



MARINES FLY SANTA TO REMOTE RESERVATION



Children on the Havasupai reservation in Arizona don't associate Santa Claus with a sleigh and flying reindeer. They know he's coming when they hear the swooshing sounds of Marine helicopters overhead. Three Marine helicopters meandered through canyons to make sure Santa and his helpers reached even the most remote of places Wednesday - a small roadless reservation that sits deep in a gorge off the Grand Canyon and the only place in the country where mail is delivered by mule train. The gifts were especially welcome this year while the tribe recovers from flooding. Francine Manakaja's children had

been talking about Santa for at least a month and woke up early Wednesday because they knew Santa was coming. "There's no other Christmas," tribal council member Edmond Tilousi said. "This is the only Christmas we know." For the Marines, the operation provides a unique training opportunity flying in high and low altitudes, through narrow canyons and in extreme weather conditions.

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We want children to believe! Marines and their volunteers across the country are working tirelessly to collect, sort and deliver toys to less fortunate children. With your help Toys for Tots delivered 16.3 million toys to more than 7.4 million

children last year. It's only with help of caring friends like you that we can do that or even more this year!

NEWS

NAWA, PROOF OF THE COUNTERINSURGENCY CONCEPT

On Sunday's front page of the Washington Post, Rajiv Chandrasekaran reports from Nawa, Afghanistan that when Gen. David H. Petraeus makes his case that the military's strategy in Afghanistan is succeeding, he cites the evolution of the Nawa community of mud-walled homes and wheat fields. Today, the area is one of the safest districts in southern Afghanistan. Marines who live at former British base have not fired a single bullet while on foot patrol in the past five months. Classrooms are packed, the bazaar is thriving, and in spring of 2011, Afghan forces are to assume principal responsibility for security, with the Marines provide emergency backup.

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MARINES TEACH SMALL UNIT LEADERSHIP TO BUILD AFGHAN NATIONAL ARMY

Marine Combat Correspondent Lance Cpl. Joshua Hines reports from Musa Qal'eh, Afghanistan, on the Afghan Army Soldiers that undertook a platoon tactics course being taught by U.S. Marines. Afghan Soldiers learned first aid, weapons handling and maintenance, as well as small-unit leadership, counter insurgency and patrolling tactics. Following the classes, the Afghan soldiers began applying what they learned during first-aid rehearsals, patrols, and a live-fire range. Small unit leadership is crucial for the Afghan Army because their area is so large. With small-unit leadership, they are more likely to make sound decisions when they interact with the population, said Maj. Christopher Reynolds, advisor team leader.

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THE COMMANDANT... JUST ANOTHER MARINE

Gen. James Amos, Commandant of the Marine Corps, and his wife; along with Carlton Kent, Sgt. Maj. of the Marine Corps, and his wife, visited the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center in Twentynine Palms, Calif. last week. As Marines TV reports, Gen. Amos wanted to watch Marines train for an upcoming Afghanistan deployment and also meet with them so they could see what the new Commandant of the Marine Corps looks like.

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FREE COUNSELING HOTLINE AIMS TO 'DISTRESS' MARINES, FAMILIES

Marines and family members who find themselves battling stress can talk to a trained counselor for free through the "DSTRESS" Line, a Marine Corps-sponsored phone hotline staffed 24-hours a day, seven days a week. Marines and their families can call the hotline at 1-877-476-7734 or visit www.dstressline.com. The service is open to all active duty, retired, reserve and former Marines, as well as their family members and loved ones. They can call the number anytime to speak anonymously with professional counselors. In addition to DSTRESS, service members and their families can also call Military OneSource at 1-800-342-9647 or visit www.militaryonesource.com.

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"PAPPY" BOYINGTON'S LEGACY

Gregory "Pappy" Boyington, Medal of Honor recipient, is credited with downing 28 Japanese planes during World War II. His son, Greg Boyington Jr., recently added to the history of a squadron assigned to Marine Corps Air Station Yuma by donating his father's golden aviator wings. In addition to the aviator wings, Boyington gave his father's wristwatch to the squadron. In the early 1980s, the Sieko watch company released a special edition watch that was given to all of the living Medal of Honor recipients. Boyington's watch was the 34th one issued.

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HEROES OF THE WEEK

MARINES HONOR FALLEN PLATOON COMMANDER IN AFGHANISTAN



In a dusty patrol base in southern Afghanistan, Marines with 3rd Platoon, Echo Company, 2nd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment recently paused to honor 1st Lt. James R. Zimmerman. A native of Aroostock, Maine, Zimmerman died Nov. 2 while conducting combat operations in Helmand province. He was remembered by the Marines he led as platoon commander as an unselfish, unwavering warrior who was called to lead Marines.

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A GRATEFUL NATION

DECORATORS LIGHT UP MARINE'S HIGHLAND HOME IN HIS ABSENCE



The St. Louis Post-Dispatch reported on Saturday how Jaclyn Duhachek never imagined Christmas lights would grace the outside of her home this year. After all, the guy who usually puts them up is fighting a war on another continent. On Friday, several trucks arrived at his modest Highland home with boxes of white Christmas lights and green garland. C.J., the Duhacheks' 3-year-old son, ran around the front yard and greeted nine decorators as if they were Santa Claus himself. SSgt. Chamous Duhachek wrote an essay that nominated the home he shares with his wife and three pre-teen children for the Decorated Family program, in which volunteers donate their time to decorate homes of military families. The home

was one of 100 nationwide selected this year.

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EVENTS

MARINE CORPS MARATHON EVENT SERIES REGISTRATION STARTS SOON

All runners who are up for the challenge of the 2011 Marine Corps Marathon Event Series and the Marine Corps Historic Half can begin registration at noon Dec. 15. There are five events in the MCM Event Series: The Irish Sprint 10K and Luck o' the Leatherneck One-Miler, Run Amuck and Kids Run Amuck, RunStock 5K, Crossroads 17.75K and the Turkey Trot 10K and One-Miler. "Runners from all over the country are drawn to the variety of distances and unique challenges offered by the Event Series. That includes everything from tackling mud pits to running through scenic parks and trails," said Rick Nealis, the MCM Director, in a MCM Event Series press release. Register online at marinemarathon.com

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