

TIP OF THE SPEAR

CMC SPEAKS AT NATIONAL PRESS CLUB



Gen. James F. Amos, Commandant of the Marine Corps, spoke on a wide range of issues at the National Press Club Aug. 28, highlighting the Corps' mission in Afghanistan, heritage in the Asia-Pacific region and impact of potential budget cuts. "Probably the greatest challenge I have right now is just making sure the Marine Corps gets back to being balanced and understands that we are in a period of austerity," he said. "And we need to be asking

ourselves what's good enough...

what do we have to absolutely have to modernize?" During the luncheon, he also fielded questions about the effect of the Don't Ask, Don't Tell repeal, describing implementation as a "non-event," as well as questions about the future roles of women in combat units. Acknowledging the matter is emotionally charged for many Marines, Amos said the ongoing Women in Service Restriction Review is vital. "I need to get past hyperbole and get past intuition and instincts," he said. "I need to get facts." [Read more](#)

Related Articles:

[Sequestration 'Dangerous' to the Corps](#)

[Commandant Determined to End Sexual Assault](#)

[Women to Attend IOC](#)



PHOTO OF THE WEEK



Marines assigned to the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit approach the well deck of amphibious dock landing ship USS Tortuga after conducting open ocean operations using Combat Rubber Raiding Crafts. Tortuga is part of the only forward-deployed amphibious ready group. *(Photo by Navy Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Chelsea Mandello)*

IN THE NEWS

CORPORAL AWARDED SILVER STAR DURING 2ND MARINE DIVISION CHANGE OF COMMAND



As his last act as commander of the 2nd Marine Division, Maj. Gen. John Toolan awarded the Silver Star to Cpl. Jason Hassinger Aug. 23. Hassinger received the medal for his heroic actions in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. While under gunfire during a security patrol in northern Marjah, Afghanistan, he took four shots to the chest, yet calmly and fearlessly directed his team to overtake the enemy. Following the award ceremony, Toolan relinquished command to Brig. Gen. James

Lukeman. [Read more](#)

Also Read: MARSOC Gunny to Receive Silver Star

200 MARINES JOIN ANTI-DRUG EFFORT IN GUATEMALA



Marines are hammering down on drug trafficking in Guatemala as part of Operation Martillo (Spanish for "hammer"), a transnational effort to stem the flow of illicit drugs, money and weapons in the coastal regions of Central America. The operation involves troops and law enforcement agents from Belize, Britain, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, France, Guatemala, Honduras, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, Panama and Spain. Focused on drug dealers in airplanes or

boats, the Marine detachment is providing communications support and aircraft assets

that increase the task force's detection and monitoring capabilities. [Read more](#)

TWENTYNINE PALMS CELEBRATES 60TH ANNIVERSARY



With a reputation as the Corps' foremost training facility, the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, Twentynine Palms, Calif., celebrated its 60th anniversary Aug. 24. "The anniversary celebration serves as a salute to six decades of selfless service by tens of thousands of sun-leathered Leathernecks who have played a role in writing the rich history of this 'crown jewel' of our Corps," said Brig. Gen. George W. Smith, Jr., commanding general. The Combat Center is the only

installation that can accommodate the Corps' large-scale combined-arms live-fire exercises. [Read more](#)

Also Read: Commemorative Booklet

Watch: The Combat Center's History

70 YEARS OF DEDICATION AND SUPPORT AT PENDLETON



Brig. Gen. Vincent Coglianesse, commanding general of Marine Corps Installations-West, and nearly 190 military members and civilians celebrated the 70th anniversary of Camp Pendleton, Calif., Aug. 28 at an evening colors ceremony. "Camp Pendleton has a proud tradition of training top-quality Marines and maintaining its combat readiness," he said, adding that nearly half of the Marines currently deployed in support of

Operation Enduring Freedom are from Camp Pendleton. The ceremony also recognized leaders from the surrounding communities and showed appreciation for their continued support since the establishment of the base in 1942.

[Read more](#)

CORPS FINALIZING REQUIREMENTS FOR NEW AMPHIBIOUS VEHICLE



The Marine Corps is close to finalizing their requirements for a replacement for the Amphibious Assault Vehicle, said Gen. James F. Amos, Commandant of the Marine Corps. Amos underscored his determination to avoid issues that plagued the now-canceled Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle program. "This is not a Cadillac Escalade we're trying to build here," he said. "We want to make sure that we're not trying to build something that ends up with capabilities that we either don't need or can't

afford." The Corps also plans to start work on a new personnel carrier to transport troops on the ground. [Read more](#)

'AMERICA'S BATTALION' CONDUCTS NON-LETHAL WEAPONS TRAINING



Marines with 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment participated in non-lethal weapons training scenarios Aug. 15 during foot patrols through a simulated urban village at Marine Corps Training Area Bellows, Hawaii. The Marines learned to employ a variety of non-lethal weapons and munitions, including flash bang and Stingball grenades, lasers, pepper spray and tasers. "We're showing the Marines, in a quantitative manner, the benefits of using non-lethal weapons...that they're available for

use, easy to be trained on and very effective," said Brian Long, the project officer for the Department of Defense Non-Lethal Weapons Demonstration and Assessment Program.

