



TIP OF THE SPEAR

NAVY CROSS FOR FALLEN MARINES



Staff Sgt. Sky Mote and Capt. Matthew Manoukian were posthumously awarded the Navy Cross Jan. 18 for their actions while deployed as a part of Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in August 2012. When a rogue Afghan policeman opened fire inside their military outpost in the Puzeh area of Sangin, the two rushed the attacker and shot back, fighting to the death to cover other Marines as they escaped with the wounded. "The actions of Sky and Matt are the essence of what drives us daily in this command. These two men truly believed in their mission, their unit, this country and

ultimately each other," said LtCol John Lynch, commanding officer, 1st Marine Special Operations Battalion. The Navy Cross is the nation's second-highest medal for valor in combat. [Read more](#)

Also Read: Families Receive Navy Cross for Son's Heroic Actions

Also Read: Navy Cross for Marines Killed In 'Insider Attack'



PHOTO OF THE WEEK



Cpl. Justin Cope, M1A1 tank crewman, 1st Tank Battalion, climbs a jungle gym with students during recess at Palm Vista Elementary School in Twentynine Palms, Calif., Jan. 15. Marines with 1st Tanks visited the school for the first time as part of the Adopt-a-School program. *(Photo by Lance Cpl. Kasey Peacock)*



IN THE NEWS

CORPS APPEARS STRONG AHEAD OF QDR



With the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) likely to be published in February, defense experts marked support for the Marine Corps' equipment needs, its post-Afghanistan mission, and its stated minimum end-strength goal of 174,000. "I think the Marine Corps is going to come out best of all the services," said Dakota Wood, senior research fellow for defense programs at the Heritage Foundation. "The Marine Corps has positioned itself as this middle-weight response force, very mobile, very flexible. That has really resonated well with the combatant commanders." Last published in 2010, the QDR is a congressionally mandated review of U.S. military

strategy and priorities. [Read more](#)

NO END IN SIGHT FOR MARINES' WOUNDED WARRIOR REGIMENT



The war in Afghanistan may be ending, but the Marine Corps' Wounded Warrior Regiment isn't going anywhere. "While our reduced presence in Afghanistan will result in fewer combat casualties...the [regiment's] current structure and capabilities are flexible and able to adjust to fluctuations of our population of wounded, ill and injured Marines," said spokesman Capt. Ryan Powell. This decision is due in part to the regiment's mission, offering recovery support to troops regardless of whether their ailments are combat-related. The Army plans to restructure its wounded warrior program, closing five of its 29 Warrior Transition

Units. [Read more](#)

MARINES, SAILORS TO CONDUCT TRAINING IN BURUNDI, UGANDA



Approximately 50 Marines and Sailors from Special-Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force (SPMAGTF) Africa 14.1 are gearing up to travel to Uganda and Burundi to conduct train-and-equip missions designed to improve the military capacity of our African partners and better enable them to prevent conflict and increase regional security. The focus of the training is logistics and engineering, but also includes medical services, basic marksmanship, communications, vehicle movement and maintenance procedures, staff coordination training. SPMAGTF Africa 14.1 is the newest rotation of Marines to arrive at Naval Air Station Sigonella, Italy, to stage and prepare for theater security cooperation missions into various countries in Africa. [Read more](#)

A JOB NOBODY APPLIES FOR -- MILITARY CAREGIVER



Family and spouses of injured service members - whether physically or emotionally - are increasingly identifying themselves as "military caregivers" as more realize the role they are playing. Attention on the population has grown since 2010, when the Department of Veterans Affairs was directed to begin offering a monthly stipend and health insurance to people caring for gravely injured Iraq and Afghanistan veterans. Many have reached out to others in the situation, relieved to find people who understand their situation. A 2013 survey by the nonprofit Blue Star Families showed that 12 percent of members described themselves as military caregivers, and they expect that number to grow. [Read more](#)

[Blue Star Families Website](#)

