



FALLEN SCOUT SNIPER TO RECEIVE NAVY CROSS



Sgt. Matthew Abbate will posthumously receive the Navy Cross for bold and decisive leadership in Afghanistan as a member of 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines. In October 2010, insurgents attacked his scout sniper section during a patrol through Sangin district. After three Marines stepped on improvised explosive devices (IEDs), Abbate quickly reacted. According to the award citation: "With total disregard for his own life, he sprinted forward through the minefield to draw enemy fire and rallied the dazed survivors. While fearlessly firing at the enemy from his exposed position, he

directed fires of his Marines until they effectively suppressed the enemy, allowing life-saving aid to be rendered to the casualties." Just six weeks after his heroic actions, Abbate was killed in combat on Dec. 2. Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus is expected to present the Navy Cross, the highest decoration that may be bestowed by the Department of the Navy, to Abbate's family later this year.

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NEWS

MARINE WEEK CLEVELAND: MISSION COMPLETE

Marine Week Cleveland ended June 17, but the impact on Cleveland will linger much longer than the week the Marines were in town. "It's been phenomenal," said spectator Paul Lord, of North Royalton, Ohio. "Ohio is known for its Marine Corps members. This gives Marines an avenue to show people the different facets of the Marine Corps, not just combat." Capping off the week, more than 115,000 people attended the Marine Air-Ground Task Force demonstrations Saturday and Sunday at Burke Lakefront Airport, where Marines showcased their capabilities by land, air and sea. Throughout the week, thousands of locals and visitors toured tactical equipment displays, viewed Marine Corps Martial Arts Program and military working dog demonstrations, visited the Traveling Vietnam War Memorial Wall, and watched Marine Corps Base Quantico Band performances. The Marines went to Cleveland to interact with the community, provide volunteer service and share the history of the Corps. At the conclusion of the week, Lt. Gen. Steven A. Hummer, commander of Marine Forces Reserve and Marine Forces North, proudly proclaimed: "Our mission has been completed."



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Also Read: Marines Invade Cleveland's Burke Lakefront Airport as Part of Marine Week

Also Read: Marine Week Leaving Emotional Impact on Visitors

Also Read: Silent Drill Platoon Caps Marine Week with a Quiet Flourish

AFGHAN POPPY CROPS DOWN 40 PERCENT SINCE '08



Poppy cultivation in Afghanistan, which supports insurgent activity with its profits, has declined 40 percent due to coalition



forces' efforts. In Helmand province, Marines with Regional Command Southwest (RC-SW) have implemented programs to encourage farmers to switch to legal crops, such as wheat. The decline in poppy cultivation has limited the Taliban's ability to conduct their terrorism operations. "In all countries we see links between cultivation and security," said Angela Me, an analyst at the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. "The areas that are more

secure are where we had less opium." As the harvest season comes to a close, farmers grew approximately 143,000 acres poppy this year, down from nearly 256,000 acres in 2008, according to RC-SW. More than 90 percent of the world's heroin poppies come from Afghanistan, particularly Helmand province.

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MARINES SUPPORT RESCUE OF TWO MEN LOST AT SEA NEAR GUAM



Marines participating in Exercise Geiger Fury on the Pacific island of Tinian worked with the U.S. Coast Guard- Sector Guam to successfully rescue two men lost at sea June 6. By providing aerial assistance, the Marines were able to locate the lost men and coordinate efforts with a Japanese tanker to bring the two men aboard. The men had been missing for nearly three days. "This truly says something special about the Marine Corps that in short notice we were able launch and get the mission

underway and successfully complete it," said Capt. Joseph Lennox, a pilot with Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 152 who assisted in the search and rescue operation. "That's the kind of thing the American people expect out of us, to be able to conduct a mission at the drop of a hat and accomplish it professionally, and we definitely proved that today."

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CORPSMEN CELEBRATE 114TH BIRTHDAY AT SEA

Navy Corpsmen celebrated the 114th anniversary of the Navy Hospital Corps and its partnership with the Marine Corps June 17. Corpsmen with the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) and the Iwo Jima Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) held cake-cutting ceremonies aboard three ARG ships. The 24th MEU has 96 Navy medical personnel as a theater reserve and crisis response force. "I wanted to be a medic, but I also wanted to be a Marine, so a green-side corpsman is the best of both worlds for me," said Petty Officer 1st Class Julian Guidry, a senior medical representative for the 24th MEU. As part of their current deployment, the 24th MEU has one of the newest additions to the expeditionary medical field -- a shock and trauma platoon that provides medical care for Marines where ships and hospitals cannot.

