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## Celebrate Dog Days at the National Museum of the Marine Corps

Annual event highlights animal-loving organizations

Man's best friend is taking over the National Museum of the Marine Corps on Saturday, September 21, 2019. An annual event, "Dog Days" highlights the important role canines play in the Marine Corps and in the community.

"Dog Days," which runs from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., includes working dog demonstrations by the Virginia State Police and Marine Corps Base Quantico Police K9 teams, service dog demonstrations, a meet-and-greet with Chesty XV, the official bulldog mascot of the Marine Corps, and--new this year--the "Semper Fido" Dog Costume Contest. And, of course, because Marines love bulldogs, there will be a bulldog "kissing" booth.

On the plaza of the Museum, visitors will have an opportunity to adopt a new fur-baby and learn about canine community programs. Prince William Humane Society, Airedale Terrier Rescue of the Virginias, Virginia German Shepherd Rescue, On the Rebound Bulldog Rescue, Lab Rescue of the LRCP (Potomac), Homeless Animals Rescue Team, Paws for Honor, Leashes of Valor, Semper K9, Greyt Hearts Service Dogs, and Dogtopia will be sharing information about their missions and programs with visitors. Organizations will have dogs on hand for visitors to meet and greet.

There is something for everyone at the event! Kids can create crafts and join in the "Tales with Tails" program in Leatherneck Gallery, where young readers reserve a time slot to read to a therapy dog from the Blue Gray Therapy Dogs organization. Also, families can take in the movie, "Superpower Dogs" in the Medal of Honor Theater.

At noon in the Museum's Scuttlebutt Theater, **retired Marine Corps dog trainer and handler Master Sgt. Chris Willingham will be speaking about his time with Marine K9 war hero Lucca.** Lucca, an IED detection dog that lost her front left leg in an explosion in Afghanistan, is a legend in the Corps. During her three combat deployments, she led over 400 patrols during which no injuries were sustained by her Marines. A sculpture of Lucca created by artist James Mellick is currently on display in the Museum's Combat Art Gallery exhibition, ***War Dogs: Never Above You, Never Below You, Always Beside You.*** The exhibit, which closes this month, includes Lucca's artifacts from her time in service.

Personal dogs are welcome on the grounds of the Museum. The service of Dogtopia, a national provider of dog daycare, will be on hand to provide dog walking services for owners that would like to visit inside the Museum. Service dogs and working dog are allowed inside the Museum. Dog owners can reward their well-behaved pups with a stop at the Wolfbowl Dog food truck in the parking lot.

The National Museum of the Marine Corps is located at 18900 Jefferson Davis Highway in Triangle, Virginia. The Museum is open daily 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., except Christmas Day. Admission and parking are free. For more information on the National Museum of the Marine Corps, call 703-784-6107 or visit [www.usmcmuseum.com](http://www.usmcmuseum.com).

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