

[Subscribe to the Marine Corps Connection](#)



100 YEARS OF MARINE CORPS AVIATION MARKED BY ADAPTATION, INNOVATION



The Marine Corps celebrates 100 years of flight this month, dating back to when the first Marine aviator, 1st Lt. Alfred Cunningham, reported for flight training on May 22, 1912. From flights across the Pacific to close air support in Afghanistan, Marine aviators have flown in every major conflict since World War I. "It's important for us to understand where we came from, and the giants whose shoulders Marine aviators stand on today," said Lt. Col. Jason

Woodworth, commanding officer of Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 323. "The airplanes are interesting, but they are just machinery." Throughout the century, Marine aviators pioneered the use of helicopters to insert ground troops on the battlefield and the use of Short Take Off Vertical Landing (STOVL) Harrier jets to fly from amphibious assault ships. The Marine Corps also developed new aircraft such as the tiltrotor MV-22 Osprey.

[Visit the Marine Aviation Centennial Site to Read More](#)

[Watch: 100 years of Marine Corps Aviation](#)

[Also Read: At 100, Spirit of Marine Flight Soars](#)

[Also Read: Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum Opens Marine Aviation Exhibit](#)

NEWS

MARINE WEEK 2012 TO ROCK CLEVELAND

The fourth annual Marine Week will land in Cleveland June 11-17. With nearly 800 Marines participating, the Corps will demonstrate skills, show off equipment and weaponry, and participate in community service events. The week will culminate with Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF) demonstrations May 16 and 17 at Burke Lakefront Airport, showcasing assault amphibious vehicles, Harrier and Osprey demonstrations, and Marines parachuting into the landing zone. "It's not every day when the Marines come to your city for a week, and bring all of their toys and equipment, doing static displays, jumping out of the sky, and letting people see them up close," said Valarie J. McCall, the chief of government affairs for the city of Cleveland. For a full schedule of Marine Week Cleveland events, please visit the [Marine Week website](#).



[Read More](#)

MARINES LAND ON TINIAN FOR GEIGER FURY



Exercise Geiger Fury 12 brought more than 200 Marines to Tinian May 14 — the biggest contingent of Marines to visit the tiny Pacific island near Guam in nearly two decades. Marine Aircraft Group 12 and Marine Wing Support Squadron 171 are participating in Geiger Fury to increase their aviation combat readiness, while simulating operations in a deployed, expeditionary environment. The exercise, which lasts through June 8, is designed to recreate a mission where Marines land in a remote

area and establish an airfield that can refuel aircraft. "Everyone is looking forward to this," said Don Farrell, chief of staff for the mayor of Tinian. "There were people down at the dock watching the Marines come in." Tinian, one of the three main islands of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, is located about 5 miles from Saipan and was the site of a major World War II battle.

[Read More](#)

BLACK SEA ROTATIONAL FORCE PREPS ROMANIANS FOR AFGHANISTAN



Marines and Sailors with Black Sea Rotational Force 12 (BSRF-12) trained with Romanian soldiers May 8-18 to strengthen the Romanian forces' interoperability with North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) forces. Some of the Romanian troops taking part in the joint instruction will deploy to Afghanistan next year to support the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission. "This training is very important for the Marines too because we are fighting alongside them in Afghanistan,"

said 1st Lt. Alaghakiz N. Ghongkedze. "They are also a part of the ISAF mission and this training aids us in becoming confident in each other's abilities." BSRF-12 is a Special-Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force (SPMAGTF) with crisis response capabilities deployed to the region to enhance interoperability, promote regional stability and build camaraderie amongst forces.

[Read More](#)

[Also Read: Marine Rotational Force Promotes Partnership, Efficiency](#)

SPMAGTF 12.2 BUILDS DEFENSE CAPACITY IN AFRICA

Marines and Sailors with Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force 12.2 (SPMAGTF-12.2) are working with partner forces across Africa to improve combat skills, strengthen relationships, and engage in security development and



peacekeeping missions. "The mission of the SPMAGTF is twofold," said Lt. Col. Gerard Wynn of 3rd Force Reconnaissance Company. "First, the Marines are working with partner defense forces across Africa to bring new skills and build on old ones.



