

TIP OF THE SPEAR

2ND MEB RECEIVES TOP HONOR FOR SERVICE



The Marines and Sailors who served as part of the 2nd Marine Expeditionary Brigade-Afghanistan were awarded the Presidential Unit Citation (PUC) for outstanding performance in 2009-2010. Calling their efforts "the most holistic counterinsurgency campaign since the coalition presence in Afghanistan began in 2001," Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus, along with the Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. James F. Amos and Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps Sgt. Maj. Micheal Barrett, presented the award during a ceremony at Camp Lejuene, N.C., Sept. 14. "They were great warriors and did strike the

heart of the Taliban insurgency, but they also built schools; they trained the Afghan forces; they deployed female engagement teams," Mabus said. "So they left not only a safer place, but a place governed by the rule of law -- a place where people can feel safe." The PUC is awarded to units that go above and beyond the call of duty to distinguish themselves from other units participating in the same campaign, and this is the first Marine-led unit to receive the PUC for service in Afghanistan. [Read more](#)

Watch: Marines Awarded Presidential Unit Citation



PHOTO OF THE WEEK



Cpl. Patrick McCall, a rifleman with the 2nd Squad, 3rd Platoon, Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 6, receives a high-five from an Afghan boy during a security patrol in Sangin, Helmand province, Afghanistan, Sept. 6. The Marines conducted the patrol to disrupt the flow of lethal and illicit aid by the enemy in the area. *(Photo by Lance Cpl. Jason Morrison)*



IN THE NEWS

EMBASSY ATTACKS HIGHLIGHT CORPS SECURITY WORK



With attacks and protests on the rise in the Middle East, the U.S. has sent two Marine Corps' Fleet Antiterrorism Security Teams (FAST), whose mission it is to reinforce or recapture the critical U.S. infrastructure in their specified area of operations, to Tripoli and Yemen. The platoon of 50 Marine security troops was released to Libya last week following the death of U.S. Ambassador to Libya, Christopher Stevens, and the resulting protests at the U.S. consulate. Just days later, a second FAST team was sent to Yemen after another anti-American protest broke out. As America's Expeditionary Force in Readiness, the FAST capabilities are an important

example as to why the Marine Corps is key to the nation's defense. [Read more](#)

WOUNDED MARINE GETS KEYS TO 'SMART HOME'



Cpl. Juan Dominguez and his wife were presented the keys to their new "smart home," which boasts several adaptations to make life easier for the triple amputee. The two-story house in Temecula, Calif., was modified with an elevator, self-flushing toilets and easy-opening cabinets, as well as doors, lighting and heating controlled by an iPad. Dominguez lost both legs and his right arm due to a roadside bomb explosion in Afghanistan in 2010. Money to build the smart house was raised by actor Gary Sinise and the Stephen Siller Tunnel to Towers Foundation. [Read more](#)

BROTHERHOOD BOND THROUGH TRAINING



While Marines with Weapons Company, 1st Battalion, 1st Marines work to prepare Afghan National Army (ANA) soldiers to lead combat operations,



the two groups have become brothers in arms. After teaching ongoing courses in mortar systems, marksmanship, night movements and land navigation, the ANA now plans and conducts their own patrols and operations, with the Marines in a supportive role. But it isn't all work and no play in the insurgent stronghold of Trek Nawa, in southwest Afghanistan -- the Marines and Afghans have used their limited downtime to play volleyball and dine together on base. [Read more](#)

CORPSMAN AWARDED FOR LIFE-SAVING RESPONSE AT MALL



Petty Officer 3rd Class Nicole Rodriguez received the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal Sept. 6, after saving the life of a civilian. While visiting the local mall in Japan, Rodriguez sprang into action to administer cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) to a patron who had stopped breathing. "I directed two of the other civilians that were there to move him onto the floor where I reassessed his vitals," said Rodriguez. "Once I determined I could hear or feel something, I started CPR. After about 30 seconds of CPR, he started to come back." This was Rodriguez's first time administering CPR on someone outside of training. Rodriguez currently

serves with the Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 12 at the Robert M. Casey Medical and Dental Clinic in Iwakuni, Japan. [Read more](#)

NAVY, MARINE CORPS BANDS GET EVERYONE FEELING PATRIOTIC



As part of Detroit Navy Week 2012, sounds of patriotic music and popular tunes filled the streets of Livonia, Mich., as the Navy Band Great Lakes and Marine Corps Band New Orleans performed together Sept. 10.

