sgt Allan Alfaro</i>	<i>Cpl Ronald Mitchell</i>
<i>Cpl Blaise Ramirez</i>	<i>PFC Brian Mayle</i>

Cake Escorts

<i>Cpl Arthur James</i>	<i>Cpl Zachary Rape</i>
<i>Cpl Leo Amaro</i>	<i>Sgt Maelynn Ruff</i>

Ceremonial Escorts

<i>Maj Michelle Perez</i>	<i>Capt David Blatman</i>
<i>2ndLt Johnathan Trumpower</i>	<i>CWO2 Carlos Ortega</i>
<i>MSgt Anthony Torres</i>	<i>GySgt Corey Young</i>
<i>SSgt Courtney Weaver</i>	<i>Sgt Ashley McCullough</i>

Oldest Marine

Col Jeffrey H. Buffa
MCIEAST-MCB Camp Lejeune
Assistant Chief of Staff G-3/5

Youngest Marine

PFC Mayli Motter
MCIEAST-MCB Camp Lejeune
Regional Brig Corrections
Specialist





GENERAL LEJEUNE'S BIRTHDAY MESSAGE

On November 10, 1775, a Corps of Marines was created by a resolution of the Continental Congress. Since that date many thousand men have borne the name Marine. In memory of them it is fitting that we who are Marines should commemorate the birthday of our Corps by calling to mind the glories of its long and illustrious history.

The record of our Corps is one, which will bear comparison with that of the most famous military organizations in the world's history. During 90 of the 167 years of its existence the Marine Corps has been in action against the Nation's foes. From the battle of Trenton to the Argonne, Marines have won foremost honors in war, and in the long eras of tranquility at home, generation after generation of Marines have grown gray in war in both hemispheres, and in every corner of the seven seas, that our country and its citizens might enjoy peace and security.

In every battle and skirmish since the birth of our Corps, Marines have acquitted themselves with the greatest distinction, winning new honors on each occasion until the term "Marine" has come to signify all that is highest in military efficiency and soldierly virtue.

This high name of distinction and soldierly repute we who are Marines today have received from those who preceded us in the Corps. With it we also received from them the eternal spirit which has animated our Corps from generation to generation and has been the distinguishing mark of Marines in every age. So long as that spirit continues to flourish, Marines will be found equal to every emergency in the future as they have been in the past, and the men of our Nation will regard us as worthy successors to the long line of illustrious men who have served as "Soldiers of the Sea" since the founding of the Corps.

John A. Lejeune
Major General Commandant





10 November 2024

A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS

For 249 years, Marines have served as our Nation's sentinels of freedom. As we celebrate our Corps' birthday this year, I encourage all Marines to reflect on our legacy forged in blood on battlefields since 1775, and to rededicate ourselves to carrying that legacy untarnished into the future. Collectively, we who wear the Eagle, Globe, and Anchor have an obligation to uphold the ideals of self-discipline, warfighting proficiency, professionalism, and personal conduct that define what it means to be a Marine. I know you are all up to the task.

Twenty years ago this month, Marines fought and won the Second Battle of Fallujah, a brutal, grinding house to house fight, whose victory ultimately paved the way for the stabilization of the Republic of Iraq. Often in Iraq there were no true front lines, and by necessity, Fallujah was a battle in which every Marine fought, demonstrating once again our cornerstone philosophy that Every Marine is a Rifleman.

Our history bears witness to Marines of all stripes picking up their rifles and fighting for Corps and Country when the call came. From Wake Island to the Chosin Reservoir to Khe Sanh to Camp Bastion, every Marine fought. Our future battles will be no different. Our rear areas will be as vulnerable as our front lines and every Marine from our infantry battalions to our aviation squadrons to our headquarters and support elements will have to stand-to when called.

Preparing for the threats of the future requires the same exceptional standards and ironclad discipline that are the hallmarks of our Corps. Twenty years ago in Fallujah, our predecessors staunchly adhered to these virtues, earned our Nation's trust, and ensured the U.S. Marine Corps would remain the most feared fighting force in the world. It is our sworn duty to uphold those standards and stay true to our Core Values of Honor, Courage, and Commitment. Though technology and equipment change, the Marine Corps' culture of excellence must not. The road ahead is far from certain, but our ethos will never change — *Every Marine a Rifleman and Everyone Fights.*

As I've said before, it is the honor of my lifetime to be a Marine and serve as your Commandant. I'm proud to stand alongside each of you, and I'm excited to see what the future holds for our Corps. When I travel to visit Marines here at home and deployed around the globe, I find absolute confidence that this generation of Marines has what it takes to uphold our Corps' legacy and prevail in any conflict we face. Happy Birthday, Marines!

