251st Marine Corps Birthday Ball

Seoul, Republic of Korea





SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

Fallen Comrades Table

Adjutants Call

Arrival of Official Party

Presentation of Colors

National Anthem

Retirement of Colors

General Lejeune's Birthday Message

Commandant's Birthday Message

Guest of Honor Remarks

Guest Speaker Remarks

Official Cake Cutting

Detachment Commander Closing Remarks

Anchors Aweigh and Marines' Hymn



CEREMONY PARTICIPANTS

Guest of Honor
Ambassador Michelle E. Steel

Guest Speaker
Major General Anthony M. Henderson

Detachment Commander
SSgt Hunter T. Kriberscheck

Adjutant
Sgt Erik A. Lopez

Narrator
Major Caitlin J. Foran

Color Guard
Sgt Aidan Nelson *Sgt David Alvarez*
Cpl Brandon Williams *LCpl Byron Espanazapeta*

Cake Detail
Sgt David Alvarez *Sgt Aidan Nelson*
Cpl Wonzik Paul *Cpl Brandon Williams*

Oldest Marine
1stSgt John M. Murphy, USMC, Ret.

Youngest Marine
LCpl Byron J. Espana-Zapeta

GENERAL LEJEUNE'S BIRTHDAY MESSAGE



On November 10, 1775, a Corps of Marines was created by a resolution of the Continental Congress. Since that date many thousand men have borne the name Marine. In memory of them it is fitting that we who are Marines should commemorate the birthday of our Corps by calling to mind the glories of its long and illustrious history.

The record of our Corps is one, which will bear comparison with that of the most famous military organizations in the world's history. During 90 of the 167 years of its existence the Marine Corps has been in action against the Nation's foes. From the battle of Trenton to the Argonne, Marines have won foremost honors in war, and in the long eras of tranquility at home generation after generation of Marines have grown gray in war in both hemispheres, and in every corner of the seven seas, that our country and its citizens might enjoy peace and security.

In every battle and skirmish since the birth of our Corps Marines have acquitted themselves with the greatest distinction, winning new honors on each occasion until the term "Marine" has come to signify all that is highest in military efficiency and soldierly virtue.

This high name of distinction and soldierly repute we who are Marines today have received from those who preceded us in the corps. With it we also received from them the eternal spirit which has animated our Corps from generation to generation and has been the distinguishing mark of Marines in every age. So long as that spirit continues to flourish Marines will be found equal to every emergency in the future as they have been in the past, and the men of our Nation will regard us as worthy successors to the long line of illustrious men who have served as "Soldiers of the Sea" since the founding of the Corps.

John A. Lejeune

John Lejeune
Lieutenant General
U.S. Marine Corps

A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS

For 251 years, the United States Marine Corps has been our Nation's premier expeditionary force in readiness. Born from the sea and forged in the fires of conflict, Marines have fought, and won, in battles all over the world. From our first amphibious landing 250 years ago at Nassau to the volcanic sands of Iwo Jima, and from the bold invasion of Inchon to the mountains of Afghanistan, we have always marched forward with rifles in hand. The Marines who came before us paved our legacy in sweat and blood. They built a foundation of excellence and proved time and again that Marines remain ready to answer the call.

As we reflect on our proud and illustrious history and commemorate the founding of our Corps, we must take inspiration for the future. We are marching forward, as we always have, to fight and win our Nation's battles in every clime and place. We're preparing every day by innovating and evolving. Through our ingenuity, ruthless adherence to standards, and sheer grit, we continue to demonstrate the unmatched lethality of our expeditionary naval forces.

Today, the operational demand for Marines is high. At this very hour, 40,000 Marines are forward deployed and stationed around the world to secure liberty and to strike when our adversaries test our resolve. Just as always, Marines are ready to go wherever the Nation needs us, whenever it needs us.

Sergeant Major Ruiz and I could not be prouder of your dedication to upholding our legacy as America's *Soldiers of the Sea*. This is who we are, and we are up to the challenge. We are honored to stand beside you as we prepare for the fights ahead. Happy 251st Birthday, Marines!

Semper Fidelis,



General, U.S. Marine Corps
Commandant of the Marine Corps

Guest of Honor

Ambassador Michelle P. Steel



Ambassador Michelle Steel was confirmed by the Senate on June 17, 2026, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Korea. Prior to her confirmation, Ambassador Steel served as a Member of Congress from 2021 to 2025, representing California's 48th and 45th Congressional Districts. She served on the House Committee on Ways and Means, including the Subcommittee on Worker and Family Support and the Subcommittee on Health. During the first Trump administration, she was appointed by the President to co-chair the President's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. Previously, Ambassador Steel represented the second district on the Orange County Board of Supervisors from 2015 to 2020, where she was chairwoman in 2017 and 2020. She also served as vice chair of the California State Board of Equalization, the only elected tax agency in the nation, from 2007 to 2015. Ambassador Steel was born in Seoul and later immigrated to the United States. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Pepperdine University and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Southern California. She and her husband, Shawn Steel, have two children and four grandchildren.

