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MARINE CORPS: LOOKING BEYOND AFGHANISTAN



While observing part of Exercise Mailed Fist, Magnus Nordenman, Associate Director of the International Security Program, was impressed by the versatility, capabilities and technology the Marine Corps possesses. "In recent years the Marines have conducted humanitarian relief operations in, among other places, Haiti, Pakistan, and Indonesia; trained with friends, allies, and even

NGOs in South America and Africa; conducted non-combatant evacuations in Lebanon; and rescued the crew of the F-15 that crashed in Libya in the early days of the Libya no-fly zone. The Marines reckon that they will remain almost as busy in the future, even if Afghanistan winds down significantly in the coming years," Nordenman writes. In his article, Nordenman shares his experiences while riding aboard the Marine Corps aircraft, as well as what he learned during his time with the Marines. "The Osprey and Mailed Fist say a lot about the

Marine Corps and its future beyond Iraq and Afghanistan. In many ways, the Marine Corps intends for the Osprey to take it into the future, and back to its roots of a mobile and light amphibious force, the way it was before the Corps took on occupation duties and counter-insurgency tasks in Iraq and Afghanistan," Nordenman said.

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HEROES

MARINE FIRST ON SCENE, SAVES INFANT'S LIFE



Thanks to the heroic actions of a Camp Pendleton Marine, an infant will see another birthday. On June 20, Sgt. Sergio Zacarias Jr., a combat instructor, Alpha Company, Infantry Training Battalion, School of Infantry was enjoying a regular evening home from work when he heard his neighbor, Alana Pedroza, screaming. Her 14-month-year-old daughter Nynette Pedroza, had stopped breathing while taking a bath. "I ran downstairs, told my wife to call 911 and went outside," Zacarias said, who began applying pressure to the baby's chest. At that point, another neighbor arrived on the scene and began to assist Zacarias in conducting CPR. Carefully handling the baby's delicate frame, the two were able to bring Nynette back to life and she slowly returned to her normal color, after nearly five minutes of being unconscious. Zacarias was able to quickly react to the baby's situation thanks to training he receives as a Marine. "As Marines, we all get taught to take initiative and lead by example and we get CPR classes

periodically, so I knew what to do and how to assess and handle the situation," Zacarias said. "I don't know what would have happened if they wouldn't have been there," said Pedroza. "Thank God he was there."

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CAMP PENDLETON MARINE AWARDED SILVER STAR

Marine Sgt. Franklin Simmons was



awarded the Silver Star for "conspicuous gallantry" under fire. Simmons received his medal on July 4 while aboard the amphibious ship Boxer on deployment in the Gulf of Aden. "It was a good day for the platoon, a good day for the Marine Corps, and a bad day for the enemy," Simmons said. "I don't know how we pulled it off." The enemy fought from positions dug in a trench and along a treeline. They pinned down two squads of Marines, one of them



saved eventually by aircraft support. The battle lasted for over eight hours, according to an account by CNA Strategic Studies, a federally funded research group. Without regard for his own safety, Simmons crawled to the top of a berm to locate targets for his Mark 11 sniper rifle. With enemy rounds hitting within a foot of his location, he calmly took out 18 Taliban fighters and wounded at least two others. "I thought that would be the spot to make my final stand," said Simmons. The Silver Star is the third-highest military decoration awarded for valor against an enemy.

