

FLIGHT JACKET

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**New battle streamer,
memorabilia**

**Purple Foxes celebrate
50th anniversary**



Veterans take up new 'occupation'

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Purple Foxes celebrate golden anniversary

The squadron celebrated its 50th anniversary and the official end of their operations in Iraq at Marine Corps Air Station Camp Pendleton, Calif.

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'Take a Vet to School Day' hits Coronado Middle School

Coronado Middle School recognized approximately 70 veterans for their service during the "Take a Vet to School Day"

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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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Tree lighting illuminates Miramar

Photo courtesy of Marine Corps Community Services



Col. Frank A. Richie, Santa Clause, Dr. Seuss' The Grinch and Maj. Gen. Andrew O'Donnell Jr. prepare to light the tree during the annual tree lighting ceremony here Nov. 19. The evening ended with prize give-aways and performances by traditional carolers.

ON THE COVER:

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. – Past and present Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 364 Purple Foxes admire the newest addition to the squadron's colors – the Iraqi Freedom battle streamer – at a ceremony here Nov. 10. The squadron celebrated its 50th anniversary and end of its operations in Iraq. (Photo by Cpl. Lisa Tourtelot)



Veterans take up new 'occupation'

Story by Cpl. Lisa Tourtelot

SAN DIEGO - “You see people waving the flag, but you never see anyone waving the Constitution,” said Muhammed Abdullah, an Occupy San Diego protester and Marine Corps Persian Gulf War veteran.

Amid the boldly scrawled signs calling for change, Guy Fawkes masks and curious onlookers, camouflage uniform items and brightly-printed hats recalling military service dotted the scene at the San Diego Civic Center, Nov. 8.

Approximately 100 protesters gather outside the Civic Center every day, bearing signs addressing everything from legalizing marijuana to increasing taxes on large corporations.



Veterans and current service members have responded in large numbers to join the Occupy San Diego protest with various goals.

“In our enlistment oath, we swore to uphold the Constitution against all enemies, foreign and domestic,” said Abdullah. “As veterans, we’re still under that enlistment oath.”

Abdullah explained that many of the veterans and service members participating in the protests can provide firsthand experience in dealing with government functioning and strategy and organization skills to strengthen the protest.

Army Pvt. James Lawrence, a food service specialist with a local reserve unit, explained that he came to City Hall more than one month ago to ask a question about permits. He claimed that police officers directed him to join the protesters based on his appearance, and he never left.

“I’m hoping to accomplish more rights for free speech,” said Lawrence, now that he is an active member of the protest. “I’ve never seen true free speech.”

Former Marine John Gray explained that he joined the military to help people and that is why he joined the downtown protests.

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SAN DIEGO – Make-shift sleeping areas for Occupy San Diego protesters line 3rd Ave. outside the San Diego Civic Center Nov. 8. Protesters have taken to the streets since the city closed off access to the Civic Center plaza. (Photo by Cpl. Lisa Tourtelot)



SAN DIEGO – Army Pvt. James Lawrence, an Occupy San Diego protester and member of a local Army Reserve unit, takes stock of his fellow protesters’ living conditions outside the San Diego Civic Center here Nov. 8. Lawrence has been encamped with the occupiers for approximately four weeks and is one of several currently enlisted protesters. (Photo by Cpl. Lisa Tourtelot)

“There is a unique breed who go in the military,” said Michael Ponsler, a former Marine and Occupy San Diego protester. “They’re willing to stand up against oppression and obviously have a passion for fighting for democracy.”

Ponsler explained that he put his personal

belongings in storage and moved out of his apartment to join Occupy San Diego after seeing news reports about violence at the Occupy Oakland protests.

“I want to see as many veterans as possible be part of healing a community,” said Ponsler. “I think it would be a big piece of their

recovery from [Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder]. They see themselves bonding. It’s been empowering, moving, strengthening to be out here connecting with people. I feel like I’m part of a community again for the first time in years.”

Ponsler believes that more and more vet-

erans will continue to join Occupy San Diego because it is an opportunity for positive change.

Though they have different goals and different reasons for entrenching themselves in the protest, the veterans there share a common background and common desire for change.



SAN DIEGO – Volunteers hang a sign for the 3rd annual Skate for the Troops event at Robb Field Skate Park here Nov. 12. Approximately 40 amateur and professional skateboarders gathered to skate a 12-mile course around Mission Bay to raise money for the Semper Fi Fund. The event was created by former Marine Derek Smith, a professional skateboarder with Honey Board skateboards. (Photo by Lance Cpl. Erica DiSalvo)

Skateboarders push 12 miles for wounded troops

Story by Lance Cpl. Erica DiSalvo

Skateboarders from as far away as Colorado traveled to Robb Field Skate Park in San Diego to skate 12 miles to raise funds for wounded veterans.

