



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Dozens of “Screaming Eagles” Are Flying to California for Operation Eagle Visit Nine Bay Area Cities Welcome 101st Airborne Division

SAN MATEO, Calif. – On Thursday, March 22, over four dozen active duty members of the U.S. Army’s 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, of Fort Campbell, Kentucky, will fly into San Francisco Airport to attend the City of San Mateo’s *Operation Eagle Visit* – four days of festive activities that celebrates a 50 year relationship with the 101st Airborne “Screaming Eagles.”

In 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 soldiers did not receive the same kind of appreciation and adulation when they returned home as they do today.

“The fifty year anniversary of the relationship between San Mateo and the 101st Airborne is a remarkable milestone,” said Col. Derek Thomson, commander, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division. “I have been stationed all over this Army, and I have never seen such an outpouring of support and encouragement like I see here with the Bay area communities.”

Operation Eagle Visit is a collaboration with nine Peninsula cities to honor their adopted 101st Airborne Screaming Eagles: San Mateo, Burlingame, Hillsborough, Belmont, San Carlos, Foster City, Millbrae, Atherton and San Bruno.

Over 40 Vietnam veterans from the original unit are also flying in to attend the festivities. The celebrations include a tour of downtown San Francisco, a homecoming parade in downtown San Mateo, a gala to honor the soldiers, a boot camp-style workout with the troops, and a memorial observance at the Golden Gate National Cemetery in San Bruno.

Over 50 Airborne members of the 101st will fly into SFO on Thursday, March 22, at 9:45 a.m. Accredited members of the media may film, gather photos, b-roll, and to conduct recorded and live interviews for their stories – they need to contact [Elizabeth Valente](mailto:Elizabeth@ValenteCommunications.com) at (831) 915-4952 by 3p.m. on **Wednesday, March 21** to secure their spot for Thursday’s media access at SFO. Media representatives will need to show media credentials, driver's license, and be able to check in with the United Airlines P.I.O. by 9:15 a.m. on Thursday morning at Terminal 3, Door 8 (United). Media will be escorted to the United Airline gate upon the military unit’s arrival.

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The four-day festivities include:

- **Thursday, March 22, 2018**
 - 9:45 a.m. over 50 Airborne active duty members will fly into SFO through United Airlines followed by a guided bus tour to San Francisco. **Media access available.**
 - 7 p.m. active duty will have first meet and greet with original 1968 Vietnam veterans from 327th Infantry Regiment at San Mateo County History Museum.
- **Friday, March 23, 2018**
 - 6:45 a.m. ‘Sore’ with the Eagles – visiting soldiers will lead a boot camp-style workout in San Mateo’s Central Park with veterans, San Mateo police, and community members.
 - 11:30 a.m. Community Day – each participating city will host members of the 101st Airborne with a variety of hometown activities. Meet at San Mateo Library.
- **Saturday, March 24, 2018**
 - 11 a.m. Homecoming Parade – begins at B Street and Baldwin in San Mateo. The one mile parade will have floats, bands, soldiers, veterans, historic cars, etc.
 - 12 p.m. Festival in Central Park – Family-friendly booths, activities, and food.
 - 6 p.m. Recognition Gala – Banquet dinner in honor of the 101st Airborne and veterans with city leaders at the SF Airport Marriott Waterfront.
- **Sunday, March 25, 2018**
 - 9 a.m. Memorial Observance at Golden Gate National Cemetery – In recognition of National Medal of Honor Day, a full military ceremony will be held at the main plaza and at 10 a.m. laying of a wreath at the gravesite of Sgt. Joseph Gregory Artavia, of the 101st Airborne, who died in service on March 24, 1968.

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. The initiative was sparked by then-San Mateo resident Linda Giese Patterson, whose brother Sgt. Joseph Gregory Artavia was killed in action on March 24, 1968.

Patterson encouraged the City of San Mateo 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 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 of San Mateo 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.

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