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ONLY ASKING FOR WHAT WE NEED

In an Oct. 26 moderated discussion at the Council on Foreign Relations, Gen. James Amos, Commandant of the Marine Corps, said, "For decades the Marine Corps was known as — in some circles as the cheap force. We were known to be the penny-pinchers. So to begin with, we're going back to that." Amos said the Marines Corps planned



to go down to 186,800 personnel from 202,000 - cuts approved by former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates. He added that he was not sure 186,800 was the floor. He added that there would also be some cuts in ground vehicles, from 40,000 to 30,000. "I will not ask for things that I want; I will only ask for things that I need," he said. In addition, he said, pay

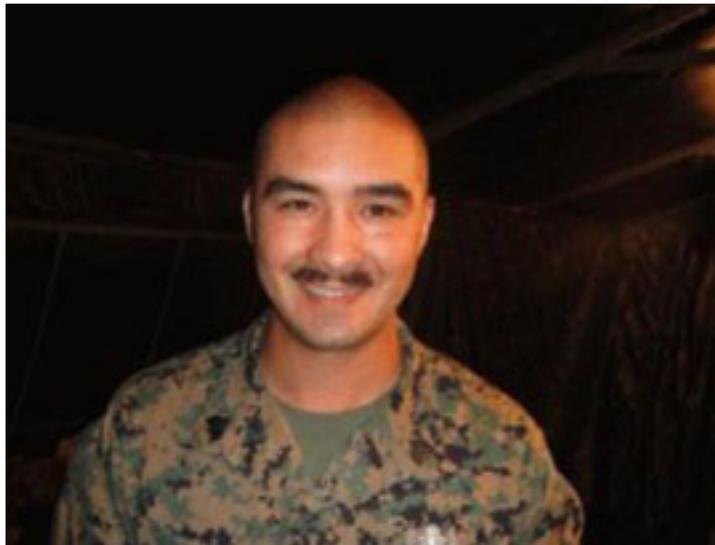
and housing, health and retirement benefits would be looked at.

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[Watch video: A conversation with Gen. James F. Amos](#)

HEROES

STAFF SGT. STEPHEN DUNNING, OF MILPITAS, CA, KILLED DISARMING BOMB IN AFGHANISTAN



Staff Sgt. Stephen Dunning put his life in danger saving the lives of others. He volunteered to be one of the Marines who dismantled bombs that insurgents laced along the treacherous trails of Afghanistan. Dunning, 31, of Milpitas, Calif., was killed Oct. 27 in Helmand province, Afghanistan, while deactivating one of those bombs. Dunning was one of 50 Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) specialists assigned to the III Marine Expeditionary Force in Japan. He was an EOD team leader and was dispatched to different locations as needed. In Afghanistan, he

was attached to a Marine infantry battalion. If the Marines on the front lines found an improvised explosive device (IED), they called Dunning and his team to come to the front and explode or dismantle the device. He died as he tried to live, keeping others safe. "He was originally in the high-tech field, but that wasn't what he wanted. When he got into EOD, he absolutely loved it. He thought that by taking bombs apart, he was saving the lives of others," said Robert Dunning, Staff Sgt. Dunning's father.

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MARINES HONOR FALLEN BROTHER IN MUSA QAL'EH

Lance Cpl. Benjamin W. Schmidt of San Antonio, Texas, was honored Oct.



13 by Marines and Sailors with 2nd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment. Schmidt, a scout sniper with Headquarters and Service Company, 2/4, died while conducting combat operations Oct. 6. "I believe there are several ways to honor a man like Benjamin," said Gunnery Sgt. Jairo A. Fredonis, the Scout Sniper Platoon commander. "One way is to simply remember him and tell his story, show people how he lived, how he cared and loved, speak of his dedication and his commitment, inform those who didn't know him that he existed explain that Benjamin was a great man and how unfortunate it is that they never had a chance to meet him." As the ceremony neared its end, a final roll call was performed by Sgt. Maj. Donald K. Williams, the battalion sergeant major. Williams ordered the Marines to honor the dead; they promptly complied, rendering salutes for their fallen brother as "Taps" played softly. Then every Marine in attendance approached Schmidt's memorial display, individually paying their final respects to a hero who made the ultimate sacrifice.

