



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 15, 2018
Contact: Deputy City Clerk Joan Diskin (650) 522-7044
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www.cityofsanmateo.org/101st

Operation Eagle Visit – Homecoming 50 Years!

Join Peninsula Cities in Welcoming 101st Airborne Unit’s Return

SAN MATEO, Calif. – Nine cities are inviting the community to take part in three days of family-friendly festivities marking the 50th anniversary of San Mateo’s historic relationship with the 101st Airborne Division. Dozens of active-duty troops and veterans will soar to the Peninsula March 23-25 for *Operation Eagle Visit – Homecoming 50 Years*. The celebration includes a homecoming parade in downtown San Mateo, a gala to honor the soldiers, a festival in Central Park, a boot camp-style workout with the troops and more.

This year, for the first time the cities of San Mateo, Burlingame, Hillsborough, Belmont, San Carlos, Foster City, Millbrae, Atherton and San Bruno are collaborating to honor their adopted 101st Airborne Screaming Eagles, a U.S. Army division based in Fort Campbell, Kentucky. San Mateo forged a relationship with the military unit during the Vietnam War, and was one of the few communities in the nation to extend a thankful recognition when the soldiers returned to the states.

“We are thrilled to welcome our adopted 101st Unit back to the Peninsula and want to acknowledge their courage and patriotism with Operation Eagle Visit,” said San Mateo City Council Member Joe Goethals. “These events will introduce a new generation to the sacrifices made by our veterans and instill an appreciation for the brave men and women who serve in our Armed Forces today.”

Over 10,000 people are expected to attend the 50th Anniversary Homecoming Parade Saturday, March 24 in lively downtown San Mateo. Event organizers are actively seeking youth groups,



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nonprofits, businesses and individuals to march in the parade. This newsworthy event will be featured on television and participation is a unique way for organizations to highlight their community spirit. Entries may include floats, classic cars, bands, entertainment acts, drill teams, dance teams, equestrians, comical groups, military units, and more!

Community members and organizations interested in participating in the parade or in the festival activities that immediately follow in Central Park must apply by March 5, 2018. Contact the San Mateo City Clerk's Office at (650) 522-7040 or visit www.CityofSanMateo.org/101st for applications, entry requirements and details.

The three-day festivities include:

- Friday, March 23, 2018
 - 'Sore' with the Eagles – Visiting soldiers will lead a boot camp-style workout beginning 7 a.m. in San Mateo's Central Park.
 - Community Day – Each participating city will host members of the 101st Airborne with a variety of hometown activities.
- Saturday, March 24, 2018
 - Homecoming Parade – Begins 11 a.m. on B Street and runs between and Baldwin and Seventh avenues in San Mateo.
 - Festival in Central Park – Family-friendly booths, activities and food will be at Central Park on Fifth Avenue, San Mateo.
 - Recognition Banquet and Gala – Dine with the visiting 101st Airborne and original veterans at the San Francisco Airport Marriott Waterfront.
- Sunday, March 25, 2018
 - Memorial Observance at Golden Gate National Cemetery – In recognition of National Medal of Honor Day, a ceremony will be held at the main plaza and at the gravesite of Sgt. Joseph Gregory Artavia, of the 101st Airborne, who died in service in 1968.



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History of Operation Eagle Visit

On March 4, 1968, the City of San Mateo became the first municipality in the United States to adopt and recognize a military unit during the Vietnam War, a time when anti-war sentiment ran high. The initiative was sparked by then-San Mateo resident Linda Giese Patterson, whose brother Sgt. Joseph Gregory Artavia was killed in action. Patterson encouraged the City to adopt Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division of the U.S. Army, in a show of moral support for the young troops and in memory of her late brother. In 1972, soldiers from the 101st Airborne Division were invited to San Mateo where they were welcomed home from war with a parade in their honor.

For five decades the City has had a continuous relationship with the Screaming Eagles that includes sending letters and care packages to troops overseas, as well as visiting them at their Fort Campbell headquarters. Since that time, eight other San Mateo County cities have joined the armed forces adopt-a-unit program and forged a bond with the 101st Division.

Visit www.cityofsanmateo.org/101st for more information, ticket prices and how to get involved with the Operation Eagle Visit – Homecoming 50 Years celebration.