

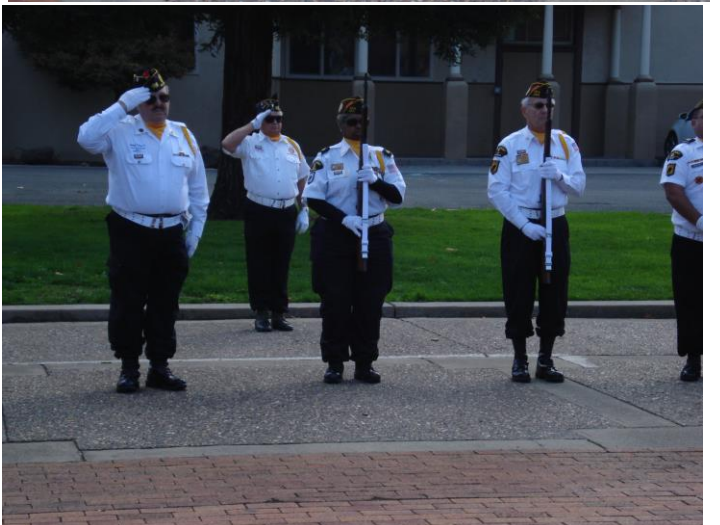
Pioneer Cemetery



Martinez City Hall



Martinez City Hall



Lunch at Veteran's Hall



Mr. Fraser's Speech

My Son, America's Marine

Veteran's Day Remarks

Martinez, California

November 11, 2017

David E. Fraser, Chief of Staff

Contra Costa County, District 5

I bring you warm greetings on this brisk autumn morning on behalf of the Board of Supervisors of Contra Costa County, and more specifically the Chair and District 5 supervisor, Federal Glover. As Supervisor Glover and I spoke of my plans to join you this morning, he asked that I convey his and the Board's profound regard for the women and men who have served our great nation, and their families who supported them in their service.

Today, as I have done during our past gatherings, I also greet you as the proud parent of United States Marine Lance Corporal, Bryan Fraser, who continues his service to our nation at the Marine Corps base in Okinawa, Japan. As the parent of a service member, there isn't a single day that goes by where I rise in the morning without immediate thoughts of his well-being and purposeful prayers for his safe-keeping.

A few months ago, upon completion of his annual rifle qualifications, he sent me a snapshot. As any parent would, I felt a surge of pride, and immediately took to share with my friends on social media that he had qualified as an expert rifleman. But as I began to write the caption for the image, I found myself lost in contemplation. After all, what did it all mean? Was it simply a badge of honor to grant him, and by extension his family, some sense of ascendancy?

And once the moments of contemplation were over, I wrote a simple caption as I shared the image. It said simply, "My Son; America's Marine." In that moment, I realized more than ever before that though he will always be my son, there was a greater purpose that he serves. He was then, and is now, America's Marine.

I do not share this anecdote this morning simply to entertain. But rather as a means articulating a simple yet profound message that each of us should understand. Our servicemen and service women, who served or are serving our nation, are someone's son or daughter; someone's husband or wife; someone's grandchild; someone's cousin... but they are America's Solider; America's Marine; America's Airman; America's Sailor; America's Coast Guardsman. And as I am committed to always being a parent, so we as a nation must be committed to always making sure America's servicemen and women are cared for.

There are some 18 million veterans today in the United States. They are ours. They are America's veterans. On the day they joined the armed forces they were changed forever. They became members of a larger family. And now we have a duty - one we can never relinquish without recompense - to do much, much more than offer a

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gratuitous "thank you for your service." We have a duty to make sure they are given all that is necessary to live a life commensurate with that of a person who gave all to our nation.

My Son, America's Marine. Your daughter, America's Solider. They are ours.