Also, they are representing the U.S., by building relationships that will allow us to continue to work with our regional partners." Overseas since April, SPMAGTF-12.2 is comprised of approximately 120 Marines and sailors from 32 different Reserve units from across the country. "What's best about this training is that we can send in small teams of Marines at a low cost and know that we are making a big impact," said Wynn.

[Read More](#)

THOUSANDS RUN MARINE CORPS HISTORIC HALF

Nearly 6,000 participants raced through Fredericksburg, Va., for the 5th annual Marine Corps Historic Half Marathon May 20. Alison Sweeney, host of NBC's "The Biggest Loser," fired the starting pistol before joining the runners for the 13.1-mile race. Sweeney said she was honored to be a part of the Historic Half, particularly since her father is a retired Marine. "My dad is so proud of me for being out and supporting the Marines," she said, after finishing the course in just over two hours. Although runners came from all 50 states and nine different countries, two Virginia runners took home top honors. Bert Jacoby of Fredericksburg won the men's division in 1:11:33 and Courtney Chapman of Norfolk was the first female to finish in 1:21:56.



[Read More](#)

[Also Read: Deployed Servicemembers Run Half Marathon in Afghanistan](#)

CORPS STRESSES DSTRESS LINE



The DSTRESS Line, a Commandant of the Marine Corps initiative, provides an

DSTRESSLINE.com or 1-877-476-7734

anonymous web- and phone-based, peer-to-peer counseling hotline for Marines, Sailors and their families. DSTRESS counselors, including veteran Marines and

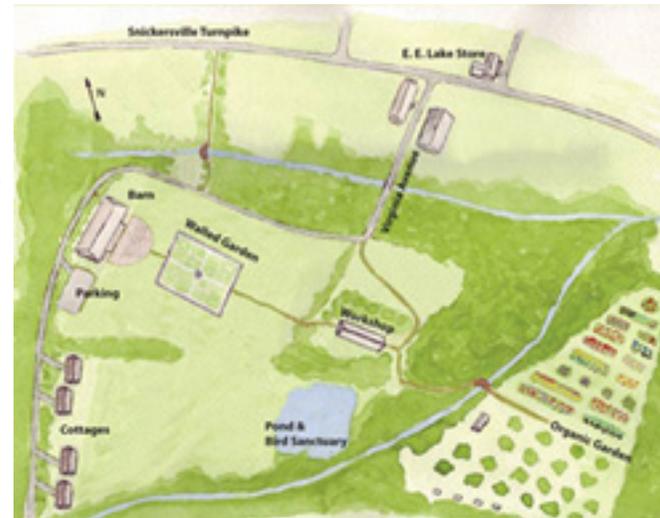
Corpsmen, provide callers with resources to cope with the challenges of life in the Corps. "The 2009 suicide rate went through the roof...so [the Commandant] went to leaders around the Corps to figure out what was wrong," said Col. Grant Olbrich, the program manager for the DSTRESS Line at Manpower and Reserve Affairs. The hotline was created in 2010 and first implemented on the West Coast. After two years and more than 6,000 calls and chats, the DSTRESS Line expanded nationwide earlier this spring. "The DSTRESS Line is one more tool for leaders to use to help their Marines," said Olbrich. The hotline's chat feature is available through the DSTRESS Line homepage at www.dstressline.com or by calling 1-877-476-7734.

