WELCOME SPEECH

FOR

KEVIN BOYCE

REVISED

Thank you, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ I want you to know that I really appreciate your generous words!! Now that I have this microphone in my hands, the pressure to be interesting and captivating is **on**. I can only think of the words of the great George Bernard Shaw who said, “ I often quote myself. It adds spice to my conversation.” Well, the bad news is, I’m not as witty as George Bernard Shaw and although I may not have great lines to amuse you, the good news is, I definitely am prepared and very thrilled to assume the lead of this command!! And I bet Mr. Shaw didn’t even have a clue about how to fly a plane! In the spirit of acknowledgement of all that it takes to make up and lead a tight and effectively functioning team, I would like to take a few moments to recognize those who have made this command what it is today. I want to welcome MGEN Hedelund, COL Vara, all of the squadron CO’s, and all of the friends, family, distinguished guests, and of course, to all of my fellow Marines, thank you for sharing this moment in time for MALS 26. To LT COL Doug Engel I want to express my gratitude for the service you have given to this company, and to your wonderful wife Jennifer, we all want you to know that your support for Doug and your generosity of spirit and hospitality for all of the family members and friends of this command made a tremendous contribution to the humanity and camaraderie found on this base. The two of you will be a tough act to follow, but as with all soldiers **(? Is it better to say devoted military people?),** we love a challenge and I am inspired by the legacy left to me as I take command of MALS 26.

I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the fine work of the band. The Greek philosopher Plato said, “Music gives a soul to the universe…” and your work here today definitely recalls deeply rooted feelings of tradition and honor and we appreciate your contribution to this event.

Today is a very important milestone in my military career and with eager acceptance of the mandate I face, I want you all to know that my devotion to my military service and to the command to be lead reinforces my faith in the system and the work we pledge to do for our country. I believe we must renew our pledge to assess our performance and do our duty and I want all of you to know that I will dedicate my resources to making MALS 26 more effective and successful than ever before. I am thankful for the foundation that has been strengthened by previous commanders like LT COL Engel and it is with great optimism that I accept the opportunity to build the team that will take us to the next levels of efficiency, achievement, and innovation. As one who has participated in sports my whole life, I appreciate the importance of team building, mentoring, and positive support, and I intend to work to keep our team here at MALS 26 responsive, energized, and ready for any “play” that comes our way.

I want to extend a special thanks to the team from Bell-Boeing for being present here today. Having the opportunity to support important and versatile aircraft like the MV-22 provides an incredible opportunity to build upon our aviation capabilities and readiness. Our team is constantly challenged and inspired at the possibilities that working with aircraft like this provides. I love to support this technology and those that work in the field of aviation and to have the chance to strengthen that bond is one I continue to eagerly anticipate.

Exactly seventy years ago today, on the shores France, an offensive was mounted. Although it originally bore the code name “Operation Overlord” and was initially planned for the fifth of June, history and conditions conspired to make D-Day, June 6th 1944, one of the greatest battles ever fought in the name of freedom. And although those who experienced the Great Depression and then the Great War have been called “The Greatest Generation,” I believe that with regard for history, respect for each other and reverence for cutting edge technology, we all have the opportunity to make even more significant marks in our capacity in the military and in the world. There is an expression that teaches us, “Adapt or Die.” With our eyes open and our unprecedented access to information and innovation, our ever-evolving military has the wherewithal to attain achievement that will protect and defend our fellow Americans as never before. I am proud to create the team to lead this command into the future. We are ready, willing, eager and able. And now I am sure we would all like to hear from LT COL Engel. Thank you all.