



## **Commander, Expeditionary Strike Group 2**

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### **Expeditionary Strike Group 2, USS Bataan Celebrate Veterans Day, Reopening of Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum**

By Lieutenant John Fage – Expeditionary Strike Group 2 Public Affairs Officer

NORFOLK – Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG) 2 and the amphibious assault ship USS Bataan (LHD 5) recently completed a week-long port visit to New York City as part of Veterans Day celebrations in the city.

Approximately 1,500 Sailors and Marines from the multi-purpose amphibious assault ship USS Bataan (LHD 5) and the 22 Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), departed New York City Nov. 12, following a successful port visit celebrating Veterans Day and supporting the reopening and of the Intrepid, Sea, Air and Space Museum.

“To be a part of any Veterans Day celebration and honor those who came before us is always very special,” said Rear Adm. Terence McKnight, commander, ESG 2. “But for our Navy and Marine Corps team to be a part of this year’s celebrations in New York City and to be able to celebrate the reopening of the Intrepid is a truly special occasion.”

In addition to hosting nearly 4,500 citizens during general public visitation, Bataan Sailors and Marines participated in many events around New York City, including a ribbon-cutting ceremony marking the reopening of the Intrepid museum, the

Veterans Day parade, and a Veterans Day ceremony attended by President George W. Bush.

Sailors and Marines also performed several community relations projects throughout the week, such as a visit to the Veteran's Hospital in the Bronx.

"It is important to honor those who have sacrificed and served, and how we care for them is a direct reflection on the character of a society and a culture. How we treat them is important and says a lot about who we are," said Bataan Chaplain (Lt.) Thomas Cook.

Bataan Sailors and Marines also represented their brothers and sisters-in-arms by attending military appreciation events involving the New York Jets, Knicks and Islanders.

Admiral McKnight had the honor of enlisting more than a dozen new military recruits during halftime of the New York Jets game Nov. 9.

"As we honor the sacrifices our veterans have made for our freedom, it's important that we keep an eye to the future," he said. "The young men and women that stood on the field and raised their right hands are going to be the ones protecting our nation for years to come. For them to say they took the oath standing on the field at Giants Stadium, that is something they'll remember the rest of their lives."

ESG 2 is preparing for a deployment to the Central Command (CENTCOM) area of operations in early 2009.

