

TIP OF THE SPEAR

MARINES SUPPORT HURRICANE SANDY RELIEF EFFORTS



Marines deployed to the most hurricane-battered sections of New York and New Jersey this week to bring assistance and supplies to victims of the storm. Within twenty-four hours of receiving the order, Marines and sailors of the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) deployed to New York Harbor on the USS Wasp, prepared to provide medical, logistical, engineering and heavy airlift support to the storm-damaged areas. Residents welcomed the Marines when they came ashore aboard CH-53 Super Stallion helicopters. They quickly went to work, clearing debris and conducting block-by-block assessments of

Staten Island neighborhoods to determine how much manpower was needed. "It was wonderful to see them," said Jessie Gonzalez, whose Staten Island home was flooded. "They gave us supplies, water and food. It makes us feel like we're actually getting help now. At least we feel safer with their presence." [Read more](#)

[Also read: 26th MEU Deploys to New York](#)

[Also read: Marines push into NYC to help with Sandy relief](#)



VIDEO OF THE WEEK

Commandant Gen. James F. Amos, and Sgt. Maj. of the Marine Corps, Sgt. Maj. Micheal P. Barrett, present the 2012 Marine Corps Birthday Message. Video includes historical footage and images from Guadalcanal, as well as interviews with World War II veterans, subject matter experts, active duty Marines and Marine spouses. *(Video by the Marine Corps)*



IN THE NEWS

CORPS RETURNING TO AMPHIBIOUS ROOTS



In a sign of shifting attention to amphibious operations and the Asia-Pacific region, the number of Marines deployed on Navy ships now equals that of those on the ground in Afghanistan. As of late October, three Marine Expeditionary Units (MEUs) -- totaling over 7,000 Marines -- were operating in the Indian or far western Pacific oceans, from the Persian Gulf to Thailand, Australia and the Philippines. The three MEUs now afloat -- the 15th, 24th and 31st -- are deployed from Camp Pendleton, Calif., Camp Lejeune, N.C., and Okinawa, Japan, respectively. There are seven MEUs total. With the end of the war in Afghanistan in view, the Corps is

returning to its traditional role as Americas expeditionary force-in-readiness, deployed worldwide aboard Navy vessels. [Read more](#)

MARINES, OKINAWANS SIGN AGREEMENT GRANTING ACCESS TO BASE DURING EMERGENCIES



Okinawa residents can now gain access to Marine Corp Air Station Futenma and Camp Foster to evacuate to higher ground should a natural disaster occur like the 2011 earthquake and tsunami that devastated northern Japan. Marine Corps and Japanese officials signed an access agreement Nov. 5. "Disaster preparedness is everyone's responsibility," Maj. Gen. Peter Talleri, commanding general of Marine Corps Base Camp Smedley D. Butler and deputy commander, Marine Corps Bases Japan, said during the signing ceremony at Camp Foster. "We strive to be contributing members of the local communities in which we live." Roughly

60 residents took part in a disaster drill following the signing. [Read more](#)

II MEF (FWD) MARINES PREP FOR DEPLOYMENT



In preparation for a year-long deployment to Afghanistan, Marines with II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward) (II MEF (Fwd)) recently went to the rifle range to hone their combat skills. More than 6,000 Marines will deploy as a task-organized Marine Air-Ground Task Force to southern Afghanistan early next year, with elements from 2nd Marine Division, 2nd Marine Logistics Group and 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing. The II MEF (Fwd)



Marines will assume operational control of Helmand and Nimroz provinces early next year and they'll be replacing the currently deployed I MEF (Fwd) Marines based out of Camp Pendleton, Calif. [Read more](#)

WASHINGTON NATIVE NAMED MARINE OF THE YEAR



Sgt. Cliff Wooldridge of Port Angeles, Wash., received the United Service Organizations (USO) Marine of the Year award from Marine Corps Assistant Commandant Gen. Joseph F. Dunford at the USO Gala Nov. 2 in Washington, D.C. Wooldridge joined the Marines in 2006 after graduating from high school. In 2010, Wooldridge was deployed to Afghanistan with 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines when his unit was ambushed. Snatching a machine gun from the hands of a Taliban fighter and killing the enemy in hand-to-hand combat, Wooldridge led a successful counterattack to thwart the ambush, for which he was awarded the Navy Cross in May. [Read more](#)