Semper Fidelis,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eric M. Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

General, U.S. Marine Corps
Commandant of the Marine Corps



Colonel Ralph J. Rizzo, Jr.
Commander, MCIEAST-MCB Camp Lejeune

Colonel Rizzo is a native of Charlestown, Massachusetts. He graduated from Western New England College in 1989 with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and a minor in Criminal Justice. After working in local law enforcement, he enlisted in the United States Marine Corps and graduated from MCRD Parris Island, South Carolina, in 1990. After completing Recruit Training, he reported to the School of Infantry where he attained the MOS of 0341 Mortarman.

In January 1991 he received orders to Marine Barracks Ground Defense Force, Subic Bay, Philippines where he participated in Operation Fiery Vigil in June 1991. Upon the deactivation of Marine Barracks, Subic Bay, he received orders to 3rd Battalion, 9th Marines, 1st Marine Division, as an 81 MM Mortar Platoon Section Leader and promoted to the rank of Sergeant.

In August 1994, he was accepted for the Enlisted Commissioning Program and attended Officer Candidate School, The Basic School, and Infantry Officer Course, obtaining the MOS 0302. Colonel Rizzo accepted augmentation in November 1998 in conjunction with the supplementary MOS program and reported to Logistics Officer School where he received the MOS of 0402.

Colonel Rizzo's operational assignments include: Platoon Commander, 81MM Mortar Platoon Commander, and Executive Officer, 1st Battalion, 3rd Marines; Weapons Company Commander, 1st Battalion, 3rd Marines; Company Commander, 2nd Maintenance Battalion, 2nd Force Service Support Group (Operation IRAQI FREEDOM); Battle Major/Senior Watch Officer, CJTF-76 (Operation ENDURING FREEDOM); Commanding Officer, Combat Logistics Battalion-6 (Operation ENDURING FREEDOM); and CJ4, CJTF-HOA.

His staff and joint assignments include: S-4 Officer, Camp Johnson Area/MCCSSS; Commanding Officer, Recruiting Station Detroit, Michigan; Program Analyst, Joint Fires Division, J6, CJCS; Global Force Management Future Operations Officer, Current and Future Operations Branch, PP&O; Commanding Officer, Marine Corps Detachment Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri; AC/S G4, III Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF); Chief of Staff, III MEF; Deputy Commander, Marine Corps Installations East-Marine Corps Base (MCIEAST-MCB) Camp Lejeune, North Carolina; and Commander, MCIEAST-MCB Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.

Colonel Rizzo is a graduate of The Basic School (with Honors), Infantry Officers Course, Logistics Officers Course, U.S. Naval War College (with Honors), Marine Corps War College, and High Command and Staff Course at the United Kingdom Defense Academy.



Major General William H. Swan
Commanding General, 2D MAW
Guest of Honor



Major General Swan assumed the duties of Commanding General, 2d Marine Aircraft Wing on 16 May 2024. Originally from Pewaukee WI, Major General Swan was commissioned in 1991 after graduating from the University of Wisconsin with a degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering. Upon completion of The Basic School, he attended flight training and was designated as an F/A-18 Hornet pilot.

Major General Swan's previous assignments as a General Officer include Assistant Deputy Commandant for Plans, Policies and Operations at Headquarters Marine Corps, Deputy Director for Operations in the Joint Staff J3, Assistant Deputy Commandant for Aviation, and the Director for Manpower Policy, Manpower and Reserve Affairs, Headquarters Marine Corps.

Major General Swan's command assignments include the Commanding Officer of Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 323 and the Commanding Officer of Marine Aircraft Group 11.

Major General Swan's operating forces assignments include Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 251 as part of Carrier Air Wing One, Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 321, Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 242, Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 323 as part of Carrier Air Wings Nine and Fourteen, the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit, Marine Aircraft Group 11, 3d Marine Aircraft Wing, and the I Marine Expeditionary Force. He has participated in Operations SOUTHERN WATCH, BRIGHTSTAR, NOBLE EAGLE, IRAQI FREEDOM, ENDURING FREEDOM, NEW DAWN, TOMADACHI, and NATO exercises in both Scotland and Denmark. Additionally, Major General Swan has served in both the Joint Staff's J-3 and J-8 and multiple billets in Headquarters Marine Corps.

Major General Swan is a graduate of the Marine Corps' Division Tactics Instructor Course, Weapons and Tactics Instructor Course, Command and Staff College and the National War College where he earned Masters' Degrees in both Military Studies from the Marine Corps University and National Security Strategy from the National Defense University. Major General Swan has flown over 4200 flight hours, made over 600 carrier-arrested landings, and executed over 200 aerial combat missions.

His personal decorations include the Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal with Strike/Flight numeral 10, and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with Gold Star, and the Marine Corps Achievement Medal with two Gold Stars.

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