



MARINE WEEK ST. LOUIS SPECIAL EDITION

MARINE WEEK COMES TO ST. LOUIS

The third annual Marine Week will take the city of St. Louis, Mo., by land, air and sea, June 20-26. Marine Week will feature more than 60 events across the metropolitan area during the week-long celebration, which will showcase the unique characteristics of America's Corps. Included in this special edition of the Marine Corps Connection is a preview of all you can see and do during Marine Week. When the Marines land in the Gateway City this June, every St. Louisan will be reminded why the Marine Corps is "America's Expeditionary Force in Readiness." We'll see you in St. Louis.

[Click here to check out the Marine Week St. Louis website >>](#)

[Click here to see the full schedule of events >>](#)



CORPS, ST. LOUIS SHARE IN CELEBRATION AND RECOGNITION

Marine Week is bookended by opening and closing ceremonies to officially mark the seven day celebration. There is no place more appropriate to hold both ceremonies than the War Memorial, located in the heart of Downtown St. Louis. The memorial honors the gallant sons and daughters of Missouri and of St. Louis, who made the supreme sacrifice during World War I. During the opening ceremony, Monday, June 20 at 11 a.m., Mayor Francis Slay will officially proclaim June 20 to 26 to be Marine Week in the city of St. Louis. The ceremony will feature a performance by the Albany Marine Band, a special recognition of Montford Point Marines from the Greater St. Louis area, and the posting of a Marine honor guard that will stand post 24 hours a day at the steps of the War Memorial to remind the city the Marine Corps is always on duty. Marine Week St. Louis will conclude with an official ceremony to not only thank the city for their generous partnership, but also to honor the Gold Star Families of Missouri and remember the sacrifices their loved ones gave in defense of this nation. As Americans, we have much to celebrate, but it is important to remember those who have paid the ultimate price so we may continue to enjoy the freedoms of this country. The closing ceremony will be Sunday, June 26 at 10:30 a.m. Immediately following the

ceremony, the Silent Drill Platoon will perform at 11:15 a.m., marking the last official event of Marine Week St. Louis.

[Learn more about the history of the War Memorial >>](#)

WHAT TO SEE AT MARINE WEEK ST. LOUIS

THE CORPS' EQUIPMENT, CAPABILITY ON DISPLAY

Seize the opportunity to man the helm of the revolutionary MV-22 Osprey; climb aboard a M1A1 Abrams tank; jump in the cockpit of the AH-1W Cobra attack helicopter; and take your best shot on the simulated rifle range. All week, state-of-the-art ground vehicles, aircraft, weaponry and equipment will be on full display at the Gateway Arch, Ballpark Village at Busch Stadium and the War Memorial. Witness demonstrations by the elite instructors of the [Marine Corps Martial Arts Program \(MCMAP\)](#) as Marines engage in hand-to-hand combat under the Arch. Military Working Dog Teams will also be conducting demonstrations with their highly trained K-9 companions. See how you match up during the Marine Corps Combat Fitness Test (CFT) to experience both the mental and physical rigors of Marine life. For the hi-tech enthusiast, get a sneak peek of the latest combat gear and equipment during [Marine Corps Systems Command \(MCSC\)](#) Military Science and Technology Expo. MCSC is the Commandant's agent used to accomplish the Corps' warfighting mission, outfitting United States Marines with literally everything they drive, shoot and wear. All static equipment display venues will be open 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily. For dates and times of specific demonstrations, please visit the Marine Week website for the full schedule of events.

[Learn more about the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program >>](#)

[Learn more about Marine Corps Systems Command >>](#)

ALBANY MARINE BAND, SILENT DRILL PLATOON TO PERFORM

The Albany Marine Band and Silent Drill Platoon will perform for the St. Louis community throughout Marine Week, with performances at Kiener Plaza, Busch Stadium, the Gateway Arch, the War Memorial and throughout the streets of Clayton, Mo. Formed in 1990, the Albany Marine Band became one of only twelve bands through the Marine Corps. Stationed at Marine Corps Logistics Base, Albany, Ga., the Band of 50 Marines travels throughout the United States and internationally to fulfill its mission of serving as musical ambassadors, providing music for military ceremonies, community celebrations, recruiting programs, and this June, Marine Week St. Louis. The precision and discipline of the United States Marine

Corps Silent Drill Platoon exemplifies the professionalism rooted in the history and tradition of the Corps. The Silent Drill Platoon first performed in the Sunset Parades of 1948 and received such an overwhelming response that it soon became a regular part of the parades at Marine Barracks, Washington, D.C. Do not miss the opportunity to see them perform together at Marine Week during a Sunset Parade at the Gateway Arch, Saturday, June 25.