[Read more](#)

EXECUTIVE ORDER TO IMPROVE MENTAL HEALTH CARE FOR VETS



With military suicides on the rise, President Barack Obama signed an executive order Aug. 31 to improve mental health care for veterans. Under the order, the Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) must expand its crisis line capability by 50 percent before Dec. 31 and ensure that veterans who identify as being a danger to themselves or others are advised by a trained mental health professional within 24 hours. The VA also must partner with the Defense Department in implementing

a nationwide year-long suicide prevention campaign aimed at veterans. [Read more](#)

[Also Read: Panel Calls for Better Care, Protections for Wounded Troops](#)

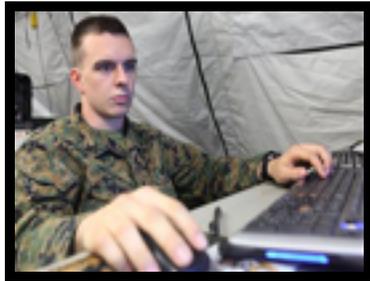
WOUNDED WARRIORS HEAL THROUGH ARCHERY



More than 30 Marines from the Wound Warrior Regiment (WWR) recently took part in a week-long archery camp at Camp Lejeune, N.C. The camp is part of the WWR's Warrior Athlete Reconditioning program, which aims to create an environment where wounded Marines can build confidence in the athletic abilities that they may have lost as a result of their injuries. "Archery helps me find relief from pain," said Sgt. Than Niang, who participated in the camp. "[I] don't think about what

happened in the past, [I] think forward and into the future." [Read more](#)

COMPUTER TRAINING POPULAR AMONG TRANSITIONING VETS



To help veterans find jobs, the Veterans Retraining Assistance Program (VRAP) provides up to a year of Montgomery GI Bill benefits to qualified veterans to learn skills necessary for one of 200 high-demand occupations. So far, more than 14 percent of VRAP-approved veterans are working to receive training as computer support specialists, a widely growing field, through the Department of Veterans' Affairs initiative. Other top fields for VRAP include substance abuse counseling, business operations, heating and air conditioning repair, cooking and nursing. [Read more](#)

[VRAP Website](#)



THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

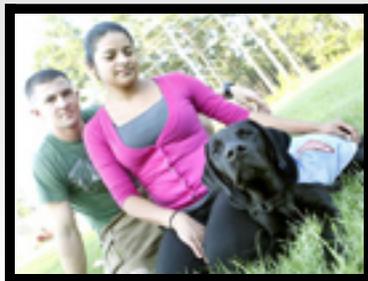
SEPTEMBER 8, 1942

On Guadalcanal, the 1st Raider Battalion and the 1st Parachute Battalion, supported by planes of Marine Aircraft Group 23 and two destroyer transports, landed east of Tasimboko, advanced west into the rear of Japanese positions, and carried out a successful raid on a Japanese supply base.



SEMPER FI

STAFF SERGEANT RAISES DOGS TO HELP THE BLIND



Since he was 11 years old, Staff Sgt. Brad Vande Hei has helped raise more than a dozen dogs to help the blind and visually impaired. As a volunteer for Leader Dogs for the Blind, Vande Hei is responsible for teaching the puppies basic obedience, house manners and socialization outside of the home. The puppies are returned to the organization when they are just over a year old to continue their formal guide dog training. "It's the best temporary pet you could ever have," said

Vande Hei, who is currently stationed at Camp Lejeune, N.C. [Read more](#)

[Leader Dogs for the Blind Website](#)

OUR MISSION

*In the words of Lt. Gen. Victor H. "Brute" Krulak, "The United States does not need a Marine Corps... the United States wants a Marine Corps." As America's Expeditionary Force in Readiness, the Marine Corps is deployed across the globe, standing ready to respond to any crisis. The Marine Corps Connection is your one-stop source for the latest Marine Corps news and is published weekly by the Division of Public Affairs at Headquarters Marine Corps. **Stay connected to your Marines!***



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