Approximately 40 professional and amateur skateboarders pushed through the rain on a 12-mile course around Mission Bay for the 3rd annual “Skate for the Troops” event and raised \$400 for the Injured Marine Semper Fi Fund Nov. 12.

Derek Smith, a former Marine and professional skater for Honey Skateboards, drove

pressures,” said Laura Castellvi, a community outreach coordinator with the Injured Marine Semper Fi Fund. “We are so thankful Derek created this event. It is amazing to see so many people whom are willing to help people in need who they don’t even know.”

While many of this year’s participants had joined the push last year, there were many new faces present.

“I wasn’t able to make it last year, but there was no way I was going to miss it this year,” said Ryan Rogotzke, a friend of Smith,

said Smith. “We changed locations to a less trafficked area and ended up with more people agreeing to take part this year.”

Skaters, after more than a two hour trek, ended the route back at Robb Field Skate Park where they started.

At the end of the event, Smith held a raffle where participants won t-shirts, boards, and other merchandise from the various corporate sponsors that donated to the Injured Marine Semper Fi Fund.

“Over all I am really happy with the turn-



SAN DIEGO – Longboarders from Colorado to California gather for the 3rd annual Skate for the Troops event at Robb Field Skate Park here Nov. 12. (Photo by Lance Cpl. Erica DiSalvo)

from Colorado to host the event.

“I always loved going to these kinds of events and decided I wanted to host my own a few years ago,” said Smith. “I wanted mine to be different though, so I made it a charity fund-raiser. Because I used to be in the Marine Corps, I wanted to do a charity that helped my brothers and sisters in the military.”

After exploring multiple different military-based charities, Smith chose the Injured Marine Semper Fi Fund for its ties to the Marine Corps and continued assistance for the veteran community.

“Our organization is a non-profit that helps disabled veterans find adaptive housing, vehicles and alleviates immediate financial

who also drove from Colorado to participate. “This is such a great cause, plus it’s fun. I am so thankful for everything those in the military do, and this is a great way to give back. It is great to see so many people in the community come together, too.”

In addition to the various corporate donations, Abec 11, a skateboard company with ties to Smith, raised over \$150 for the cause with an event kick-off party Nov. 11.

While last year’s Skate for the Troops event was a 24-mile push, Smith changed this year’s course to a more convenient and well mapped 12-mile route throughout Mission Bay area.

“We wanted to make it a little easier and prevent people from getting lost this year,”

out,” said Smith. “The number of people keeps growing each year we do this. It is really awesome that everyone came out to support the Semper Fi Fund and everyone that it helps. I am just really grateful for those who serve and am glad we can help out.”

Smith plans to continue hosting the Skate for the Troops event each year. For more information about upcoming events contact him at Derek@honeyskateboards.com or to donate to the Injured Marine Semper Fi Fund visit <http://www.facebook.com/l.php?u=http%3A%2F%2Fsemperfifund.org%2Fdonate.php&h=qAQHK7HvL>.

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Purple Foxes celebrate golden anniversary

Story by Cpl. Lisa Tourtelot

“I stepped on an 82mm mortar round, and I flew through the air,” said Tim Stanton, a former Marine and San Gabriel, Calif., native, “From the time I got hit to the time I was on the hospital ship was 27 minutes. You can’t get an ambulance in that time and that’s why I didn’t bleed out.”

Stanton was a lance corporal when he stepped on ordnance near the Marble Mountains in Vietnam in 1970.

A helicopter crew with Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 364, the Purple Foxes, medically evacuated Stanton. He credits them with saving his life.

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MARINE CORPS AIR STATION CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. – Marines with Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 364 present the colors, officially opening the squadron's 50th anniversary ceremonies here Nov. 10. The squadron officially added the Iraqi Freedom battle streamer to its colors, marking an end to squadron operations in Iraq. (Photo by Cpl. Lisa Tourtelot)



MARINE CORPS AIR STATION CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. – A special CH-46 Sea Knight with the Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 364 mascot, Swifty the Fox, and a special 50th anniversary squadron emblem on its tail, sits on the flight line here Nov. 10. The squadron celebrated their 50th anniversary, as well as the official end of squadron operations in Iraq. (Photo by Cpl. Lisa Tourtelot)



MARINE CORPS AIR STATION CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. – Tim Stanton, a San Gabriel, Calif., native and former Marine, shows off his first Marine Corps birthday meal – C-Ration pound cake – at the 50th anniversary celebration for Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 364 here Nov. 10. (Photo by Cpl. Lisa Tourtelot)

The squadron celebrated its 50th anniversary, as well as the official end of their operations in Iraq, aboard Marine Corps Air Station Camp Pendleton, Calif., Nov. 10. As part of the celebration, Stanton became an honorary Purple Fox and the squadron formally added the Iraqi Freedom battle streamer to the HMM-364 colors.

