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MARINE CORPS AIR STATION YUMA

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MEDIA RELEASE

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51st Annual MCAS Yuma Airshow a hit despite lowered attendance

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION YUMA, Ariz. – The Marine Corps Air Station Yuma 51st Annual Airshow and Open House, held on Saturday, March 9 honoring Korean and Vietnam War Veterans, had a strong community attendance of over 25,000 visitors.

Despite the lowered attendance from 2012 which reached close to 60,000 visitors, senior officials aboard MCAS Yuma were pleased with the patriotic support from our local community and veterans at the show.

“The response of the local community and the visitors to the airshow was overwhelmingly positive,” stated the MCAS Yuma 2013 Airshow Director and station Operations Director, LtCol. John Hicks. “While it's true that we were missing the USAF participants to the event this year due to the sequester, I think that the impact to the average visitor was more than likely defined by better access to the static display aircraft that were able to make it here. I personally interacted with hundreds of people visiting the show on Saturday and I think that this event probably strengthened our already healthy relationship with the community of Yuma County and Southwest Arizona overall.”

As the first ever F-35B static display during an airshow, Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 121 personnel greatly enjoyed speaking to thousands of visitors about the world's first operational F-35B Lightning II squadron. Spectators were also captivated by the world's only remaining operational B-29, many of them posing near the aircraft in order to take away a slice of military history.

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With 2013 as his sixth airshow, Greg McShane, the MCAS Yuma Airshow Coordinator, was extremely proud of the air station personnel who made the day a success and the overall partnership between the City of Yuma and the air station.

“In my opinion, this year's airshow definitely achieved its goal of continuing to enhance community relations with our neighboring communities,” stated McShane. “By opening our gates to the public and delivering a free, world-class airshow in Yuma, this event is just one way to extend our sincere thanks to the Yuma citizens for their unfailing support to the Air Station year-round. This airshow also allowed us to continue to educate the community on the mission of Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, as a whole. Our key highlights included being able to successfully recognize and honor our Korean and Vietnam veterans as well as our aerial and static displays that specifically paid tribute to these deserving individuals.”

From Marine Corps aviation’s earliest beginnings during World War I to Yuma’s newest arrival, the F-35B Lightning II Joint Strike Fighter, MCAS Yuma continues to answer our nation’s call of duty to provide superior aviation training ranges to U.S. and NATO forces. This year’s show is symbolic of the history and future of Marine Corps Aviation in the desert southwest and provides insight in to the exciting opportunities that await MCAS Yuma Marines, Sailors, civilian employees and their families.

MCAS Yuma would like to thank the City and County of Yuma for their outstanding support to the Airshow, the hundreds of community volunteers who assisted as well as the thousands of visitors for taking time to meet some of the most amazing men and women serving in the armed forces today. Additionally, MCAS Yuma truly appreciates the selfless service offered by over 10 local Korean and Vietnam War Veterans as a part of the Veteran’s Display Pavilion which included vintage aviation and ground equipment from both eras. MCAS Yuma plans to develop additional war veteran events on station in the future to improve our Marines and Sailors understanding of military history and to keep our military history alive.

Check out the MCAS Yuma website at www.mcas-yuma.marines.mil or the airshow website at www.yumaairshow.com in the coming days for photos and videos from the 2013 show. Imagery will also be available at www.dvidshub.net/mcas-y.