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MARINE HONORS FALLEN, INJURED TROOPS



Last month, Gunnery Sgt. James J. Dacey set off on a journey from Camp Lejeune to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Md. However, he isn't traveling by bus, by car, by train or by plane. Rather he will run the 345 miles to honor and to raise public awareness for the nation's fallen and wounded warriors. "The reason for this event is to assist men and women who have sacrificed so much for our great country," said Dacey, who has served in the Corps for more than a decade. "The physical and psychological wounds incurred by



these warriors are nothing short of heroic. It is with honor for my brothers- and sisters-in-arms [that] I embark on

this endeavor to ease their burden, if only for a brief moment." After leaving Camp Lejuene Oct. 22, Dacey hopes to complete his run by Nov. 11, Veterans Day. Through his efforts, he has set a goal to raise \$100,000 for injured servicemembers through donations to the nonprofit Wounded Warrior Project.

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NEWS

RUNNERS ENDURE MARINE CORPS MARATHON FORWARD IN HELMAND PROVINCE



This year marks the third time the "People's Marathon" has been held at Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan. While the more than 30,000 participants in the main race in Washington, D.C. get to enjoy running on paved roads and seeing the numerous memorials and monuments scattered throughout the Nation's capital, servicemembers at Leatherneck were provided with a radically different backdrop while enduring the 26.2-mile event.

Participants ran five dusty laps on roads

along the perimeter of the base, which were often crowded with armored vehicles either going to or returning from supporting combat operations. Machine gun fire was frequently heard on the course as service members conducted in-theater training. First Lt. Angelica Valdez, an air officer with Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 363, and a native of Tuscon, Ariz., was the first female and fourth overall participant to finish the race. She finished her third marathon with a time of 3 hours and 15 minutes. "My legs feel like jello and my feet are numb and my head is floating a bit," said Valdez.

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[See Also: Regional Command Southwest weekly news round-up](#)

31ST MEU ARRIVES IN PHILIPPINES FOR PHIBLEX



On Oct. 22, the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) arrived in Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines to participate in the bilateral Amphibious Landing Exercise (PHIBLEX). During the exercise, the Marines and Sailors of the 31st MEU will be working side-by-side with their Philippine counterparts. "Our main mission is to conduct a bilateral exercise with the Philippine military to promote security engagement in the region," said Lt. Col. Gary Roesti, the executive officer of the 31st MEU. "We

will also be conducting civil-military operations, which consist of community relations projects, as well as medical and dental care for the Philippine citizens that need it. Through doing this we have the chance to better improve our partnership with the Philippine country." The 31st MEU, operating in support of the 3rd Marine Expeditionary Brigade for the exercise, is the only continuously forward-deployed MEU and remains the United States' force-in-readiness in the Asia-Pacific region.

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CMC ENCOURAGES PARTICIPATION IN HEALTH SURVEY



In a short video, Gen. James Amos, Commandant of the Marine Corps, informs active and retired Marines and their family members about the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry's (ATSDR) survey to learn more about the health of those who lived or worked at Marine Corps Bases Camp Lejeune or Camp Pendleton prior to 1986.

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COMMANDANT'S WIFE REACHES OUT DURING VISIT TO COMBAT CENTER



While Gen. James Amos, Commandant of the Marine Corps, was touring and talking with Marines at the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, Bonnie Amos, his wife, was working hard to learn about some services available to Marines, Sailors and their families. During her visit, she learned about the Single Marine and Sailors Program, the Armed Services YMCA and the Wounded Warrior Battalion. Amos said that while she enjoyed every aspect of her visit, it was the Wounded Warrior detachment that stuck with her the most. Sgt. Brandon DeFiorentio and Cpl. Timothy Culhane, both patients with the detachment, created two videos to help spread the word about problems facing families and wounded vets. One video featured military children; the other

highlighted the dangers of traumatic brain injury. "Having seen the two videos that the Wounded Warrior Battalion Marines put together, I hope it saves lives and puts lives back together," Amos said.