“If you were a mechanic, a crew member or pilot in the last 40 years, you looked at that Vietnam Campaign streamer as something to live up to,” said Lt. Col. Edward Jeep, the commanding officer of HMM-364. “Every Marine has something to live up to.”

The Purple Foxes’ Iraqi Freedom battle streamer features four Bronze Stars, and, Jeep explained, represents the sacrifices squadron Marines and their families have made over the past seven years supporting operations in Iraq.

In addition to the new battle streamer, the newest honorary Purple Foxes donated HMM-364 memorabilia to the squadron’s ready room, or preflight briefing room for pilots and aircrew. The donations included a model CH-46 Sea Knight and a shadow box commemorating the seven Purple Foxes who lost their lives in Iraq in 2007 when their helicopter was shot down.

Stanton offered his own donation to the ready room: his very first Marine Corps birthday meal.

A Purple Fox helicopter delivered cases of C-Rations and Schlitz beer to the 2nd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment lance corporal and his compatriots in the field on Nov. 10, 1970. The team did not have time to finish their birthday meal before they continued on patrol, so Stanton saved his pound cake and ham and eggs with water added C-Rations. When they returned to base, he mailed them home.

Forty-one years later, Stanton handed them over to Jeep, bringing his involvement with the Purple Foxes full circle.

The golden anniversary celebrated the end of the squadron’s second period of intense combat, as well as the newest, oldest and current Purple Foxes.

“It’s not about us,” said Jeep. “It’s about the guys in the back [of the helicopter]. It’s about the men and women and children at home. It’s about anyone who has ever had to do that. The 50th is a family reunion.”

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Flight Jacket

HMH-462 welcomes new commanding officer



Lt. Col Earl W. Daniels



Lt. Col. Brian Fanning

Compiled by
the Flight Jacket staff

Marines with Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 462 welcomed a new commanding officer during a change of command ceremony in which Lt. Col. Earl W. Daniels relinquished command to Lt. Col. Brian Fanning aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., Nov. 17.

Daniels attended Park College and received a Bachelor of Science degree in Logistics Management. He commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps in March 1993 after completing Officer Candidate School.

Upon completion of The Basic School, he reported to Naval Air Station Pensacola, Fla., where he was designated a naval aviator in October 1994. Daniels then received orders to Marine Heavy Helicopter Training Squadron 302 aboard Marine Corps Air Station Tustin, Calif.

He later transferred to HMH-462 and served in several billets to include ground training officer, assistant operations officer and aviation safety officer. Daniels completed two unit deployments to Okinawa and a deployment with the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit. He also participated in Operations Stabilize, Eastern Maverick and Eager Mace.

In August 2000, Daniels attended Command and Control Systems Course in Quantico, Va. After the course completion, he received orders to Marine Helicopter Squadron One where he was designated a Marine One aircraft commander.

Daniels reported to the 24th MEU, Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., as the air officer in April 2005 where he supported in Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. In addition, he participated in humanitarian relief operations following Hurricane Katrina, a non-combatant evacuation operation of the American Embassy Beirut, Lebanon, and Inspired Union.

In January 2007, Daniels transferred to HMH-461 where he deployed to Djibouti as the CH-53E Super Stallion detachment officer-in-charge for OEF Combined Joint Task Force Horn of Africa.

Daniels received orders to Headquarters Marine Corps Plans, Policy and Operations and served as section head for the Amphibious Programs Division within the Expeditionary Policies Branch in September 2008.

In January 2010, he was ordered to as-

sume duties as the commanding officer of HMH-462.

Daniels personal decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal with gold star, Navy Commendation Medal with gold star, and the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal.

Lt. Col. Fanning graduated from North Carolina State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Engineering and commissioned as a second lieutenant in December 1994.

Upon completion of The Basic School, he reported to the Naval Aviation Training Command in Pensacola, Fla., where he was designated a naval aviator in May 1997. He then reported HMHT-302 aboard MCAS New River, N.C.