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MARINE SURPRISES SON WITH HOMECOMING ON FLAG DAY

Michael Estrada got the surprise of his life June 11 when his father, Staff Sgt. Juan Estrada, walked into his kindergarten classroom as part of a surprise homecoming ceremony. The five-year-old boy was overjoyed to see his father who deployed to Afghanistan for six months. "It's definitely great to see him and give him a hug," the elder Estrada said. Michael's teacher at Live Oak Elementary School in Santa Cruz, Calif., convinced his mother to have the homecoming at the school. "It's important for the community to know our forces are out there risking their lives," Arletta



Smith said. "There is a real dad in those uniforms." As part of the plan, the students were in the middle of a Flag Day celebration when Estrada made his surprise entrance.

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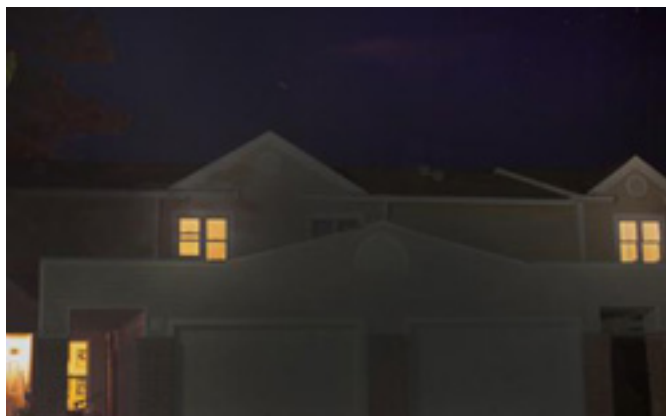
REYNOLDS NAMED INFLUENTIAL FEMALE ATHLETE

Brig. Gen. Lori Reynolds, the first woman to command Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C., was honored June 21 in Washington, D.C., as one of 40 influential women who participated in high school or college athletics. Reynolds, a basketball player at the U.S. Naval Academy during the early 1980s, and the other honorees are great role models for young girls, said Maria Brennan, president and chief executive officer of Women in Cable Telecommunications, one of three organizers for the event. "They are women who were involved in athletics early in their lives and have gone on to make a significant impact on society," she said. The event commemorates the 40th anniversary of Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, which required institutions receiving federal funding to provide equal opportunity to women and men. Reynolds is one of two service members to be honored at the event alongside celebrities such as Tina Fey and Queen Latifa.



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CHERRY POINT INTRODUCES DOD ENERGY CONSERVATION PROGRAM



Base housing residents at Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Cherry Point, N.C., are next in line to test the Resident Energy Conservation Program (RECP), a Secretary of Defense initiative to decrease energy use on bases. As part of the RECP, residents who use more than 10 percent above the average will owe a utility payment, while residents who use more than 10 percent below the average will receive a refund. During the three-month trial phase

beginning Oct. 1, residents will receive statements detailing their energy use and any funds they would have earned or paid. This test period will also determine the average energy use baseline. The full program will begin Jan. 1, 2013. "It's a good deal for our Marines, it's a good deal for the Marine Corps, and it's a good deal for our partner, [Atlantic Marine Corps Communities]," said Lt. Col. Paul W. Miller, the military family housing manager for MCAS Cherry Point.

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[Visit the Resident Energy Conservation Program Website](#)

USO OFFERS FREE MARRIAGE COUNSELING SEMINARS



The Oxygen For Your Relationships Program teaches couples how to improve communication, better understand each other, resolve conflict, and renew their relationship. Hosted by the United Services Organization (USO) and the Stronger Family Program, it acknowledges the struggles military families often deal with and offers a series of marriage counseling seminars free of charge to wounded warriors and their families. The in-person training sessions include a relationship assessment and training on how to improve marriages. Participants will create an action plan to help as they continue to strengthen their marriages, and the program provides on-going training and resources through online support networks. Upcoming seminar dates and locations include: July 31 in San Diego; Aug. 29-30 on Camp Twentynine Palms, Calif.; and Nov. 6-7 on Camp Lejeune, N.C.