Commemorating the 200th anniversary of both the War of 1812 and "The Star-Spangled Banner", the bands played for more than an hour at City Hall, ending with the well-loved military medley honoring each branch of service. The hundreds who attended the concert were among the millions of citizens that hear the Marine Corps Band New Orleans perform each year at more than 250 concerts, parades and ceremonies around the

country. [Read more](#)

VETERANS' AFFAIRS EXEMPT FROM SEQUESTRATION



The White House has declared that the Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) budget is exempt from cuts should sequestration take effect in January, according to a report released Sept. 14. This safeguards veterans' disability and education benefits, health care and counseling, and prevents administrative cuts that could have forced layoffs, pay reductions and travel bans. However, numerous other veteran programs and initiatives outside of the VA, including the Labor Department's Veterans Employment and Training Service, are expected to see budget cuts if sequestration happens. [Read more](#)

DOD TO HOST 2013 CAREGIVERS CONFERENCE



The Department of Defense (DoD) plans to hold a conference next year to address issues facing military caregivers and their needs, announced John Campbell, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Warrior Care Policy. Wounded warriors often rely on friends and family throughout their recovery -- and the DoD wants to provide caregivers with the support and resources that they need. The DoD and Department of Veterans' Affairs already have dozens of programs to support caregivers through the recovery process, but Campbell says they fall short in addressing many of the daily issues families face, including marital strife and financial stress

of caregiving. [Read more](#)

MARINE CORPS DESIGNATES MACDILL A STANDALONE COMMAND



The Marine Corps designated its new Central Command at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla., as a standalone headquarters for its Middle East forces, and Lt. Gen. Robert Neller took command following a ceremony Sept. 17.



Though the previous commander, Lt. Gen. Thomas Waldhauser, split his time between MacDill and Camp Pendleton, Calif., the restructuring will allow Neller to devote his full attention to Marine forces in the Middle East and Persian Gulf region. "Up until now, there has been one officer who had two hats," Neller said. "By virtue of having two different jobs ... you end up having to split yourself. You can't be entirely focused on the one

assignment." [Read more](#)

MARINES TEST THEIR ABILITIES DURING THE 4TH ANNUAL RECON CHALLENGE



With a time of 9 hours, 28 minutes and 16 seconds, Capt. William Burns and Master Sgt. Dave Jarvis, both of Force Recon Company, took top honors at the 4th Annual Recon Challenge at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., Sept. 15. The 29.4-mile race tested 14 two-man Marine teams, who all swam, hiked and completed a performance course. The challenge took competitors through hills and sweltering heat to complete several missions to test their endurance, communication skills and commitment to mission accomplishment. [Read more](#)



THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

SEPTEMBER 16, 1814

A detachment of Marines under Maj. Daniel Carmick from the Naval Station at New Orleans, together with an Army detachment, destroyed a pirate stronghold at Barataria, on the Island of Grande Terre, in the Gulf of Mexico, near New Orleans.



SEMPER FI

THE HOMECOMING THEY NEVER HAD



Nearly half a century after returning from the Vietnam War, Marines from one of the first units to make an amphibious landing in Vietnam were finally honored Monday with the homecoming party they never received. Marines of 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marines, who landed on Red Beach in Da Nang Bay, South Vietnam, on April 10, 1965, held a reunion in Las Vegas and were honored by Mayor Carolyn Goodman. Former Sgt. Ted Riccubuo, who helped organize the reunion, said that when he and his buddies returned to the U.S., they were disenchanted with the war but "more disillusioned by the American public," which for the most part shunned them with attitudes of coldness and indifference. The reunion provided the men an official homecoming and an opportunity to see each other for the first time in decades. [Read more](#)

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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