ALL BARK, ALL BITE



The controlled aggression of military working dogs is a key to their job, as they locate drugs and explosive components, work as part of search-and-rescue teams and react to save handlers' lives. "It's all about building confidence," said Staff Sgt. Charles Hardesty, kennel master, Combat Center Provost Marshal's Office. The aggression in a military working dog can be compared to the use of a ballistic vest for police officers. The likelihood of being shot on duty is relatively low, but it's always good to have a tool and not need it, vice the alternative. "It's a tool that we like to have," Hardesty said. [Read more](#)

MARINES, SAILORS HEAD TO REPUBLIC OF KOREA FOR BILATERAL TRAINING



Marines and Sailors with the 3rd Marine Regiment, deployed Jan. 14 to Pohang, Republic of Korea, to participate in Korean Marine Exchange Program (KMEP). KMEP is a regularly scheduled combined training exercise that increases the combat readiness and interoperability between the Republic of Korea (ROK) and U.S. Marine Corps forces, and is designed to promote stability on the Korean Peninsula, enhance the alliance between the two nations, and strengthen ROK-U.S. military capabilities. "By partnering with a foreign unit, and effectively training and communicating with them, (we) will help our Marines understand that it's not always just a U.S.

Marine Corps operation," said Capt. Thomas Morrow. [Read more](#)

OFFICIALS SIGN OKINAWA DISASTER-PREPAREDNESS AGREEMENT



Mayor Tetsuji Matsumoto of Urasoe City, Okinawa, Japan and Maj. Gen. Charles Hudson, commanding general of Marine Corps Installations Pacific, signed a local implementing agreement Jan.



17, specifying evacuation procedures through Camp Kinser. This agreement is the fifth of its kind between Okinawa-based officials and Marine Corps leaders, and is an important way to ensure the mutual safety of the citizens of Okinawa and the personnel stationed on U.S. installations. "The Marine Corps is committed to doing everything we can to be prepared to respond in the event of such a crisis. By treaty we are allies, but by choice we are partners, friends

and neighbors," said Hudson. [Read more](#)

FIRST MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP ANNOUNCES RECIPIENTS



Master Sgt. Marion Eggers, 34, and Sgt. Michael Joseph, 24 became the first recipients of the new Loretta Cornett-Huff Memorial Scholarship, Jan. 21, during a presentation at the Education Center of Wayland Baptist University Hawaii. Recently, Wayland Baptist University began offering two scholarships in honor of the retired command education services officer, who passed away June 20, 2013. Cornett-Huff, who served in numerous positions throughout her career, including the Navy Campus Far East area coordinator in Yokosuka, Japan and public relations director at Oklahoma City University, had worked more than 42 years in government service.

[Read more](#)

[MCBH Kaneohe Bay Education Center Website](#)



THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

JANUARY 29, 1991

Marines participated in the first major ground action of Desert Storm, repulsing an Iraqi mechanized



MARINE OF THE WEEK

MARINES IN TANKS UNIT DECORATED FOR BRAVERY IN AFGHANISTAN



This week we're highlighting several Marines who were honored Jan. 21 for exemplary service and bravery during deployments to Afghanistan. Capt. Christopher Ashinhurst received the Bronze Star with combat device for a series of combat engagements during his 2013 deployment. And LCpl. Matthew Gonzales and Cpl. Arturo Zavala Jr. received Navy and Marine Corps Medals for saving their tank driver from drowning when the vehicle flooded while crossing a stream. Though separate incidents, all Marines exemplified fearlessness and serve as an inspiration to their fellow Marines. Ashinhurst, Gonzales and Zavala received their awards from Maj.

Gen. Larry Nicholson, commanding general of 1st Marine Division, during a ceremony at Twentynine Palms, Calif. [Read more](#)



THE CORPS REPORT



The Corps Report Ep. 31 -- Recon Marines Train and Silver Star Recipient is Recognized

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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