



31st MARINE EXPEDITIONARY UNIT COMPLETES DEPLOYMENT TO ASIA-PACIFIC REGION



The Okinawa, Japan-based 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit recently returned from a three-month deployment, marked by significant training and operations, which took them around the Asia-Pacific region aboard the Essex Amphibious Ready Group. The unit conducted bilateral training with U.S. allies, provided support during humanitarian assistance/disaster relief operations in the Republic of the Philippines in the wake of Super Typhoon Juan, and participated in the

commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the landing at Inchon, Korea. This amphibious, combined arms team is the nation's only Marine expeditionary unit that is forward-based outside the continental United States.

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NEWS

CENTRAL HELMAND COMMANDER SHARES SUCCESS WITH SENATORS



The multi-national coalition force deployed to Afghanistan's Helmand Province, home to the once tumultuous districts of Marjah and Nawa, has made significant progress in security, reconstruction and governance. Central to those successes has been California-based Regimental Combat Team 1. The regiment's senior Marine recently traveled with a delegation of United States senators to various towns throughout the province to visit with Marine units and assess the counterinsurgency efforts.

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MARINES WORK HAND-IN-HAND WITH AFGHAN POLICE



The Afghan police force is a key element in providing security and countering the Taliban insurgency within Afghanistan. Police Mentoring Teams with 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment live, train and patrol alongside the Afghan police force in Sangin District as they continue to grow their capacity and capability to safeguard the Afghan people. The mentoring teams train their Afghan partners through formal instruction and personal example.

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MARINES TAKE TO STREETS IN NEW RECONNAISSANCE VEHICLE

The Corps' new reconnaissance vehicles were designed to give Marines more speed and mobility. The Internally Transportable Vehicles can be loaded on small aircraft and allow Marines to navigate the most challenging driving conditions. Marines with 3rd Reconnaissance Battalion in Okinawa, Japan, recently put the compact vehicles through an extensive test drive in preparation for future deployments and operations.

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CORPS TO REASSESS HOW IT PREPARES MARINES FOR LIFE AFTER WAR

In his recently published guidance to the Corps, Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. James Amos directed a complete assessment of the Corps' Transition Assistance Program to ensure it is providing the right educational and occupational assistance to Marines leaving active duty. The North County Times reports on the challenges facing some Camp Pendleton Marines who are transitioning to civilian life and the Corps' commitment to return better citizens back to communities across the nation.

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MARINE CHILDREN GIVE THROUGH COMMUNITY PROGRAM

Some Marine families will inevitably celebrate this holiday season separated from a spouse, parent or loved one who is deployed overseas. Children Giving Gifts, A California non-profit organization recently teamed with the 1st Marine Division to help children of Marines and sailors select holiday gifts that will be mailed to their deployed parents. The event not only benefited the military families, but was also a special moment for the organization.

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FIRST LADY WELCOMES MARINE FAMILIES TO WHITE HOUSE



First Lady Michelle Obama recently welcomed Marine families to the White House for an event that highlighted the Toys for Tots charity and allowed military children to make holiday crafts with her. Obama said she was honored to be with the families who go beyond the call of duty in volunteering with Toys for Tots. "We're honored to be joined by so many members of the military and their families, folks who show us every day with their service, truly, what it means to put others above self," she said.

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HERO OF THE WEEK

MARINE LAUDED FOR CAPTURING SHOPLIFTER DURING TOYS FOR TOTS DRIVE



A Marine stabbed while collecting Toys for Tots said he thought of all the people inside Best Buy in Augusta, Ga., on crowded Black Friday when he tried to intercept a fleeing shoplifter. Cpl. Phillip Duggan, who has since fully recovered from his injuries, tackled the perpetrator as he was running out of the store. The Marine reservist, who is currently on active duty, has been presented a new dress blouse by the North Augusta Marine Corps League, to replace the one damaged in the incident.

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EVENTS

MARINE BAND HERALDS HOLIDAY SEASON WITH CONCERT IN VIRGINIA

Kick-off the holiday season with family and friends at Wolf Trap's 2010 [Holiday Sing-A-Long](#) Sunday, Dec. 5, at the Filene Center in Vienna, Va. This annual musical celebration hosts a performance by the [United States Marine Band](#) and a Sing-A-Long of Christmas carols and Hanukkah songs with choir and vocal groups from the metropolitan Washington area. Wolf Trap will be participating in [Toys for Tots](#) by collecting new, unwrapped toys at the entrance to the Filene Center before the Sing-A-Long. Donations are strictly voluntary and not a requirement. Admission is free and no tickets are required. Parking is free, but limited so plan on arriving early.

1ST MARINE DIVISION BAND MARCHES IN FALLBROOK CHRISTMAS PARADE

The Camp Pendleton, Calif.-based [1st Marine Division Band](#) will march in the 29th Annual [Fallbrook Christmas Parade](#) Saturday, Dec. 4, in Fallbrook, Calif. The band performs at over 300 commitments a year, including the Tournament of Roses Parades, Disneyland's

Independence Day Concerts, and annual concerts at the California Center for the Arts. In 2007, they were awarded the "Colonel George S. Howard Citation of Musical Excellence for Military Concert Bands," administered by the John Philip Sousa Foundation. Most recently, the band was recognized as the Marine Corps Band of the Year.

MARINE JETS KICK-OFF NFL GAMES

Marine F/A-18 jets with [Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 323](#) will conduct a flyover at [Lambeau Field](#) in Green Bay, Wis., to kick-off the NFL matchup between the Green Bay Packers and San Francisco 49ers, Sunday, Dec. 5, at noon. [Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 314](#)'s F/A-18s will fly over [Raymond James Stadium](#) in Tampa, Fla., as the Tampa Bay Buccaneers take on the Atlanta Falcons Sunday, Dec. 5, at 4:15 p.m.