He then reported to HMH-466 aboard MCAS Tustin, Calif. While there, he served as the flight officer, assistant logistics officer and airframes officer where he deployed with the 31st MEU and to Okinawa, Japan.

In January 2001, Fanning joined HMH-462 and was subsequently assigned to a detachment for Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 165 (Reinforced) and deployed with the 13th MEU. During this deployment, he conducted flight operations in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Anaconda in Afghanistan.

Fanning reported to Marine Wing Support Squadron 373 in July 2002 where he deployed to Iraq and led arming and refueling convoys to support Marine aviation during the initial attack operations of OIF. Upon his return, Fanning also served as the aide-de-camp for the commanding general, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing.

In August 2004, he reported to HMH-465 aboard MCAS Miramar, Calif., where he served as the aircraft maintenance officer and director of safety and standardization. In March 2005, he deployed a third time to Iraq.

Fanning was assigned to HMX-1 in June 2006, where he served as the operations officer and a White House liaison officer. He was then designated a Marine One aircraft commander.

In June 2010, he was assigned to Headquarters Marine Corps and served as the rotary wing and tiltrotor manpower action officer. He reported to 3rd MAF June 2011.

Fanning's personal decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal with numeral 7, the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with two gold stars, and the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal.

Navy League celebrates Marine Corps' 236th year

Photos by Lance Cpl. Kevin Crist



SAN DIEGO - An empty black table signifying fallen Marines sits at the front of a U.S. Marine Corps birthday luncheon hosted by the San Diego Council of the Navy League of the United States at the Sheraton Hotel & Marina here Nov. 16. The table had a single lit candle, a Purple Heart and a pair of blank dog tags to remember those who have shed blood in defense of their country.



SAN DIEGO - Cpl. Marvin E. Umana, center, receives the Reservist of the Year award from Brig. Gen. Daniel Yoo, left, the commanding general of the Western Recruiting Region, during a U.S. Marine Corps birthday luncheon hosted by the San Diego Council of the Navy League of the United States at the Sheraton Hotel and Marina here Nov. 16. Other awards at the luncheon included the 2011 Drill Instructor of the Year award and the 2011 Aviation Marine of the Year award.



‘Take a Vet to School Day’ hits Coronado Middle School

Story by Lance Cpl. Kevin Crist

SAN DIEGO – Coronado Middle School recognized approximately 70 veterans for their service to the country during the national “Take a Vet to School Day” event here Nov. 10.

“Take a Vet to School Day,” sponsored by Time Warner Cable and The History Channel, honors veterans and allows them to tell their stories and educate students on why Veterans Day is celebrated.

CMS held a breakfast in Granzer Hall at the school for veterans, staff and visitors to start the event. After the breakfast, guests watched a 10-minute live news broadcast featuring the school’s broadcast journalism team, KCMS, and veteran speakers, including retired Gunnery Sgt. Nick Popaditch, who is known for the Marine Corps emblem on his prosthetic eye after being severely injured in Fallujah, Iraq.

Following the broadcast, the veterans went to designated first period classrooms to discuss their military experiences with students.

“This country is just amazing,” said Popaditch. “Iraq was a nasty place before we got there. People lived under a dictator. People were not allowed to speak out against him and if anyone would have done anything out of line, secret police would come and take their family, and they would have no rights.”

He explained that he loved being a Marine because he could tell terrorists they were not going to be a threat to innocent civilians anymore.

“I loved meeting Iraqi people and watching them start to have

a chance at liberty, a chance at freedom and a chance at great lives like the ones we have in America,” he said.

After the classrooms, students moved to Coronado High School’s Niedermeyer Field for a parachute demonstration by Tactical Air Operations, Inc., which is the official contracted Static Line and Freefall School of the Navy. Students, teachers and guests watched as 17 parachutists glided through the air and landed in the center of the field, ending the “Take a Vet to School Day event.”

For more information on “Take a Vet to School Day” visit www.history.com/veterans.