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WOUNDED WARRIOR & FAMILY SUPPORT

Even after retiring, Gen. (Ret.) James Jones' commitment to the Marine Corps has not wavered. Showing that he is always faithful to the Corps, the 32nd Commandant and a former national security adviser to President Barack Obama, spoke last month at a fundraising luncheon for the Semper Fi Community Task Force's "Heroes' Week" program. The funds raised will support the 2011 Heroes Week, which will bring about 60 Wounded Warriors and caregivers from around the country to Huntsville, Ala. The fifth annual event is scheduled for next week, to coincide with Veterans Day. For more information about the Semper Fi Community Task Force, please visit: www.semperfi.org.

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FAMILY MATTERS BLOG: KEEPING MILITARY MARRIAGES STRONG



Marriage can be challenging enough without tossing in the additional stressors from military life, including frequent deployments, re-integrations, separations and multiple moves; however, even the toughest challenges can be adapted and overcome to produce strong marriages. At the core of the coping strategies provided by Military OneSource, communication is key, particularly when it comes to planning ahead. November marks Military Family Appreciation Month, and Military OneSource wants to help keep military families strong.

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OPERATION BOOTS AND YOUTHS



Marine Air Group-13 (MAG-13), in coordination with several MCAS Yuma commands, hosted the first annual "Operation Boots and Youths" mock deployment event on Saturday, Oct. 15. The event provided 50 children who have one or both parents deployed overseas with an opportunity to learn about how their mothers and fathers work, live and survive during a

deployment. The children boarded buses early in the morning and were dropped off in a field environment where they got a first-hand look at field showers, field messing, sleeping quarters as well as an opportunity to learn how UAV's operate, how robots are used to disarm improvised explosive devices (IED) and how to use a compass during land navigation. Not to be missed, they watched a CH-53 drop off MREs and at the end of the day provided an out-brief to the Commander of MAG-13 on their adventure for the day. For more details about how to set up a similar event, please contact Christa Lamont, MAG-13 FRO, at

(928)269-3042, Sandra Rookey, MAWTS-1 FRO, at (928)269-6401 or Capt. Staci Reidinger, MCAS Yuma PAO, at (928)269-3609.

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TWO WOUNDED WARRIORS PRACTICE TRUE 'SEMPER FI' IN MARINE CORPS MARATHON

On Sunday, Oct. 30, more than 30,000 competitors took to the road to participate in the 36th annual Marine Corps Marathon in Washington, D.C. Among the competitors, a few stood out Sgt Carlos Evans and Marine Corps veteran Jimmy King. Both wounded warriors, they had one leg



and three full arms between the two of them. As part of the Achilles Freedom Team of Wounded Veterans, the pair used hand cycles to race. Although King has completed more than a dozen marathons, it was Evans' first attempt at 26.2. So, demonstrating the true meaning of Semper Fi, King stayed by Evans' side, even if it meant a slower time for himself. He knew that if Evans could finish, it would "boost his confidence more than just about anything he could do at this point in his recovery right now," said King. The pair completed the course in three hours and 41 minutes, and despite starting the day as strangers, they finished together. "We're Marines; that's enough," said King. For Evans, who was injured last year in Afghanistan, his initial apprehensions of racing have been overcome. "I got a second chance for life," he said. "I feel like I'm standing high and have a better view of the world now. So I don't regret it."

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'SEX SIGNALS' MAKES COMEDIC THIRD APPEARANCE AT MCB HAWAII



Actors Judith Lesser and Kyle Terry of Catharsis Productions brought "Sex



"Sex Signals" for its third visit to Marine Corps Base Hawaii. Service members were able to attend one of the three performances at the base theater and Pollack Theater aboard Camp H.M. Smith, Hawaii. Performed since 2000, "Sex Signals" has been updated over the years and caters to different audiences, from college students to the various military branches. Terry, a seven-year veteran of "Sex Signals," described the performance as "a funny show that uses everyday stereotypes and exaggerations to explore an intense issue."

