

FLIGHT JACKET

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Team Osprey visits Miramar

Osprey component
suppliers operate
simulators





Marines, sailors gather trees for holiday season

Volunteers brought nearly 350 pine trees from Peltzer Pines Christmas Tree Farm to Mills Park aboard Miramar for the annual Trees for Troops event.

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Marines get familiar with new duty station

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Team Osprey learns to operate simulators

Team Osprey, comprised of Osprey industry suppliers, visited Miramar to fly the MV-22B Osprey simulators.

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Maj. Gen. Andrew O'Donnell Jr.
Commanding General
3rd Marine Aircraft Wing



Col. Frank A. Richie
Commanding Officer
MCAS Miramar

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Corporal recognized for life-saving skills



Lt. Col. Mike D. Mizell, right, Provost Marshal and a Yakima, Wash., native, presents Cpl. Valerie L. Torres, left, a Marine Corps civilian police officer and a Loveland, Colo., native, with a Commendation for Meritorious Civilian Service here Dec. 14. Torres received the award for the use of emergency life-saving first aid to an unconscious and unresponsive victim while on duty Sept. 27. (Photo by Lance Cpl. Erica DiSalvo)

ON THE COVER:

David Johnson, a project engineer for the auxiliary power unit with Team Osprey and a San Diego native, operates the MV-22B Osprey simulator here Dec. 14. During Team Osprey's visit, pilots taught the organization's members how to take off and land the aircraft in various simulated conditions, such as on base runways and on ships at sea. (Photo by Cpl. Sarah Fiocco)



Falcons present CO with source of pride

The Miramar Falcons football team presents Col. Frank A. Richie, the commanding officer of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, with the Best of the West championship trophy here Dec. 13. The Miramar Falcons defeated the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms Headquarters Battalion Bulldawgs, 34-15, Dec. 10. This victory marks the Falcons first championship win after three prior attempts in the Best of the West football competition. (Photo by Lance Cpl. Erica DiSalvo)



Cpl. Timothy A. McMillian, an electronics technician with Marine Wing Communications Squadron 38 and a Dallas native, loads a Christmas tree into his car during the annual Trees for Troops event here Dec. 15. Peltzer Pines Christmas Tree Farm, located outside of Irvine, Calif., donated more than 300 Monterey pine trees for service members during the upcoming holiday season. (Photo by Lance Cpl. Erica DiSalvo)



Cpl. Edgar Orozcosamano, a motor transportation supply officer with Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron and a San Bernardino, Calif., native, loads trees for fellow officers with the Provost Marshal's Office during the annual Trees for Troops event here Dec. 15. Peltzer Pines Christmas Tree Farm, located outside of Irvine, Calif., donated more than 300 Monterey pine trees for the upcoming holiday season. All Christmas trees were free for service members and their families. (Photo by Lance Cpl. Erica DiSalvo)

Marines, sailors gather trees for holiday season

Story by Lance Cpl. Erica DiSalvo

The scent of pine needles wafted over Mills Park aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., where volunteers brought nearly 350 Monterey pine trees from Peltzer Pines Christmas Tree Farm in preparation of the upcoming holiday season.

The annual Trees for Troops event was in full swing as 14 volunteers traveled to Irvine, Calif., to cut and load hundreds of pine trees for service members and their families.

"This is the fourth year we have done this event," said Gunnery Sgt. Joshua G. Soliz, the education services officer with Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron and a Roswell, N.M., native. "When I arrived at Miramar, I ended up

working closely with [Marine Corps Community Services], and saw there was an opportunity to give back to the Marine Corps through a Christmas tree drive. I arranged everything from pick-up to distribution."

Peltzer Pines, located just outside of Irvine, Calif., donates hundreds of trees during the holiday season each year for service members throughout Southern California. Those aboard MCAS Miramar are no exception.

"We have found over the years that between 300 and 400 [service members] are approximately how many people who actually need a tree," said Soliz.

