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Organization donates teddy bears to deployed Marines' families

PVT. JOHNATHAN PROBST MCAS CHERRY POINT

Families of Marine Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron 2 Marines were presented with teddy bears, Dec. 15.

The teddy bears were given to children of the squadron Marines because the squadron is gearing up for a deployment, said Jennifer Grinschkowsky, a key volunteer for VMAQ-2.

One hundred teddy bears were donated by an organization called Little Patriots Embraced. This organization is a not-for-profit organization that is dedicated to supporting deployed service member's families by giving teddy bears to the children of deployed service members, said Stephanie Cyrus, a representative from Little Patriots Embraced.

The organization is kept alive by the generosity of others. Little Patriots Embraced is funded solely by donations from individuals and fund-raisers organized by the company.

The teddy bears are given to the children in an attempt to lower the children's stress levels during their parent's deployment, and try to ease the pain in the absence of their parent, said Grischkowsky.

This event is not typical in that the items being donated were for the service members' families.

"This is rare for Cherry Point," said Grischkowsky. "I think we get overlooked a lot because we are a smaller base than (Camp) Lejeune." LPE doesn't only deliver teddy bears. There is a host of things that LPE does for military spouses. Their goal is to provide emotional and physiological support for the spouses and children of those who are deployed through transitional and support objects. Another thing that LPE does is empower military spouses through educational scholarships and assist in their employment, according to www.littlepatriotembraced.org.

Other objects that are given to military families include blankets, quilts, soothing compact discs, writing journals, and more.

These products are designed to meet the emotional and psychological needs of family members in stressful situations, according to www.littlepatriotembraced.org.

"They are just to let them know that we appreciate their sacrifice as well," said Cyrus.

PVT. JONATHAN R. PROBST Santa Claus greets and hands out teddy bears to the young children of Marines in VMAQ-2.