

Vice President Pence Brought Along Marlon Bundo to Meet Military Families

Here's a fact about Vice President Mike Pence few people knew about until Tuesday evening: His family has a pet bunny.

This fact was unveiled to the rest of the world at the White House as the vice president and second lady hosted a group of military families as part of the Trump administration's recognition of Military Appreciation Month. President Donald Trump's daughter and adviser Ivanka Trump was also on hand for the event.

"So this is Marlon Bundo, and Marlon has his own Instagram account—@marlonbundo—and he is—he's what we call BOTUS—OK, so he is the Bunny of the United States," Second Lady Karen Pence told the children. "Marlon is kind of famous because he is the first bunny to ever ride on Air Force Two. We love Marlon. He's named Marlon Bundo because he's named after a famous movie star, Marlon Brando, and because my daughter got him when she was making a movie in college and she needed a bunny to be the star.

"So Marlon—this notoriety is nothing new for him. But he's a very tame bunny. He runs around our house all the time, jumps in the cage when he needs to. But he's very, very tame."

Marlon Bundo stole the show for only a moment or two before the second lady turned the evening's event back over to her husband. He said:

I'm just so excited to be with all of you, and Karen and I were so thrilled to be with all of you because we have the great privilege of having a son and a daughter-in-law who are serving our country. Our son is in the United States

Marine Corps.

I love these kids.

So we appreciate the sacrifices. We appreciate the sacrifices that our military families make, and it is, in fact, this week is—we're going to have a special celebration this week to celebrate our military families. But the month of May is National Military Appreciation Month. And on behalf of our commander-in-chief, the president of the United States of America, I bring you thanks and I bring you greetings. I truly do.

The president asked Karen and I to host this event today just as a way of saying thanks, paying a debt of gratitude to the families and the servicemen and women who are gathered here today who serve our country each and every day.

General McMaster said it so well just a few short moments ago. We honor your families because your families protect us. And while we're at it—and while we're at it—why don't we give a round of applause to all the servicemen and women who are with us here today who are wearing the uniform of the United States?

But today is really about celebrating that while servicemembers enlist; it's families that serve. And I want to give a rousing round of applause to the military spouses who are with us here today who keep the home fires burning and who support their spouses as they serve our country.

And all of these wonderful and energetic children who are with us today, some of whom themselves may follow your parents in the uniform of the United States, we're just truly honored to have you here today.

This coming Friday will be Military Spouse Appreciation Day.

President Ronald Reagan instituted this celebration in 1984 to recognize the crucial role that spouses play in the lives of our armed forces. And President Donald Trump is proud to continue this tradition here in this first year of our administration.

On the president's behalf, I just want to thank our military spouses. I want to thank you for not only the families that you build and that you serve, but for the difference that you make on and off-base with all of the families who serve and all those who provide support roles.

I want to recognize just a few people in particular who are here. We're especially honored to be joined today by those from every branch of the service who've actually been named Military Spouse of the Year. We have three national award winners, eight service branch winners, eight base winners. Would you join me in congratulating the Military Spouses of the Year who are with us here today?

I'd particularly like to recognize Mrs. Deborah Mullen and the members of the Tragedy Assistance Program of Survivors who are with us here today. Deborah Mullen has dedicated a life of service, along with her husband. And where is Deborah at? Is she in the room? Maybe in the back of the room. Give Deborah a big round of applause. She makes an incredible difference.

And lastly, Ivanka Trump just said it so well. On behalf of the president of the United States and his family and our family, I want to recognize our Gold Star Families who are here with us here today. You honor us by your presence and I promise you, on behalf of the President of the United States, the American people will never forget your loved one or the sacrifice your family made for our freedom. So help us God. Let's hear it for our Gold Star Families, would you please?

And I just want to promise all the families who are here today—whether it's education or housing or counseling or moving or all the challenges that are faced in a military family's career, I want to assure you, military families will never have a better friend than President Donald Trump.

Already in the early days of this administration, the president has signed into law the largest increase in military spending in the last 10 years. And I'm proud to say the President actually submitted a budget that will have the largest increase in military spending since the days of President Ronald Reagan.

The president is absolutely committed and our entire administration will continue to work every day to rebuild our military, to restore the arsenal of democracy, but most important of all to give your families and your loved one the resources they need and deserve, the training they need and deserve to accomplish their mission and come home safe.

That's our pledge to each and every one of you, and it's a solemn pledge and a solemn oath.

The Old Book says: If you owe debts, pay debts. If honor, then honor. If respect, then respect.

On behalf of the president of the United States of America, I hope you see this crowded room as just one more down payment on a debt of honor and a debt of gratitude that we owe to the families of our armed forces.

We're grateful that you're here at the White House today. We hope you leave here today with your hearts full of the assurance that the American people are grateful for those who serve in uniform and just as grateful for the families who stand by their side.

Thank you all very much. God bless you and God bless these wonderful kids who did such a great job today. Good job,

everybody.

The vice president's portion of the event (because videos involving children and small animals are generally too funny not to watch) can be seen in the video clip above. {eo}