While this is a first-come, first-serve event,

any trees not collected will still be available the following day. Any trees not retrieved on the first day of the giveaway are placed in the MCAS Miramar education center counseling office. They remain there until all trees have been collected.

"We keep all of the extras here, so service members can pick [the trees] up at their convenience," said Trinity Herrera, an administrative assistant with the education center. "We know many of the Marines are busy and can't necessarily come get the trees right away. This ensures that those few will still have a chance for a free Christmas tree."

For any questions regarding volunteering for similar events at the education center or remaining tree collection, call 858-577-1801.



More than 300 Monterey pine trees were collected for the annual Trees for Troops event here Dec. 15. Peltzer Pines Christmas Tree Farm, located outside of Irvine, Calif., donated the evergreen trees for service members during the upcoming holiday season. This is an annual event hosted by the MCAS Miramar education center. (Photo by Lance Cpl. Erica DiSalvo)

Marines get familiar with new duty station

Story by Pfc. Christopher D. Johns

Every third Tuesday and Wednesday of each month, new Marines and sailors aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., attend the "Welcome Aboard" brief to learn about various opportunities available in the local area.

During the first day, the new arrivals receive classes where they learn of different resources currently available aboard the air station. The second day focuses on the sights and history of the San Diego area.

"[The briefs] give [service members] a good understanding right off the bat of all the amenities and how many resources Miramar has to offer the first term Marines," said Cpl. Sanjeev Jayaraman, the active-duty travel noncommissioned officer-in-charge with the Installation Personnel Administration Center and a Memphis, Tenn., native.

Marine Corps Community Services, MCAS Miramar Education Center and The Great Escape are a few examples of off-duty activity hubs Marines can take advantage of aboard the air station. Marines who attend the briefs also learn about local outdoor adventure centers where they can rent kayaks, surf boards and snowboards.

The International Travel and Ticketing office is also available and offers discounted tickets for military personnel to places such as Knotts Berry Farm, Disneyland and local ski resorts.

"For [Marines] who have been in the Corps for a while, the briefs show them Miramar is different from other bases in America and all over the world," said Jayaraman.

Jayaraman and Cpl. Stephen Hamilton, the first-stage noncommissioned officer-in-charge with IPAC and a Dallas native, led the newcomers throughout San Diego's sights Dec. 14.

Due to San Diego's rich Naval history, there are multiple historical sights surrounding the base. The air station is also located close to beaches, a multitude of gyms, national parks and historic hotels.

Hamilton sees the briefs as an opportunity all in their own.

"I think the program definitely shows [Marines] the tip of the iceberg about what San Diego has to offer," said Hamilton.

Many of the Marines are far from home, and this brief allows them to see different resources available, explained Hamilton.

The brief is open to all newly checked-in E-5 and below Marines and sailors. The tour portion of the brief is also open to Marines' spouses and children to ensure everyone in the household can learn of the different opportunities in San Diego.

During the second day of MCAS Miramar's "welcoming" Marines visit the island of Coronado, Calif., home to two naval bases, as well as the USS Midway. The group then travels to one of the many shopping districts throughout the city to get a small taste of what is available.

While each Marine or sailor may take something different away from the "Welcome Aboard" brief, each will have a better understanding of not only their new duty station but their new city as well.



SAN DIEGO – Pfc. Daniel C. Theodore, an aviation electrician with Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 352, and Saint Croix, native, gazes out over the the ocean during a Welcome Aboard briefing Dec. 14. (Photo by Pfc. Christopher D. Johns)



SAN DIEGO – Marines who attended a Welcome Aboard outing look over the aircraft carrier USS Midway in San Diego's north harbor Dec. 14. Welcome Aboard briefs give newly checked-in Marines and Sailors aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., the opportunity to visit historical sites and popular attractions in the local area. The brief is open to all checked-in E-5 and below-ranking personnel. (Photo by Pfc. Christopher D. Johns)



SAN DIEGO – Marines who attended a Welcome Aboard outing pose for a picture before entering the USS Midway in San Diego's north harbor Dec. 14. Welcome Aboard briefs give newly checked-in Marines and Sailors aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., the opportunity to visit historical sites and popular attractions in the local area. The brief is open to all checked-in E-5 and below-ranking personnel. (Photo by Pfc. Christopher D. Johns)

Team Osprey learns to operate simulators

Story by Cpl. Sarah Fiocco



“You feel like you’re in the actual aircraft, and it’s not even moving. It’s all visual, but it really does give you the sensation of flying.”