[Learn more about the Albany Marine Band >>](#)

[Learn more about the Silent Drill Platoon >>](#)

MARINES CONDUCT COMBAT AIR AND GROUND DEMO

On June 24 and 25, St. Louisans will witness the Marine Corps' military might with a Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) demonstration. As Marines come across the Mississippi River and up the riverfront adjacent to the Gateway Arch grounds from land, air and sea, this demonstration will illustrate why the Marine Corps is "America's Expeditionary Force in Readiness." The MAGTF is the Marine Corps' principal organization for conducting missions. MAGTFs provide commanders with scalable, versatile expeditionary forces able to respond to a broad range of contingency, crisis and conflict situations. They are a balanced combined-arms force package containing organic command, ground, aviation, and logistics elements. The MAGTF demonstration scenario is of a Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) that has been deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, and subsequently receives the call to interdict pirate actions off the Horn of Africa. This amphibious assault demonstration will showcase multiple Marine vehicles and aircraft in action, to include: amphibious assault vehicles, light amphibious vehicles, combat rigid raiding crafts, the MV-22 Osprey, AV-8B Harrier, CH-53E Super Stallion, CH-46E Sea Knight, AH-1W Cobra, and UH-1N Huey. The MAGTF demonstrations will last approximately 45 minutes and promises to be a highlight of Marine Week St. Louis. Show times are June 24 at 4 p.m. and June 25 at 2 p.m. at the Gateway Arch.

MARINES LEND A HAND TO THE GATEWAY CITY

Dozens of Marines will partner with St. Louisans in more than 20 service projects during Marine Week promoting community outreach and development. Marines will volunteer at the St. Louis Area Food Bank, build and renovate homes with Habitat for Humanity, and participate in multiple greening initiatives at local parks. On Wednesday, June 22, Marines will be visiting veterans at Jefferson Barracks Medical Center and raising and realigning headstones with Wounded Warriors at Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery. From Monday through Thursday, Marines will be working on a major service project with Operation Brightside to renovate a community garden and learning center at the organization's offices. Marines will also be lending their artistic talents to a commemorative mural promoting "community, country and Corps" at the Mathew's Dickey Boys and Girls

Club. On Friday, June 24, both the community garden and learning center and the commemorative mural will be unveiled and dedicated to the community to serve as a lasting memory of the Corps gratitude to and continued relationship with the city of St. Louis.

For a full schedule of events, please visit www.Marines.mil/Marine Week.

GET TO KNOW YOUR ST. LOUIS MARINES

The strength of the Corps is the individual Marine. In St. Louis, that strength is represented by the Marines of 3rd Battalion, 24th Marine Regiment, who not only serve their community daily, but also serve as the commander and members of the Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force Command Element (SPMAGTF CE) for Marine Week St. Louis. Currently, more than 2,300 active duty and reserve Marines from Missouri are serving at home and overseas, including Marines participating in combat operations in Afghanistan. Over 20,000 men and women living in the greater St. Louis area have served, or are currently serving, in the Marine Corps. Meet a few of your St. Louis Marines in the following profiles.

LT. COL. T. SHANE TOMKO

Lt. Col. T. Shane Tomko is the Inspector and Instructor (I&I) of 3d Battalion, 24th Marine Regiment in Bridgeton, Mo., and serves as the Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force (SPMAGTF) Commander for Marine Week St. Louis. Lt. Col. Tomko grew up across the Mississippi River in Quincy, Il. A graduate of the University of Missouri, he became quite affiliated with the St. Louis area during his college years and joined the Corps with the military occupational specialty (MOS) of Infantry Officer. When asked why he joined the Marine Corps, his answer was simple yet direct: "I have always wanted to be a Marine." Lt. Col. Tomko grew to love the Gateway City, as the USO of St. Louis took good care of he and his family throughout his 28 years in the Corps. He has seen many climes and places, but is proud and honored to call St. Louis his home.

SGT. NICOLE LEA TANNEHILL

Sergeant Nicole Tannehill has been in the St. Louis area her entire life, other than the four years spent on active duty at Camp Pendleton, Calif. She was raised in Wentzville, Mo., before moving to the neighborhood of Moscow Mills. "I love the challenge, self pride and great adventure the Corps has to offer," said Sgt. Tannehill, who is the first in her family to serve in the Marine Corps. Now a mother with one young daughter, Sgt. Tannehill serves as

a Marine Week St. Louis Assistant Planner at 3/24 and is quite active in the community with Toys for Tots.

CPL. MICHAEL JAMES VANDEVEER

Corporal Michael Vandevveer, Headquarters and Service Company, 3d Battalion, 24th Marine Regiment, spent his childhood across Florissant, Chesterfield, and St. Peters, constantly surrounded by his family, all of whom live in the St. Louis Metropolitan Area. He joined the Corps as a Radio Tech three years ago and currently serves as an Assistant Planner for Marine Week St. Louis. "I joined to better my life, help educate myself and to be a Marine," Cpl. Vandevveer said. "I have always wanted to serve my country." He has continued the path to higher education, currently enrolled at St. Charles Community College.

DID YOU KNOW?

The St. Louis Cardinals, one of the most storied franchises in Major League Baseball, have a particularly historic relationship with the Corps. While Marines were stationed in Japan during WWII, members of Maj Gregory Boyington's Marine Fighter Squadron 214 (VMF-214), better known as the "Black Sheep" Squadron, received a commemorative baseball cap from the 1942 World Series Champion Cardinals for each enemy aircraft downed by the squadron. Here members of VMF-214 are shown wearing their caps on the wings of a powerful Corsair fighter, 4 Dec 1943.

[Click here to learn more interesting history between St. Louis and the Corps >>](#)
[While you're at it, take a listen to the Marine's Hymn >>](#)