



10 November 2024

A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDER AND SERGEANT MAJOR  
MARINE CORPS INSTALLATIONS EAST

Each year, as we honor the birthday of our beloved Corps, Marines everywhere—whether at home or deployed—pause to remember the strength, resolve, and storied history that have carried us forward since our founding in Tun Tavern 249 years ago.

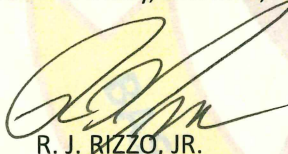
Here at Marine Corps Installations East-Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, these traditions renew our commitment to the ideals that make the Marine Corps the greatest fighting force in the world.

Our cherished traditions—the cake cutting ceremony, the recognition of the oldest and youngest Marines, and the reading of General Lejeune’s message—unite us across generations and distances. Whether on the rugged sands of Iwo Jima or in the harsh deserts of the Middle East, and in all future conflicts no matter the clime and place, these traditions inspire and reaffirm our dedication, reminding us of the selfless service and patriotism that form the bedrock of our Corps.

While we’ve advanced from the days of colonial ships to a 21st-century force equipped with modern technology, we know it’s ultimately our Marines, their rifles, and their unyielding spirit passed down through generations that secure our nation’s victories.

We also know that the installation—backed by a supremely dedicated workforce—provides our Marines the necessary training to project power at any time and place of our choosing.

Marines, today I urge you to reflect on the values and symbols that past generations have entrusted to us, forged through sacrifice and honor. Let us also remember those who stand beside us—our Sailors, civilians, families, veterans, and community members who offer unwavering support. Happy 249th birthday, Marines; thank you for all you do in support of our warfighters, and Semper Fidelis!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. J. Rizzo, Jr.".

R. J. RIZZO, JR.  
Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps  
Commander

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. A. Gnecco".

R. A. GNECCO  
Sergeant Major, U.S. Marine Corps