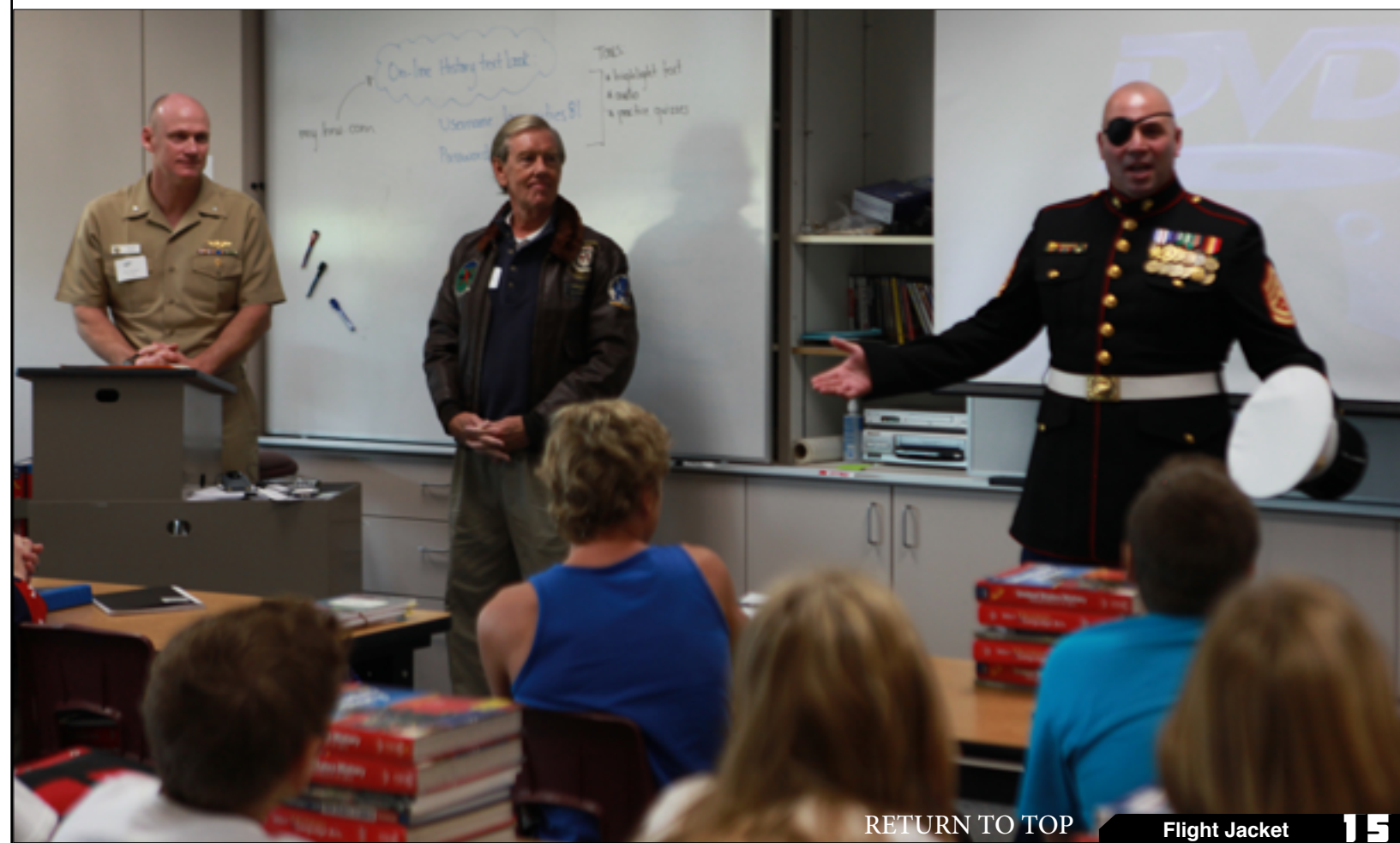


(Opposite Top) SAN DIEGO – Students sing “God Bless the USA” for the “Take a Vet to School Day” event at Coronado Middle School here Nov. 10. Approximately 70 active-duty and retired veterans throughout the community shared their military experiences with the students and were recognized for their service. (Photo by Lance Cpl. Kevin Crist)

(Opposite Bottom) SAN DIEGO – Veterans socialize before the “Take a Vet to School Day” event begins at Coronado Middle School here Nov. 10. Approximately 70 active-duty and retired veterans throughout the community shared their military experiences with the students and were recognized for their service. (Photo by Lance Cpl. Kevin Crist)

(Left) SAN DIEGO – A parachute jumper glides through the air as the highlight for the “Take a Vet to School Day” event at Coronado Middle School here Nov. 10. The event honored veterans and educated students on why the country celebrates Veterans Day. (Photo by Lance Cpl. Kevin Crist)

(Below) SAN DIEGO – Retired Gunnery Sgt. Nicholas Popaditch speaks to students at the “Take a Vet to School Day” event at Coronado Middle School here Nov. 10. Approximately 70 active-duty and retired veterans throughout the community shared their military experiences with the students and were recognized for their service. (Photo by Lance Cpl. Kevin Crist)



The Miramar Minute:

Miramar Marines reach out to local students

Video by Pfc. Max S. Pennington



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