

ALL GAVE SOME; SOME GAVE ALL

This week's veteran is Ryan Erisman.

Ryan graduated from the University of Wisconsin–Madison in May, 1997 and was commissioned a Marine Corps Second Lieutenant through the Naval ROTC program. Following Basic Officer and Infantry Officer courses at Quantico, VA, Ryan reported to 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment in Camp Pendleton, CA, in April 1998. He served as a platoon commander in Alpha Company and deployed with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit.

Ryan then served as the Executive Officer and Commanding Officer of the Field Training Company at Weapons & Field Training Battalion in Camp Pendleton from July 2000 to May 2002 and then as the Executive Officer of Recruiting Station Seattle, WA from June 2002 to December 2004.

Ryan attended the Army's Armor Captain's Career Course in Fort Knox, KY from January to May of 2005 and then reported to 3rd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment in Camp Lejeune, NC. Ryan deployed to Al Qaim, Iraq from August 2005 to March of 2006 as the Assistant Operations Officer.

In May 2006, Ryan assumed command of Lima 3/6, a 170-man rifle company. 3/6 deployed to Camp Habbaniyah, Iraq in January of 2007. Lima conducted several combat operations, including Northern Forge, a nighttime boat crossing of the Euphrates into insurgent-held territory between Fallujah and Ramadi. Lima operated across the river for two weeks, disrupting the insurgents so much that attacks in nearby Fallujah and Ramadi, Al Anbar's most violent cities, ceased for several days.

Lima then moved to the Fallujah peninsula, a rural area west of Fallujah. They partnered with the Abu Issa tribe and began training and patrolling with Iraqi villagers, called Indigenous Counterinsurgency Forces or ICF. Along with another Marine company and the ICF, Lima drove insurgents from the peninsula, improving security on the peninsula and inside Fallujah itself.

On his last day in the field, Ryan met with his favorite ICF leader, Dr. Mustafa. The former Baghdad professor left his job to help defend his village after insurgents murdered his father and brothers. Dr. Mustafa told Ryan, "Your Marines treat the fighters as brothers and respect the Iraqi people as friends... Because of your Marines, the people turned against Al Qaeda."

Ryan left the Marine Corps as a Major in November 2007. He currently lives in Madison, WI with his wife Sarah and their twin toddlers, Hazel and Karsten. His forthcoming book, *No Better Friend*, details his rifle company's experiences during the Al Anbar Awakening.

Thank you, Major Ryan J. Erisman, for what you gave for us and sharing your story with us.

Date to remember:

May 26, 2013: VFW Ladies Auxiliary dinner and gun raffle. Gun raffle tickets may be purchased from any Veteran's committee member.

ALL GAVE SOME; SOME GAVE ALL