



Marines pick up donated toys for their Unit's children at Christmas.

## Helping on the home front

There are many ways you can help support the squadron and their family members and all are deeply appreciated by the troops.

- Letter writing campaigns
- Donations for family members here at home
  - Gift certificates.
  - Calling cards.
  - Car repair services.
  - Grocery store gift cards.
  - Baby items (diapers, formulas).
  - Toys for kids at Christmas.
  - School supplies for kids.



## Get involved

Participants will be recognized on the City of Vista's web link to the program at [cityofvista.com](http://cityofvista.com).

## Create a care package today

For more information on HMLA-369 or the Adopt-a-Unit program, please check online at [cityofvista.com](http://cityofvista.com).

## Contact numbers

**City Manager's Office:** 760.639.6131

**E-mail:** [charris@cityofvista.com](mailto:charris@cityofvista.com)

**Your Help Makes a Difference!**



This publication is available in an alternate format.  
Please contact the ADA Coordinator at 760.639.6145.



# Adopt-a-Unit

## Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 369



*Americans Helping Americans*

[cityofvista.com](http://cityofvista.com)



## Adopt-a Unit program

The purpose of the Adopt-a-Unit program is to bond local communities with brave servicemen and women who protect and serve our country. It is a way for communities to reach out and make a difference in the lives of Marines, both when they are deployed and when they are stationed locally, but away from their homes. As part of this program, the City of Vista has adopted HMLA-369, stationed at Camp Pendleton. The City is coordinating several ways that the community, including school classes, church groups, service organizations, and individuals, can express their appreciation for the troop's efforts.

## HMLA-369

HMLA 369 is one helicopter squadron within the Marine Aircraft Group 39. The group's mission is to provide combat ready expeditionary aviation forces, capable of short notice world wide deployment. Known as the "Gunfighters", HMLA 369 has proven itself as the premier attack helicopter squadron in the Marine Corps by establishing a pattern of excellence few military units can emulate.

### HMLA-369 history

**1972:** The squadron was activated in Okinawa and quickly deployed to Vietnam. Known as the 'gunfighters', their efforts were recognized with the Helicopter Squadron of the Year award in 1972.

**1977:** The squadron was moved to Camp Pendleton, where it has earned several recognitions including the Commandant's Efficiency trophy in recognition for being the most operationally productive squadron in the Marine Corps for 1981.

**1990:** The squadron embarked for Southwest Asia as part of Operation Desert Shield.

**Present:** The squadron has and continues to complete many humanitarian operations. Each year they are scheduled to deploy overseas.

## Care packages & what to send

Your service member will, without a doubt, appreciate anything sent. These are some particularly useful items to consider when creating a care package.

### Food & drink

- Powdered drink mix (instant coffee, tea bags, cocoa).
- Meal enhancers (ramen noodles, hot sauces, mustard, ketchup).
- Quick protein (energy bars, tuna fish, beef jerky, beef summer sausage).
- Snacks (small hard containers of chips, cookies, pretzels, nuts, and cheese & crackers).
- Candy and gum. Avoid chocolate, it may melt. Send gum & candy in zip lock bags.
- Please do not send alcohol.

### Personal care & clothing

- Toiletries (toothpaste, toothbrush, dental floss, cotton swabs, shampoo).
- Personal care (baby wipes, eye drops, lip balm, feminine hygiene products).
- Foot care (moleskin, medicated foot powder, athlete's foot ointment).
- Disposable hand warmers (for cold weather climate).

## Entertainment

- Reading materials (paperback books, current magazines, comic books).
- Word games & puzzles.
- Games (foam footballs, basketballs, frisbees, hacky sacks, playing cards).
- Batteries (AA & D are always in demand).
- Writing materials (notepaper, envelopes, pens, pencils, and stamps).
- Disposable cameras & phone cards.

## Other supplies

- Cotton socks, underwear, and tee-shirts.
- Sunglasses (preferably goggle-type).
- Tactical duct tape (green, black, tan).
- One and two gallon zip lock plastic bags.
- Electrical tape.

## Reminders from home

- Include a personal note in each care package.
- Homemade goodies (cookies, brownies in airtight containers).
- Local news articles.
- Sunday comics.
- Photographs, drawings, and videos are comforting mementos of home.