Hopefully [Sex Signals] brings attention to sexual assault in a way that helps prevent people from hurting [others], because ultimately that's what sexual assault is." The Department of Defense Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office have also launched a Safe Helpline available to service members affected by sexual assault. The helpline has three different means of support. Servicemembers can visit <http://www.safehelpline.org> and chat online, or call 877-995-524 to speak to a trained professional. They can also text message their location to 55-247 (within the U.S.) or 202-470-5546 (outside of the U.S.) from a mobile phone to find out how to contact their installation Sexual Assault Response Coordinator.

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DAYS OF BULLYING AS RITE OF PASSAGE ARE GONE, OFFICIAL SAYS



Hoping to reverse the bullying trend, the Defense Department has partnered with the U.S. Education Department and several other federal agencies to develop new strategies to combat the issue. Surveys from the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry indicate that nearly half of all children are bullied at some time during

their school years – and children from military families are comparable to their civilian counterparts in this regard, particularly due to a high rate of moves and stressors caused by deployed parents. The "Stop Bullying Now!" campaign has been launched at DOD schools

and youth centers. Barbara Thompson, director of the Pentagon's office of family policy, children and youth said that the campaign encourages everyone to take a stand. "We have to let [children] know that not only should they stand up and get help from a significant adult, but they also need to stand up for children they see being bullied," she said. "You can't be an innocent bystander even though you're not being bullied yourself or are not the bully." Connie Gillette, a DOD Education Activity spokeswoman, agreed: "The people who stand by and watch bullying, whether they realize it or not, are actually siding with the bully," she said. "The sooner you can teach children kindness and compassion and saying something when they know something's not right, the better." More information about the campaign is available online at www.stopbullying.gov.

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SPIKE TV LAUNCHES INITIATIVE TO HELP VETERANS



Launching this Veterans Day, Spike TV has a new initiative to provide veterans across the country with jobs -- claiming to "help our veterans live the American dream they've sacrificed to protect." The "Support the Troops: Hire A Vet" campaign seeks to reduce the number of unemployed veterans and provide well-trained workers across geography and industry. While national unemployment rates continue to rise for civilians, veterans are not exempt

-- recent media articles have reported that more than 30% of male veterans ages 18-24 are out of work, marking a higher rate of unemployment for our Nation's heroes. Through the new initiative, Spike hopes to join forces with companies, government, military and non-profit organizations from Main Street to Wall Street to reduce the unemployment rate of veterans to less than five percent over the course of the next five years. Spike TV and Viacom will use their existing media channels to promote the initiative through celebrity Public Service Advertisements (PSA) and thank companies and organizations who hire veterans.

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DISNEY RESORT AREA HOTELS TO AWARD FREE ONE-WEEK VACATIONS TO TWO MILITARY FAMILIES



In a tribute to veterans and their families, the "Happiest Place on Earth" will award two military families with one-week



vacation packages to Disney. As part of the competition, active and retired U.S. military personnel who are stationed anywhere in the world are eligible to enter the contest by either submitting a link to a 90-second video on YouTube or by drafting an essay of no more than 300 words stating why their family is proud to be a military family. For the winners, the Disney Resort Area Hotels will award one-week vacation prize packages to

each of two U.S. military families of four, including airfare, hotel accommodations, park access, ground transportation and meals. Entries must be received by Nov. 18, and then the winners will be announced by Dec. 9. For additional information about the contest and complete details, visit www.downtowndisneyhotels.com/MilitaryPromo.

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EVENTS

MCA GROUND DINNER



The Marine Corps Association (MCA) in coordination with HQMC Plans, Policies and Operations (PP&O) will host a reception and dinner on Dec. 8. Gen.

James Amos, Commandant of the Marine Corps, will be the key note speaker. At this widely attended event, attendees will have the opportunity to meet old friends, MCA members, industry partners, and others in the military community for an evening of education and networking. To register, please contact 703-640-0174 or visit www.mca.networkats.com.