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NEWS

COUNTERINSURGENCY SUCCESSES IN HELMAND

Marine Brig. Gen. Lewis Craparotta, commander of Task Force Leatherneck, and Marine Col. Dave Furness, commander of Regimental Combat Team-1, spoke with reporters traveling with Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta about the progress in Helmand province. Three districts that were once the heartland of the Taliban saw an 80 percent reduction in enemy activity



since August 2010, Marine commanders said on July 10. Both men said the Marines are fighting a



classic counterinsurgency campaign against the Taliban. The unit's area of operations runs from the Kajaki district in the north through Sangin, Lashkar Gah, Marja, Now Zad to the Pakistani border in the south. There are 5,000 Marines and Sailors in the area supported by an Army Combat Service Hospital and Air Force engineers. The Marine role is to get the insurgency to a level where the Afghan security forces can manage it, and let them assume the lead. Most of the low-level fighters are local, with many of the mid- and upper-level leaders from the border area of Pakistan. "The cells we [were] fighting about two years ago, a leader would command 30 to 40 fighters," Furness said. "Today those same leaders have four or five people. They are also trying command from Pakistan via cell phone." The Marines and Afghan forces also cut off much of the money the Taliban used by interdicting opium poppy and raiding heroin processing places. The Marines will continue the counterinsurgency fight, the commanders said. Time is their ally.

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See Also: Regional Command South-West weekly news round-up

31ST MEU WOWS AUSSIES AT TALISMAN SABER 2011



The Marines have landed in Australia and have put the Corps' greatest and latest on display. On July 9, Australian citizens had the opportunity to attend opening day for Talisman Saber 2011 (TS11). The event consisted of static displays along with demonstrations of weapons and equipment used by Marines and Sailors of Weapons Company, Battalion Landing Team 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines and Combat Logistics Battalion 31, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, as well

other displays by the Australian Defence Forces. TS11 demonstrates the United States and Australian commitment to their military alliance, and enhances stability and security throughout the Asia-Pacific region. "It gives me a lot of pride to be able to talk to the Australian civilians and tell them what we do and how we do it," said Sgt. Todd J. Martin, an assistant section leader and machine gunner with Weapons Co. BLT 2/7, 31st MEU. "It is

rewarding to know we are representing the entire Marine Corps, and if I could do this in every country we go to I would do it in a heartbeat." The 31st MEU is the only continually forward-deployed MEU, and remains the nation's force-in-readiness in the Asia-Pacific region.

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MARINES MAKE GRAND ENTRANCE IN CHINATOWN

Marine Corps Recruiting Station New York (RSNY) and Recruiting Substation Manhattan celebrated their historical first-time grand opening of Permanent Contact Station (PCS) Chinatown with a ribbon cutting ceremony Wednesday, July 6. RSNY celebrated this momentous occasion and extended invitations to key members of the Chinese community to participate in the festivities. To keep with traditions as well as to show respect to the Chinese culture, one of the highlights of the celebration included a customary lion dance performed by Chinatown's very own Dragon Style Kung Fu & Tai Chi dance troupe. "The Marine Corps is a reflection of our society," said 1st Lt. Ramon Deleon, RSNY executive officer. "Chinese Americans are a big part of our American society and this is our way of ensuring that we maintain a diverse and broad Marine Corps. All the people from different backgrounds represent our values as a nation."

The Chinese American community agrees that the PCS in Chinatown will play an important role to bring the Asian American community closer to the mainstream. "The whole Chinese community is proud to support the Marine Corps," said Harvard Tang, New York County Commander, The American Legion Department of New York. "And this station will recruit well-qualified individuals to uphold the Marine Corps standards."

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VETERANS LAID TO REST WITH PRECISION, DIGNITY



Ensuring the fallen receive the appropriate honors is a task the Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego (MCRD SD) ceremonial



platoon takes seriously. Each ceremony involves rigorous preparation on their part, as well as the assistance of other Marines around the depot. There is a lot that goes into each funeral; the Marines who are augmented to the detail must first be properly trained and acquire their rifles from the armory. They also coordinate with the family,

funeral coordinators and hold several rehearsals prior to the ceremony. "We have to make sure everything is organized and precise," said Cpl. Ryan Johnson, a member of the MCRD SD ceremonial platoon. Although laying the fallen to rest can be an emotional experience, it is a rewarding job for those Marines assigned to the duty. "It's the younger guys, like the [privates first class], that really hit me," said Sgt. Zachary Robbins, the ceremonial platoon non-commissioned officer in charge. "It really makes you think about life." The Marines of MCRD SD ceremonial platoon will continue to ensure they reach their final resting place with honor and dignity and their families hear these final words: "On behalf of the President of the United States, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, and a grateful nation, please accept this flag as a symbol of our appreciation for your loved one's service to Country and Corps."

