

Friends,

It's been almost a month since I left for Afghanistan and it's been quite an experience so far. The Marines are incredible and I'm very blessed to be with them. Camp Leatherneck is a forward operating base in southern Afghanistan, right in the middle of bad-guy country. We're mostly Marines and a few Sailors and everyone is working very hard day/night. Operations are progressing and we're hoping to make a difference here!

Spiritually, it's been incredible to see the hunger and thirst for God's Word. We've got Bible Studies going almost every night of the week and many are asking the questions I love to answer the most, like "where will I go when I die?", and "how can I know God personally"? It's amazing to be part of the process and to see the seeds that others have planted over the years grow into fruit producing tree's! I know many of you are praying for us, we feel it many times in many ways. Thank you so much, there's nothing we need more than that!!

Some of you have expressed an interest in care packages. If you'd like to send something, I'll make sure it gets distributed. As I was making my rounds the past few days, I asked some of the men what they'd like from home. If you, your business, church, or family would want to do something to support the troops, here's the list I made:

1. By far the most popular choice was anything workout related. Marines LOVE to do physical training to relieve stress and they try to maintain HIGH levels of fitness. We've got 1 very small gym on this base and with 10,000 Marines here, its VERY packed 24/7 with VERY little equipment. Some of them have been creative in making their own weights, but its prison style and they make them out of sand-bags, etc. We've got an extra tent that they'd like to make their own gym. They've specifically asked for the following:

- **Kettlebells!**
- Jump Ropes
- Medicine Balls
- Ab Mats
- Weight Bands/Resistance Bands
- TRX Suspension Trainer
- Elite Rings II
- Perfect Push-ups/Push-Up Handles
- Perfect Pull-ups/Pull-Up Bars
- P90X DVDs
- Olympic Barbells
- Weight Bench
- Bumper Plate Weights (rubber coating)
- Concept 2 Rowers (rowing machine)

They will use just about anything. Many of them like Crossfit, P90X and TRX Suspension style workouts and the above listed items are great equipment options for them.

2. Electronics and games: PSP, PS3, Wii, Xbox 360

Board Games: Scrabble, Yatzee, Axis and Allies, Risk, etc. Also, dart boards and darts.

3. Food Choices:

- Gatorade Powder
- Nutrition Bars: Clif, Zone, PowerBar, MetRx, etc.
- Graham Crackers
- Peanuts or any nut related products
- Cookies, Chips
- Candy

4. Misc.

- Air Freshener
- Stationary
- Laundry detergent and dryer sheets
- Foot Powder
- Socks
- Towels
- Cigars

If you mail it to me, I'll ensure the Marines get it:

**Chaplain Matt Berrens**

**1st CEB - H&S CO.**

**Unit 40501**

**FPO AP 96427-0501**

We're trying to get the unit's website updated, so check it regularly for some pictures and more information: <http://www.i-mef.usmc.mil/div/1ceb/default.asp>

THANKS SO MUCH FOR YOUR SUPPORT!!

In His Unfailing Love,  
Matt

Wednesday, June 10, 2009

The letter on the other side was forwarded to me by a relative of the Chaplain. I was struck by the sincerity of his words and the straightforward requests of the Marines. Most importantly, I realized that I could help.

As a professional RKC™ (Russian Kettlebell Challenge) Instructor and boxing coach I understand the power of exercise. At a time when our armed forces are under historic strain, physical training becomes indispensable. Old-school, hard-style training equipment and methods, as taught by Pavel Tsatsouline through the RKC™ system, can have profound—even life-altering—effects. Nowhere is this more vital than in combat, where preparedness is essential and psychological stress peaks.

Before I had finished the letter I set myself an ambitious goal: ***to completely outfit a training tent for Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, including 50 kettlebells.*** With your help, I believe this goal can be reached.

On Saturday, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2009, Dragon Gym in Exton, PA, will be hosting an RKC™ Master Class featuring some of the most prominent kettlebell instructors in the area teaching their favorite techniques. At that time we will be collecting kettlebells and other items highlighted from the Chaplain's list to send to the Marines. The class will be taped and sent with the equipment so that we can donate our expertise as well. Anyone who attends and donates a kettlebell can participate in the Master Class and record a personal message to send the Marines.

How can you help?

- **Donate equipment** from the list, especially kettlebells (dragondoor.com). *Every one who donates a 'bell will be eligible for a spot in the 'All-Star' RKC™ Master Class at 11am Saturday, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2009.*
- **Donate funds** to buy 'bells, ropes, etc.
- **Donate** goods, services, gift certificates, etc. that can be raffled off as door prizes at Dragon Gym on July 11<sup>th</sup>.
- **Purchase** raffle tickets. Proceeds from the raffle will be used for shipping, which we expect to be a *considerable* expense.
- Come out on July 11<sup>th</sup> and bring a friend!
- If you are an RKC™, come out and teach! Show the Marines your best workout and do something personally for the troops!

Those who go in harms' way bear an enormous burden. Please help me lighten that load by providing the Marines of Camp Leatherneck with the means to maintain their physical, mental, and spiritual health.

Yours in Health,

Brian Petty, RKC™, USA Boxing Certified Coach  
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