



## BEST PRACTICES

Now you've created a roster, let's make connections! Your time, budget and location will determine what works best for your group and the following are some tested and true ways to build on the initial contact. When you discover a new way to connect, share your success with us! Email: Marine and Family Programs at [hqmc.upfrp@usmc.mil](mailto:hqmc.upfrp@usmc.mil) or Semper Connected at [mailto:semperconnected@gmail.com](mailto:mailto:semperconnected@gmail.com)

## GETTING STARTED

1. Create an email using Gmail to support your new group. Why?
  - a. Simple transfer of your group on to the next coordinator
  - b. Email history is stored in one place specific to your group
    - i. Helps with event planning to see prior history
  - c. You can use other google platforms in Google Drive such as Google Docs and Google Sheets to support your group with flyers and social rosters.
    - i. All documents are stored to your Google account (via the cloud).
    - ii. Makes for easy access to prior invitations, sign-up sheets, welcome letters, etc.
2. Use this email for your social media platforms that support this group such as Instagram and Facebook.

## GETTING CONNECTED

- ★ **MEET-UPS** - locations can be fixed or moved from place to place. Ask your audience, sometimes people will have an opinion on this and sometimes they won't. If not, decide for the group.
  - **Community Service Projects** - get the group together for a cause like clean up the base or beach, check for base volunteer opportunities, homesforheroes.com, etc.
  - **Support Single Marines**
    - Dogs to the barracks
    - Baked goods and door decorating for the holidays
    - Monthly dinners
  - **Sunday brunches** - potluck brunch first Sunday of every month when unit is deployed, kids are welcome.



- **Local Parks** - after a few consider inviting Semper Fit, MFLAC, MFP, Volunteer Coordinator or other base resources to introduce new programs
- **Birthday Dinners** - pick a local restaurant and celebrate birthdays of the month
- **Supper Clubs** - during deployment; rotate houses, everyone brings a dish to share, can use SignUp Genius if you prefer items to be identified in advance
- **BUNCO** - <https://gathertogethergames.com/bunco>
- **SNO - Spouses Night Out** - pick a local restaurant on the same day of the month for appetizers, dinner or drinks. This can be for Moms/Dads/Working spouses, etc.
- **Book Clubs**
- **Craft groups**

## MORE PERSONAL CONNECTIONS

- ★ **PHONE CALLS** - consider **texting** prior to calling. Many people won't answer the phone if they don't recognize the number - giving them advanced notice, let's them know to expect your call AND even if they don't answer, they have your number now if they need it.
  - Refer to [Connect By Phone](#) for additional tips and tricks on making personal phone calls.
- ★ **LETTER WRITING** - although considered old fashioned, most people treasure a handwritten note and receiving something in the mail other than bills and junk mail.
  - If you are writing a large group of letters, consider writing a standard draft that you can copy onto all letters with a personalized closing.
  - Check out - [Connect In Writing](#) for a Sample Letter and Tips and Tricks
  - Ask a crafty spouse or family member to create homemade unit note cards.
  - Visit your local dollar store - \$1 cards are great for birthdays, thank yous, new babies, congratulations on your promotion, etc. Especially useful prior to moving overseas.
- ★ **WELCOME BASKETS OR GIFT BAGS** - can be left on the front door step or with the active duty service member to pass on. Not sure what to include? Consider:



- Baked goods - premade cookie dough or store bought cookies...it doesn't have to be gourmet...your kind gesture is enough, it doesn't have to be Pinterest perfect
- Local highlights - Maps, brochures or a list of local favorites (restaurants, date nights, parks, places to take kids, beaches, museums, free activities, local military discounts, etc)
- Unit ornament, water bottle or other small unit treasure
- Include a card with your name and phone number and a base resources guide
- Include the Trifold - You can find the link to your local base trifold under: [Ask An Expert](#)

★ **MEAL TRAINS** - [www.mealtrain.com](http://www.mealtrain.com) - This is a great way to support families with new babies, ill family members and anyone needing a little extra support. Set-up takes 10-15 minutes and then families are able to sign up for meals or gift cards for the recipient family.

## RECRUITING SPECIFIC RESOURCES

- ★ **CHAP APP** - <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/chap-app/id1610684220>
  - Connect with your recruiting chaplain for counsel and resources
- ★ **Eastern Recruiting Region** - <https://err.usmc-mccs.org/>

## MANAGING YOUR SOCIAL ROSTER

- ★ **SOCIAL ROSTERS** - People are joining and leaving units all the time. Remember to keep your social rosters up to date-this is easy with your Google Form.
  - Get an email update when new members sign up for your group:
    - In your Google form, click on the 3 dots to the right of the Google Sheets Icon and in the dropdown, click "Get email notifications of new responses".



- Give people the opportunity to "Unsubscribe" from your email group. Put a



reminder at the bottom of your emails stating, "Please reply to this email if you would like to be removed from this email group. If you are removed, you will no longer receive communication about upcoming events."

- There is language on the Contact List Google Form stating that this information can be transferred and shared with others that need the information for the group (i.e. - a group member that takes over management of the group when another coordinator leaves or is no longer able to manage the group.) Do your best to keep your group active in the transition between group managers.