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MARINES ADVISE, HELP BUILD NCO CORPS THROUGHOUT BLACK SEA REGION

Marines with Black Sea Rotational Force 11's (BSRF-11) Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) Development detachment is showing parts of the world what it means to be a NCO by recently finishing their fourth stop in their eight-country tour to advise the importance of NCO leadership to partner nations. "In the counterinsurgency environment we are operating in [today] it's important to develop NCOs and allow them to



make the decision to drive the battle at a lower level," said Lt. Col. Nelson S. Cardella, commanding officer, BSRF-11. The two-week courses focus on advising in core-values of the Marine NCO, small-unit leadership, decision-making ability, leadership traits, leading troops and military professionalism and proficiency. In most cases, the Marines conduct their training to NCO instructors from foreign militaries to supplement already existing leadership training programs. The Marines have been traveling around the Black Sea, Balkan and Caucasus regions of Eastern Europe since April providing the NCO development course to the participating Eastern European countries who have requested it. They have conducted NCO-development training with Romania, Serbia, Azerbaijan and Bulgaria with future stops in Georgia, Ukraine, Bosnia and Macedonia.

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THANK YOU

KNITTING 530 BLANKETS

In May, the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society recognized Janie Hermon, a resident of the Greenspring retirement community in Springfield, Va., for her outstanding service to the society, as she logged 17,000 volunteer hours from February 2000 to May 2011. The society, whose mission is to provide financial and educational assistance to members of the United States Naval Services



and their families, sends baby blankets to enlisted personnel with newborn children around the world. In the last year alone, Hermon knitted 530 blankets, knitting approximately a blanket a week. The only volunteer with that many hours, Hermon received the Meritorious Service Award at the society's National Capitol Region annual luncheon in May at the Washington Navy Yard in Washington, D.C. "I was shocked to death," she said, reflecting on the surprise of receiving this award. Hermon intends to keep on knitting. She stores the blankets, some to be sent overseas, some for her family. "My problem is finding more patterns," she joked.

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MARINE IN AFGHANISTAN WATCHES DAUGHTER GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL



Last month, 18-year-old Bethany Alley, was worried her father would miss seeing her graduate from Brooke Point High School on June 18 in Virginia. The issue was that her father, Marine Col. James Alley, is currently serving a 13-month deployment to Kabul, Afghanistan. "This is the largest deployment he's ever had, and he really wants to see [me graduate]," Bethany Alley, 18, said. However, when the soon-to-be-graduate posted a comment on Fredericksburg, Va.'s home website asking for help to enable a broadcast of her high school graduation

ceremony to her father in Afghanistan, area businesses, Chenega Technology Services (CTSC, LLC) and Force3 stepped up to the cause to provide a live stream of the graduation. Col. Alley was able to witness his daughter walk across the stage to receive her diploma. After the ceremony, the Force 3 and Chenega team also remained online to provide the family a moment together despite being separated by a call to duty.

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EVENTS

HERO SALUTE FROM ANHEUSER-BUSCH



This summer, any active duty, activated or drilling reservist, or National Guardsman is entitled to free admission to participating Busch Gardens and SeaWorld locations thanks to Anheuser-Busch's Here's to the Heroes Program. This program is valid for one complimentary single-day

admission per person, per year, during the regular operating schedules at one of the following locations: SeaWorld Orlando, San Diego, or San Antonio; Busch Gardens Tampa Bay or Williamsburg; Sesame Place, Water Country USA, and Adventure Island. Department

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