NATIONAL MONUMENT TO HONOR MILITARY SERVICE DOGS



The U.S. Working Dog Teams National Monument -- the first national monument to pay tribute to military dogs -- will be unveiled in Victory Park, Calif., in just two months. The monument, which honors every dog that has served in combat since World War II, depicts a military handler and four dogs: a Doberman, German shepherd, Labrador Retriever, and Belgian Malinois -- all breeds used in wars. After its California debut, the statue will move to its permanent home at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas, the headquarters for military working dog training, where it will stand in front of a granite wall. One side of the wall will have etched

photos of military dog teams in combat, and the other will have an inscription written by John Burman, the 65-year-old veteran military dog handler who created the monument's design. [Read more](#)

FIGHTER JETS FLY FOR MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS



Jets flew high over Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., Nov. 2 in



honor of Sgt. Dakota Meyer and Cpl. Jason Dunham, and Navy SEALs Petty Officer 2nd Class Michael Monsoor and Lt. Michael Murphy -- all Medal of Honor recipients from the wars in Iraq or Afghanistan. The F/A-18 jets featured the names and citations of the honored men, and during a dedication ceremony, Marine officials recounted the heroism of each veteran that earned them the nation's highest award for valor in combat. The jets will now fly in their honor with Marine Corps and Navy instructors and aviators training at Miramar with Marine Fighter Attack Training

Squadron 101. [Read more](#)

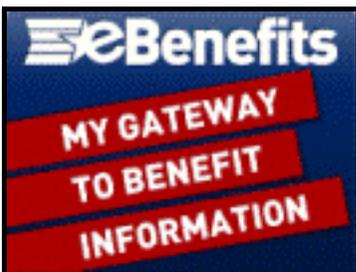
TOYS FOR TOTS BEGINS 65TH YEAR



Sixty-five years ago, the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program was started by Maj. Bill Hendricks and a group of reservists in Los Angeles, Calif., who collected and distributed 5,000 toys to needy children. Today, there are nearly 25,000 Marines, Marine Corps League members, Marine Corps veterans and volunteers involved in the annual campaign, the goal of which is "to deliver, through a new toy at Christmas, a message of hope to less fortunate youngsters that will assist them in becoming responsible, productive, patriotic citizens." The collection and distribution each year takes place in the communities across the country.

[Read more](#)

'EBENEFITS' HELPS VETS, ACTIVE DUTY, FAMILIES



Since its launch three years ago, the Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) and Defense of Department self-service portal "eBenefits" has become an online gateway to veterans. Approximately 30,000 veterans use eBenefits to track progress on VA compensation and pension claims daily. More so, 780,000 veterans use the portal monthly to view payment and reimbursement history and confirm online what money is headed into their accounts. But there's more to come: partnerships with the Veterans Health Administration, VA pensions and compensation, education services, and many other offices will introduce new features every three

months. By November 2013, every active duty member will be required to register and will be able to

access their full health records. [Read more](#)

[eBenefits website](#)



THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

NOVEMBER 10, 1921

This date marked the first formal commemoration of the birthday of the Marine Corps as Nov. 10. In October 1921, Maj. Edwin McClellan, officer-in-charge of the Historical Section, Headquarters Marine Corps, sent a memo to the Commandant, Maj. Gen. John A. Lejeune, suggesting that the original birthday of November 10, 1775 be declared a Marine Corps holiday to be celebrated throughout the Corps. Accordingly, on Nov. 1, 1921, Maj. Gen. Lejeune issued Marine Corps Order No. 47 summarizing the history, mission and tradition of the Corps, and directed that it be read to every command each Nov. 10.



SEMPER PARATUS

MARINES HELP SAVE 14 NEW YORKERS TRAPPED BY HURRICANE SANDY



With New York hit hard by Hurricane Sandy last week, Marines with 6th Communications Battalion in Brooklyn quickly responded to a New York



Police Department request for support and helped to save 14 lives. Residents of a neighborhood in Rockaway Beach were trapped in buildings on fire and the first responders' vehicles were either waterlogged or not large enough to enter the floodwaters that surrounded the buildings. Using two 7-ton trucks, Marines transported members of local police and fire departments to different areas of the neighborhood to reach those stranded and bring them to safety. "The conditions were dangerous; some first responders had already been trapped. But the Marines went out and performed. They knew they were saving peoples' lives," said Lt. Col. Richard Bordonaro, Inspector-Instructor for the 6th Communications Battalion. [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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