Guest Speaker

Major General Anthony M. Henderson



Major General Anthony M. Henderson serves as Assistant Chief of Staff/Director, Plans, Policy and Strategy for United Nations Command, Combined Forces Command, and U.S. Forces Korea. Born in Washington, D.C., he earned a Bachelor of Arts in History and a Juris Doctorate from Southern University and A&M College. He entered active duty in 1993.

An infantry officer, MajGen Henderson has held command, staff, and joint assignments from platoon through Marine Expeditionary Force level, deploying across the Arctic, Africa, Asia, Cuba, Europe, and the Middle East. His combat service includes two deployments to Iraq with 3d Battalion, 7th Marines and two to Helmand Province with Battalion Landing Team 1/6, as well as service as CJ3 and CJ5 for Marine Expeditionary Brigade-Afghanistan/Regional Command Southwest. He also served as Special Assistant to the 18th Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Military Assistant to the 76th Secretary of the Navy.

As a general officer, he commanded 2d Marine Expeditionary Brigade and Training Command, served as Deputy Commanding General of II Marine Expeditionary Force, and was Deputy Director, Joint Strategic Plans, Joint Staff J5. His education includes Amphibious Warfare School, Naval War College, National War College, MIT Seminar XXI, and Harvard Business School's Advanced Management Program. He and his wife, Sonja, a retired U.S. Army colonel, have six children.

Oldest Marine

JOHN M. MURPHY

United States Marine Corps (Retired) |
Diplomatic Courier



First Sergeant John M. Murphy enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1989 and graduated from recruit training at Parris Island in April 1990. After completing Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting School, he served at Marine Wing Support Squadron 272 in New River and later at Marine Wing Support Squadron 172 in Okinawa. He subsequently served as Assistant Guard Chief and Training Chief in London, England, and held leadership assignments at Marine Corps Air Station New River. In 2002, he attended Marine Security Guard School and served as Detachment Commander in La Paz, Bolivia, and Maputo, Mozambique, before returning as an Instructor/Advisor at the school. He later served as Inspector-Instructor First Sergeant with 4th Force Reconnaissance Company and as Company First Sergeant with 1st Battalion, 3rd Marines and 3rd Radio Battalion in Hawaii. He honorably retired on April 30, 2012. Murphy joined the Department of State as a Diplomatic Courier in May 2012, serving in Washington, D.C., Seoul, Bangkok, and São Paulo.

Youngest Marine

LANCE CORPORAL BYRON ESPANANZAPETA



Born on December 4, 2005, on Long Island, New York, he enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps on August 9, 2024. He underwent recruit training with India Company, 3rd Recruit Training Battalion, Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, South Carolina, graduating in October 2024. Following recruit training, he completed the Infantry Marine Course at the School of Infantry East, Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, and was assigned as an 0311 Infantry Rifleman. In August 2025, he graduated from Marine Security Guard School aboard Marine Corps Base Quantico, Virginia, and was assigned to his first post with Region 6, Marine Security Guard Detachment Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo. In July 2026, he arrived at his current post with Region 3, Marine Security Guard Detachment Seoul, South Korea.

THE MARINES OF DETACHMENT SEOUL



SSgt Kriberscheck



Sgt Lopez



Sgt Nelson



Sgt Alvarez



Cpl Williams



Cpl Paul



LCpl Espanazapeta



LCpl Jackson



THE MARINE'S HYMN

Verse 1

"From the Halls of Montezuma
To the shores of Tripoli;
We fight our country's battles
In the air, on land, and sea;
First to fight for right and freedom
And to keep our honor clean;
We are proud to claim the title
Of United States Marine.

Verse 2

Our flag's unfurled to every breeze
From dawn to setting sun;
We have fought in ev'ry clime and place
Where we could take a gun;
In the snow of far-off Northern lands
And in sunny tropic scenes;
You will find us always on the job
The United States Marines

Verse 3

Here's health to you and to our Corps
Which we are proud to serve;
In many a strife we've fought for life
And never lost our nerve;
If the Army and the Navy
Ever look on Heaven's scenes;
They will find the streets are guarded
By United States Marines.





Marine Security Guard
Detachment Seoul,
Republic of Korea

251st Marine Corps
Birthday Ball

November 13th, 2026

1775 – 2026

Happy Birthday Marines!!