David Johnson
Project engineer for the auxiliary power unit with Team Osprey

A Team Osprey member operates the MV-22B Osprey simulator here Dec. 14. During Team Osprey’s visit, pilots taught the organization’s members how to take off and land the aircraft in various simulated conditions, such as on base runways and on ships at sea. (Photo by Cpl. Sarah Fiocco)

Team Osprey visited Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., to fly the MV-22B Osprey simulators Dec. 14.

Team Osprey is comprised of multiple industry suppliers who contribute different components used to build the aircraft. The tour allowed suppliers to see what their contributions helped develop.

“I got a greater understanding of what the aircraft’s capabilities are,” said David Johnson, a project engineer for the auxiliary power unit with Team Osprey and a San Diego native. “Everyone [with Team Osprey] has a hand in putting this thing together, so it’s nice to see the end product.”

The simulators provide operators with a virtual flying experience. Each is equipped with screens that act as windows, imitating an airborne environment, and exact replicas of the aircraft’s cockpit.

“You feel like you’re in the actual aircraft, and it’s not even moving,” Johnson said. “It’s all visual, but it really does give you the sensation of flying.”

Johnson explained the experience gave him a greater appreciation for the pilots who operate the Osprey.

“I thought it would be easier to control than it is. I used

to be a pilot, but I never flew a helicopter,” Johnson said. “It’s like walking and chewing gum at the same time. You have to be able to operate three or four things at the same time.”

Like Johnson, many of the Team Osprey members had prior flying experience; however, none had experience in flying helicopters.

“A large percentage had fixed wing experience, whether it was in the military or as a civilian,” said Maj. Matt Baldwin, operations officer with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 163 and one of the pilots who instructed Team Osprey. “They saw how challenging it can be to sit in the seat and see what hand and eye skills are required to fly it.”

The pilots taught Team Osprey personnel how to take off and land in varying conditions.

“We did simulated landings on the base and on ships out at sea,” said Baldwin, a Bellevue, Wash., native.

Overall, the visit showed Team Osprey how all the different components they manufacture work together to create the aircraft, and gave them a new appreciation of the Marines who fly it on a daily basis.



Maj. Matt Baldwin, operations officer with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 163 and one of the pilots who instructed Team Osprey, helps guide a Team Osprey member during a flight in the MV-22B Osprey simulator here Dec. 14. The simulators provided Team Osprey with a virtual flying experience. (Photo by Cpl. Sarah Fiocco)

Flight equipment - pilots' survival

Story by Lance Cpl. Rebecca Eller

Marines constantly hear about the importance of attention to detail throughout their careers. No one takes that more seriously than flight equipment technicians when maintaining and inspecting survival gear for pilots.

The Marines who work on flight equipment with Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 314 ensure the pilots have one less thing to worry about while flying the F/A-18.

Flight equipment technicians maintain and repair parachutes, communication systems, GPS, oxygen masks and all gear pilots need during flight or in an emergency situation.

"We have to make sure everything in their vest is operating properly, and everything they wear is ready," said Cpl. Emiliano Cervantes, a flight equipment technician with VMFA-314, and a Lakewood, Wash., native. "The pilots rely on us. We have to make sure everything is working to the 'T'."

Flight equipment allows pilots to execute their mission safely while flying the F/A-18, explained Capt. Justin Floyd, a pilot with VMFA-314, and a Huntsville, Ala., native.

"If I'm ever in a case where I have to eject, I feel confident that the harness and parachutes are going to operate properly and save my life," said Floyd.

Flight equipment technicians perform thorough inspections through-

out the year on all of the pilots' gear.

