

# A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS

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*Marine Corps Gazette*; Nov 2013; 97, 11; Marine Corps Gazette & Leatherneck Magazine of the Marines

pg. 7



10 NOVEMBER 2013

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For 238 years, the United States Marine Corps has proudly served our great Nation with unfailing valor – bolstered by the enduring fortitude of our fellow Marines, our families, and our friends. This is why each year on November 10th, Marines from all generations gather together, in groups large and small, to celebrate the birthday of our Corps and to reflect on the proud legacy and warrior ethos we share. This is what unites us as Marines. From our first battle at New Providence to today in Afghanistan, Marines have always shown that they were made of tougher stuff – that when the enemy's fire poured in from all angles, and the situation was grim, Marines unequivocally knew that their fellow Marines would stay behind their guns, fight courageously, and drive the enemy from the battlefield. We have always known hardship, fatigue, and pain ... but we have never known what it is to lose a battle!

Marines of generations past built our reputation as the most disciplined and honorable warriors to ever set foot on a battlefield, and we have triumphed in every battle because our Corps has always focused on iron discipline and combat excellence. This is who we are...this is what we do! It matters not whether you carried an M-1, an M-14, or M-16. It matters not whether you fought on a lonely island in the Pacific, assaulted a citadel in the jungle, or marched up to Baghdad. It matters not whether you are a grunt, a pilot or a loggie. What matters is that, when the chips were down and things got tough, your fellow Marines could count on you to stand and fight ... and fight you did!

This year, we celebrate the anniversary of several epic battles in our celebrated history: the 70th anniversary of the 2nd Marine Division landing on Tarawa, the 45th anniversary of the Battle of Hue City, and the 10th anniversary of the "March Up" to Baghdad. Marines who fought in these legendary battles each made their mark upon the history of our Corps. They have passed a rich and illustrious legacy on to us – a much heralded reputation. It is ours to jealously guard, and it is up to us to make our own marks and thus proudly pass it on to the generations of Marines who will follow.

Sergeant Major Micheal Barrett joins me in congratulating each of you. Because of you, your selfless service, and your many sacrifices, our Corps remains strong and ready to respond to any crisis. Throughout history, Marines have faced tough times and there will be tough times ahead, but there is no challenge we cannot overcome if we remain honorable and always faithful to our Nation, our Constitution and each other. Happy Birthday, Marines!

Semper Fidelis,  
A stylized signature of James F. Amos in black ink.  
JAMES F. AMOS  
General, U.S. Marine Corps  
Commandant of the Marine Corps