



## Lucky Marines get a glimpse of home

Submitted by: Regimental Combat Team 5

*Story by Cpl. William Skelton*

**CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq (May 20, 2006)** -- Halfway around the world, Sgt. Pat P. Delahanty got to spend a half hour of quiet time face-to-face with his wife and kids.

"It was hard at first to see them on the screen and not be able to touch them," said Delahanty, a 26-year-old infantryman from Bronx, N.Y. "But it was good. I really needed it."

Sixteen Marines from 1st Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment got the chance to not only talk to their families back home, but to see them as they chatted during a live teleconference May 20.

Marines working with the infantry companies seldom get to call home. They rely on packages and letters to stay connected with family left behind.



Sgt. Pat P. Delahanty looks at his family thousands of miles away in California during a teleconference in Camp Fallujah's Chapel of Hope. Marines from 1st Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment got the opportunity to chat with family back home during their deployment to Iraq. Photo by: Cpl. William Skelton

"We don't get to use the phone very often," said Sgt. Januario S. Nimer, a 31-year-old infantryman from San Diego. "This was a real treat to get to see my wife and kids."

Nimer, who is on his third deployment to Iraq, said he never got the opportunity to do anything like this during his other deployments.

"I feel recharged for the rest of the deployment now," Nimer said.

The Marines said they talked about the usual things they always talk about when they get the chance to call. But his opportunity made things seem more realistic, Delahanty said.

"This was great," he said. "It's a real relief to see my wife is doing fine and looking as beautiful as ever."

The Marines wore smiles from ear-to-ear after their 30-minute conversations. They walked away knowing that home was just a second delay away and things are running smoothly.

"My wife was so excited when I told her I was chosen for this," said Lance Cpl. James B. Perry, a 26-year-old infantryman from Bryan, Texas. "As good as they are, pictures just don't do the job all the time."

The battalion sought out Marines who had family living in the Camp Pendleton area to participate in the teleconference. Once the names were chosen, Marines called their families to let them know where to be.

"It's late here, but it is fairly early in the day back home," Perry explained. "I would have set here all night to get those few minutes though."

Marines started the conference at midnight in Iraq and continued into the morning hours because of the time difference. Once their time came up they went in to a small room and sat before a small monitor.

"The screen was about the size of a small TV," Perry said. "I sat in front of it and waited for my wife to sit down."

All of the Marines agreed the teleconference is something they would like to see happen more often.

"It would be great if all the Marines could get to do this," Delahanty said. "I think it would boost the morale of the Marines a lot."