"We make sure all the gear looks good, and then break everything down to inspect it," said Lance Cpl. Oliver Reller, a flight equipment technician with VMFA-314, and a Minnetoka, Minn., native. "While inspecting the gear we look for damage, then repair or replace it."

Possible malfunctions flight equipment technicians look for range from checking for tears in the harness and parachutes to fresh batteries in night vision goggles.

The Marines in the flight equipment shop work continuously to ensure pilots' safety.

"There's usually a flight schedule that comes out every day with a list of flights and what time they leave, and we base our day off that," said Reller.

Working in flight equipment is a detailed job. Marines in the shop practice attention to detail because if one thing does not work properly, it could change a life, added Reller.

For the F/A-18, every component put into it is important for functionality. Pilots cannot fly without an engine, but while they can fly without flight equipment, they take a risk of not having survival equipment, added Reller.

Flight equipment might not be necessary for a pilot to have for the aircraft to work properly, but it is something that can determine the survival of a pilot. Marines in the flight equipment shop make sure the equipment functions properly in case the pilots need it in a worst-case scenario.

Cpl. Emiliano Cervantes, left, a flight equipment technician with Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 314 and a Lakewood, Wash., native, and Lance Cpl. Oliver Reller, right, a flight equipment technician with VMFA-314 and a Minnetoka, Minn., native, perform an inspection on a CMU-36P survival vest here Dec 6. Flight equipment technicians conduct inspections to ensure gear functions properly. (Photo by Lance Cpl. Rebecca Eller)



(Above) A flight equipment technician inspects night-vision goggles for proper lenses here Dec 6. Flight equipment technicians check all gear before issuing it to pilots. (Photo by Lance Cpl. Rebecca Eller)

(Right) Capt. Greg O'Boyle, the officer in charge of Installation and Logistics with Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 314 and a Kalispell, Mont., native, prepares for a flight here Dec 6. Flight equipment technicians issue pilots' helmets after inspection to ensure they function properly. (Photo by Lance Cpl. Rebecca Eller)

(Below) Lance Cpl. Oliver Reller, a flight equipment technician with Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 314 and a Minnetoka, Minn., native, sews a hole in the fabric of a harness aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., Dec 6. Harnesses are just one of many gear items flight equipment technicians inspect. (Photo by Lance Cpl. Rebecca Eller)

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Santa Claus arrives in a UH-1Y helicopter from Marine Light Attack Squadron 303, Marine Aircraft Group 39, to visit schoolchildren from Stuart Mesa Elementary School at Camp Pendleton, Calif., Dec. 16.



Children from Stuart Mesa Elementary School chant "Santa" in anticipation for his arrival on a UH-1Y helicopter from Marine Light Attack Squadron 303, Marine Aircraft Group 39, at Camp Pendleton, Calif., Dec. 16.

