

New Bedford, Fairhaven to Honor Return of Fallen Marine

New Bedford Mayor Jon Mitchell has ordered flags at all city buildings lowered to half staff in honor of United States Marine Lance Cpl. Matthew R. Rodriguez, 19, of Fairhaven, Massachusetts. Rodriguez died on December 11, 2013 while supporting Operation Enduring Freedom in combat operations in Helmand Province, Afghanistan. He was assigned to 1st Combat Engineer Battalion, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, Calif.

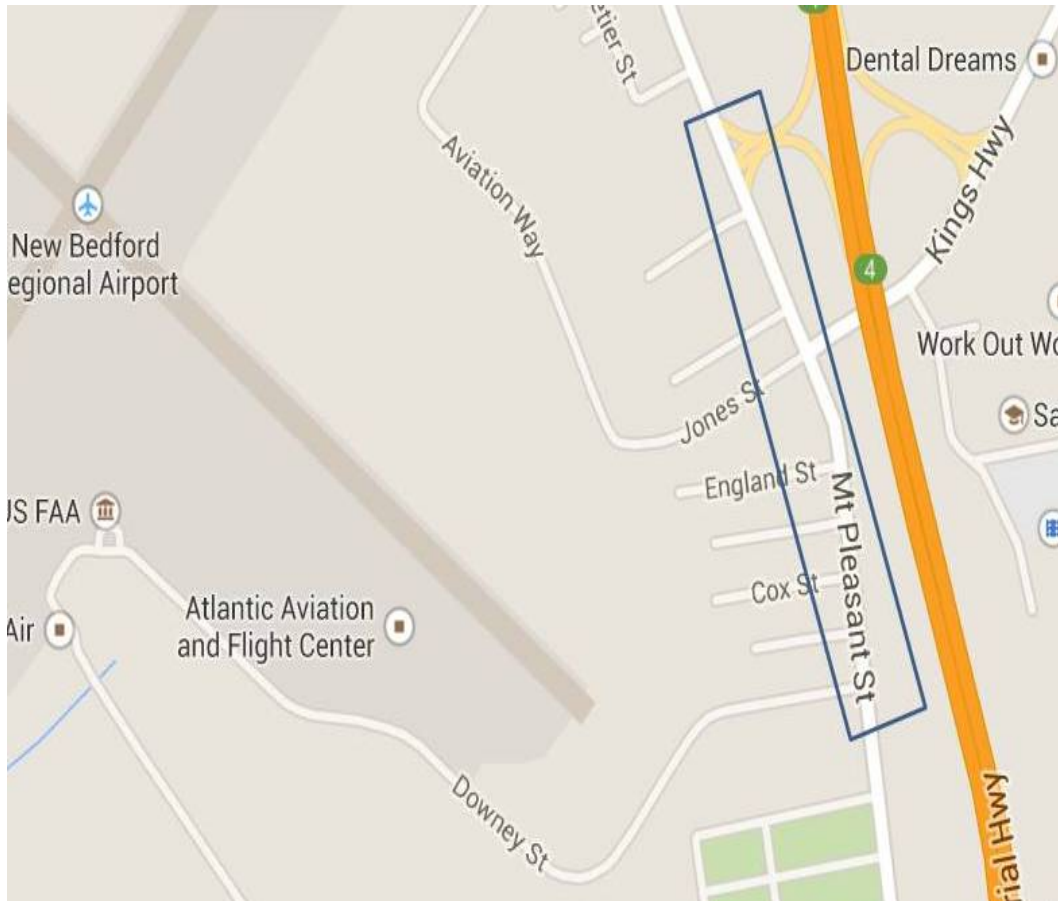
Rodriguez has been awarded the National Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, and the NATO Medal-International Security Assistance Force Afghanistan.

Lance Cpl. Rodriguez's body will return to his hometown of Fairhaven tomorrow afternoon. The United States Marine Corps aircraft carrying his body will land at the New Bedford Regional Airport and a procession will follow through New Bedford, over the New Bedford/Fairhaven Bridge and into the Town of Fairhaven. The City of New Bedford and the Town of Fairhaven have been coordinating to ensure that the procession from the Airport, through New Bedford and into Fairhaven honors Matthew's service and sacrifice.

The procession will leave New Bedford Regional Airport by way of Downey Street shortly after 1:00 p.m. and will then turn left onto Mount Pleasant Street, and onto Route 140 South, the to 195 East, then onto Route 18 South and finally onto Route 6. The procession will continue east on Route 6 over the New Bedford-Fairhaven Bridge and turn right onto Main Street, Left on Center Street, Left on Tripp Street, Right on Washington Street and back onto Route 6. The procession will continue east on Route 6 until it finally reaches Saunders-Dwyer

Mattapoisett Home for Funerals, 50 County Rd., Route 6, Mattapoisett.

Citizens wishing to express their sympathy during the procession from the New Bedford Airport to Saunders-Dwyer are encouraged to stand along Mount Pleasant Street in New Bedford north of Downey Street, or along Route 6 from Fairhaven to Mattapoisett in areas where sidewalk access is available.



Visiting hours will be on Sunday from 1-7 PM at the Saunders-Dwyer Mattapoisett Home for Funerals, 50 County Rd., Route 6, Mattapoisett.

His Funeral Service will be held on Monday at 10 AM at the First Congregational Church of Fairhaven, 34 Center St., Fairhaven. Burial with full military honors will follow in the Massachusetts National Cemetery, Bourne. In lieu of flowers, remembrances may be made to the Wounded Warrior Project, P.O. Box 758517, Topeka, KS 66675.

Flags at all public buildings in New Bedford will remain at half staff until Lance Cpl. Rodriguez is laid to rest.