[Read More](#)

TRANSITION

WOUNDED WARRIOR RETREAT BREAKS GROUND IN VIRGINIA

Investors, government officials, and former military personnel broke ground May 18 on a retreat for wounded warriors that they hope will become a getaway for wounded warriors recovering in the Washington, D.C., region. Opening May 2013, the Boulder Crest Retreat, in Bluemont, Va., will include a central clubhouse, family cabins, a fishing pond, and wheelchair-accessible trails and gardens across 37 acres. "This will be a place for family time, for rest, for healing," said founder Ken Falke, a retired Navy master chief. Boulder Crest administrators hope to partner with local businesses to offer additional recreational activities, including winery tours, therapeutic horseback riding, fly fishing and more. Falke said the retreat will be a home away from home at no cost to recovering military personnel and their families.



[Read More](#)

HEROES

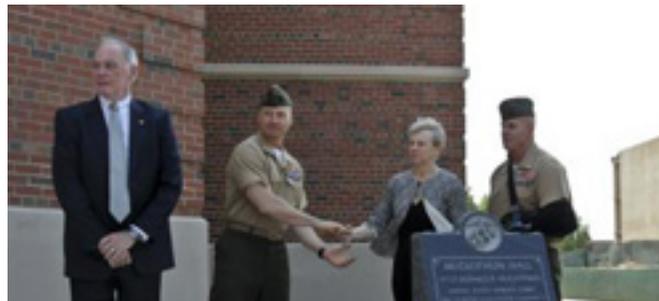
MARSOC "ALL-STAR TEAM" AWARDED BRONZE STARS

Four Marine Special Operations Command (MARSOC) Marines were awarded the Bronze Star Medal for combat operations while serving with 1st Marine Special Operations Battalion in Afghanistan between February 2009 and October 2011. Maj. Gen. Paul Lefebvre, the commanding general of MARSOC, presented Capt. John B. Dickens, Sgt. Maj. Edward Gonzalez, Staff Sgt. Steven E. Goodnight and retired Master Sgt. Stephen F. Krueger with the medals at Camp Pendleton, Calif., May 11. "At times, they stepped up when we needed them to the most," said Lefebvre, referring to the distinguished Marines as his all-star team. "They contributed to the reputation that MARSOC has today." Goodnight and Krueger received the combat distinguishing valor device with their medals. The Bronze Star is the nation's fourth-highest award for combat operations.



[Read More](#)

TBS NAMES NEW BARRACKS IN HONOR OF COURAGEOUS LIEUTENANT



The Basic School in Quantico, Va., named a recently-completed student barracks May 17 in honor of 1st Lt. Donald R. McGlothlin, who was killed in action in Iraq. "This building means that his memory will not be forgotten," said Col. Robert Oltman, chief of staff for Training and Education Command. McGlothlin's family toured the building after



the ribbon-cutting ceremony. "It's a great feeling knowing that your son had such an impact on his Marines that [the] Corps would want to make an example of him for others to emulate," said his father, Donald

A. McGlothlin. While deployed with the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit in 2005, McGlothlin led an attack against an insurgent stronghold to secure and recover wounded Marines from his platoon. During the casualty evacuation, McGlothlin used his own body to shield his Marines from an enemy grenade blast and engaged the enemy in a fierce small arms fire fight until he was mortally wounded. For his gallant actions, McGlothlin was posthumously awarded the Silver Star.

[Read More](#)

THANK YOU

1,600 MUSEUMS OFFER TROOPS FREE TICKETS



More than 1,600 museums across the country will offer free admission to active-duty military personnel and their families from Memorial Day until Labor Day. Sites participating in the Blue Star Museums initiative include art museums, science centers, history museums, nature centers and children's museums. "This is both an opportunity to thank military families for their service and sacrifice, as well as a chance to

create connections between museums and these families that will continue throughout the year," said Rocco Landesman, chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts. The program began in 2010 as a partnership between the National Endowment for the Arts, Blue Star Families and the Defense Department. First Lady Michelle Obama and Jill Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden, also are helping to promote the effort this year through their Joining Forces initiative to support military families. Additionally, the Interior Department will give military families free access to all national parks in the country this summer.

[Read More](#)

[Visit the Blue Star Museums Initiative website for a full list of participating museums](#)