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SCORE A SLOT FOR SOLD-OUT MARINE CORPS MARATHON

Those still seeking a slot in the Marine Corps Marathon (MCM) can receive a bib through the MCM Transfer Program. After the MCM sold out in record time last fall, many runners were left still wanting a bib.



Beginning June 20, registered runners can transfer their bib to another runner until Aug. 31. Once a registered runner has released his or her bib, the new runner must register and pay a \$30 transfer fee by Sept. 7. Each entry can only be transferred once. Hopeful runners can find a currently registered runner through the MCM Facebook page or event message board. In addition to the transfer program, many of the race's charity partners also have bibs remaining, and a list is available on the MCM website.

Visit the Marine Corps Marathon Website



TRANSITION

WOUNDED WARRIORS COWBOY UP



Marines with the Wounded Warrior Regiment recently did therapy Wild West-style on their road to recovery. With the help of the Lone Star Land and Cattle Company in Casper, Wyo., Marines learned cowboy skills by rounding up steers and wrestling them to the ground to be branded. Equine therapy is a regular part of the wounded warrior recovery process, but the cowboy experience provided a different kind of therapy. "What I'm trying to do is bring them out into the outdoors doing traditional, in this case, cowboy activities, because I think

the fresh air, the hard work, being up on a horse and with cattle is just a great thing," said Col. John Mayer, former commander of the Marine Corps Wounded Warrior Regiment in Quantico, Va. He coordinated the ranch experience for his wounded Marines and accompanied them during the trip.

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CAMP LEJEUNE TO GET \$11 MILLION TBI/PTSD TREATMENT CENTER

The Intrepid Fallen Heroes Fund is building an extension of the National Intrepid Center of Excellence (NICoE) at Camp Lejeune, N.C., which will treat service members with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and traumatic brain injuries (TBIs). The center, which broke ground June 13, will provide psychiatric testing, chiropractic treatment and physical therapy for service members, and has spaces where patients can spend time with their family during their




treatments. "What the NICoE treatment center brings to Camp Lejeune is a national-level state-of-the-art facility that will help us with both the diagnostics and the treatment of post-traumatic stress and traumatic brain," said Lt. Gen. John Paxton, Commanding General, II Marine Expeditionary Force (II MEF). The center at Camp Lejeune is one of approximately 10 new satellite centers being built by the Intrepid Fallen Heroes Fund for the Department of Defense within the next three years.

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VIRTUAL REALITY HELPS SERVICE MEMBERS RECOVER FROM PTSD



Veterans returning from deployment have an ever-increasing array of options to deal with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), including virtual reality. Using such technology, troops mentally return to traumatic events to work through things that still haunt them. The virtual reality systems build upon exposure therapy, a method for treating PTSD where the therapist asks the service member to verbally describe their traumatic events. "You can't re-create that exact occurrence, but you can help trigger a memory," said Michael Kramer, a clinical

 psychologist who uses the Virtual Iraq/Afghanistan program through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Additionally, veterans can also create avatars on social networks to talk about their struggles with others with similar experiences. As troops continue to return from war, it is essential that they have the resources to cope with their experiences, and virtual reality technology will continue to be one tool available to veterans.

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THANK YOU

SAN CLEMENTE HOSTS HOMECOMING PARADE FOR 2/4



The city of San Clemente, Calif., hosted a parade June 14 through the city streets to celebrate 2nd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment's homecoming from a 7-month deployment to Helmand province, Afghanistan. The event included Vietnam veterans who marched beside their younger counterparts. "One of the guys next to me told me that today was the best day of his life since returning from Vietnam," said Frank Valdez, a Vietnam veteran. Following the parade, the 2nd Battalion, 4th Marine

Regiment Association held a ceremony at the city's Semper Fi Park to unveil a plaque honoring the Marines and present members of the battalion with honors for their outstanding leadership. "As a battalion commander and a Marine, I have never attended anything like a welcome home parade," said Lt. Col. Bill Vivian, the battalion commander. "I'm personally touched and it shows the great relationship we have with this city."

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