MAG-39 flies in Santa Claus

Photos by Lance Cpl. Joshua Young

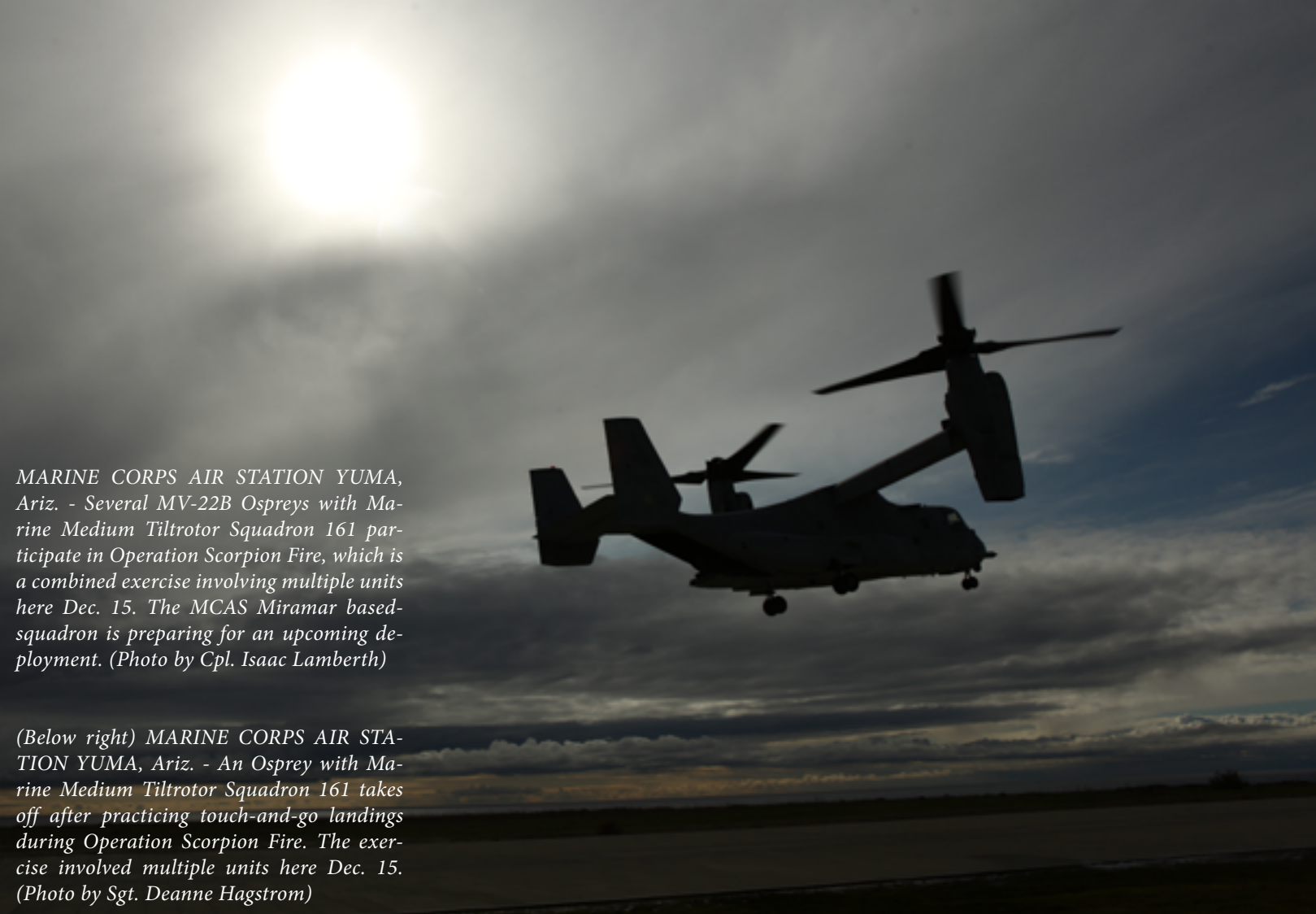
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Children from Stuart Mesa Elementary School watch Santa Claus fly in on a UH-1Y helicopter from Marine Light Attack Squadron 303, Marine Aircraft Group 39, at Camp Pendleton, Calif., Dec. 16.



A student at Stuart Mesa Elementary School meets Santa Claus after he arriving on a UH-1Y from Marine Light Attack Squadron 303, Marine Aircraft Group 39, at Camp Pendleton, Calif., Dec. 16.



MARINE CORPS AIR STATION YUMA, Ariz. - Several MV-22B Ospreys with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 161 participate in Operation Scorpion Fire, which is a combined exercise involving multiple units here Dec. 15. The MCAS Miramar based-squadron is preparing for an upcoming deployment. (Photo by Cpl. Isaac Lamberth)

(Below right) MARINE CORPS AIR STATION YUMA, Ariz. - An Osprey with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 161 takes off after practicing touch-and-go landings during Operation Scorpion Fire. The exercise involved multiple units here Dec. 15. (Photo by Sgt. Deanne Hagstrom)

Deployment training 'stings' with Scorpion Fire



The Miramar Minute

Marines take over P.E. class

Video by Lance Cpl. Kevin Crist

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