

**1st MARINE DIVISION ASSOCIATION
DESERT CITIES MITCHELL PAIGE MOH CHAPTER**

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JANUARY, 2011 NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 20TH MEETING, 29 PALMS

Reminder that our January meeting will be at the Officers Club, 29 Palms on Thursday, January 20th at 1130. Our speaker will be Sergeant Major Mike Kufchak, Regimental SgtMajor for the 7th Marines. We will look forward to hearing from him about their recent one year tour to Afghanistan.

Everyone will be responsible for paying for his own meal at the O Club. Please give us a "heads up" that you will attend so we can reserve seating in the private room to the right of the main dining room. After the meeting, SgtMaj Kufchak has arranged for a shuttle bus to provide everyone a tour around the base to see the main attractions.

We also will car pool, so let us know if you can drive or will need transportation. We have to submit the list to Base Security so RSVP by January 14th.

7TH MARINE REGIMENT REPORT

BY: SGT. MAJOR MIKE KUFCHAK

I would be remiss in the performance of my responsibilities to the Marines and Sailors if I did not start off by telling you how good it feels to be back home in 29 Palms after being deployed to Afghanistan for a year.

As you well know, we redeployed home the first week of October, just in time to celebrate the major holiday season with our families and loved ones, after being deployed so long. Upon the completion of the leave period we rushed immediately into the Marine Corps Birthday Ball Ceremony. We were fortunate to conduct the Ball in Las Vegas at Harrah's Casino & Hotel on November 10th. What a wonderful evening and event it turned out to be. The Marines and sailors all looked their finest in dress uniforms as well as our spouses and dates in their evening gowns.

Upon our arrival back after the Veterans Day Weekend, Colonel Neman reintegrated our Remain Behind Element with the Staff he took forward to Afghanistan to reorganize ourselves so that we could get back to our responsibilities of the management of the Regiment. Which by all accounts was transparent and seamless.

We now find ourselves closing out the year and in the mist of its final holiday season. The turn of the New Year will bring new Marines and Sailors to the team

but regrettably we will also say farewell to a lot of team mates who will be transitioning on.

As of recent as December 13th we had the privilege of hosting some of the Chapters most distinguished members (Korean War Veterans). The day provided us with the opportunity to dine with them at Phelps Chow Hall and it also allowed our Marines and Sailors to swap stories and experiences with them given the vastly different era's in our Corps History. Beyond lunch we had the opportunity at the Base theater to view the film "Chosin" which was a documentary of the Korean War. And as fate would have it Capt. Brian Iglasias, one of the producers, was in attendance and provided us with narrative of how the film came about regarding our veterans of the Korean War, dubbed the "Forgotten War". Upon completion of the film, which by the way was viewed by many of the Base Commands and Organizations (Standing Room Only) it gave our generation of Marines and Sailors an overwhelming understanding of what the Korean War Vets experienced and how our Corps has gotten from there to here. Additionally, the film was also very heartfelt given the brave and selfless actions. Our veterans also received a standing ovation of gratitude from their direct descendants meaning the modern day Marines and Sailors (Corpsman).

We will have an opportunity to spend some time together on January 20th. As the Desert Cities Chapter will be hosting a luncheon meeting at the Officers Club here aboard the Base where Col Newman, Master Gunnery Sgt Holquin and myself will have the ability to share our experiences of Afghanistan with them, Hopefully, all will be able to make it.

On a closing note, we cannot thank you enough for all the generous support that we've received from you while deployed and back here at home. You continue to impact us. Everything from hygienic items while in Afghanistan to Christmas gifts under the tree of our families. God Bless you all.

WOMEN MARINES LUNCHEON

We will again honor Women Marines from 29 Palms on Saturday, April 30th at the beautiful I W Club in Indian Wells. The Honorable Mary T. Roche has agreed to once again be the Mistress of Ceremonies. Reserve that date.

STEVE SANCHEZ FUND

A special fund has been set up to collect donations for his recovery from the serious stabbing that he suffered in early December. Mark your donations "Steve Sanchez Fund". The Marine Corps League will also make a donation for Steve to match the amount that we collect from our members.

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS DONATION

The Chapter presented Col Randy Newman, Commanding Officer for the 7th Marine Regiment sixty \$50 dollar Visa gift cards that were distributed to his 4 battalions. SgtMaj Kufchak and the battalion commanding officers oversaw that

each gift card went to the most needy families of young enlisted Marines and Corpsmen.

CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

Great turnout. Our wives dressed up the event. Everyone brought toys which were delivered to 29 Palms the following day. We gave each wife a gold necklace with the EAG and a Christmas decoration for their tree. Everyone had a great time, so we will do it again in 2011, Thanks to everyone for donating such nice toys.

LCol Clay Tipton, CO of the 3/7 was the guest of honor and speaker. He gave a great report on their recent deployment to Afghanistan. Bud Marsh donated the raffle prize, a round of golf for four at Shadow Hills. Dick Partee had the lucky ticket and being an avid golfer he and his wife are, will make good use. Thanks Bud!

Elmer Stone was presented an autographed DVD of CHOSIN. Col Randy Newman arranged for the DVD and the autograph from Brian Iglesias, the Producer.

Charlie Garbarini was recognized for his valuable contribution to the Chapter. He was presented an engraved Ka-Bar Knife for all of his financial and the time that he has donated to making our events successful. BRAVO ZULU, Charlie!

ARMED SERVICES YMCA, 29 PALMS

We got word they were in *NEED* of toys for the Marine kids at 29 Palms. So, we delivered a SUV packed full of all of the toys the day after our meeting. They were excited to receive our donation since they were setting up for 700 Marine families to come to their facility the next day. Our donated toys were literally going out the door the next day. They had a large group of Marine volunteers there to help with the distribution and Santa Claus and Carolers to greet these families.

We have heard about the great things for what they do for the Marines and Sailors at 29 Palms. Anita Neu-Fultz, Executive Director, gave us the tour and showed us how they were preparing for the onslaught of Marine families to collect toys the next day. They also have a thrift shop set up there and accept donations of household items, furniture, clothing and toys that will be sold at cheap prices to the Marines. If you have items that you would like to donate please give Anita a call at 760 830-7481.

2/7 CHANGE OF COMMAND CEREMONY

LCol John Reed, CO, will be relieved of Command on January 7th. LCol Don Tomich will take over as the Commanding Officer.

Reed is a member of the chapter and has been supportive of our activities. We wish him "Fair Winds and Following Seas" as he moves on. He will be missed!

FALLEN WARRIORS FLAG MEMORIAL, 29 PALMS

Their mission is to honor all those young Marines and Sailors who gave their lives to defend our freedom and way of life.

The project is to recognize those fallen warriors by placing a flag and pole in memorial for their valiant efforts. Currently, there are over 160 Marines and Sailors that were stationed at 29 Palms Marine Combat Base who paid the ultimate price for their service.

If you should find it in your heart to sponsor a flag and pole, the cost of 1 flag, flag pole, fasteners, pole cap and rebar is only \$50. The labor will be donated by Marine and Navy personnel. This project is sponsored by the Armed Forces YMCA at the 29 Palms Base. Mail your donation to Armed Service YMCA, Bldg. 192, MCAGCC, P O Box 6002, 29 Palms, CA 92278 to the Att: Rick Saxon. Check payable to the ASYMCA. Their non profit tax ID # is 91-1883458.

2011 DUES

Reminder that our annual dues are payable by January 31st.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

GOD BLESS AMERICA & SEMPER FIDELIS

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