

Regional Command Southwest

Round-up

Weekly PAO Report

----- June 04, 2012 -----



NEWS

Animal Company develops, mentors, advises Afghans

Story and photos by Lance Cpl. Mark Garcia



FORWARD OPERATING BASE JACKSON, Afghanistan – As Marines continue to retrograde from Afghanistan, the shift in focus from combat operations to advising and mentoring the Afghan National Security Forces have become ever increasing. Marines with Animal Company, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, work to establish an effective Afghan fighting force. While deployed, Animal Co.'s, main focus is to ensure the ANSF in Sangin are capable of providing future security for the local population. To accomplish their mission the Marines conduct partnered patrols. They also conduct classes and training in marksmanship, the use of mine detectors, the employment of counter improvised explosive

devices, and in some instances, partnered physical fitness sessions. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)

Afghan and British troops discover huge drugs and explosives cache

U.K. Defence News

Working closely with Afghan security forces, soldiers of 1st Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment have made a considerable discovery of insurgent narcotics and supplies in the Nad 'Ali district of Helmand province. The men of A (Norfolk) Company have been working closely with Afghan security forces since their arrival in Helmand in late March. The discovery happened on Thursday 17 May when troops from 1st Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment, known as the Vikings, were carrying out an operation with Afghan forces to stop insurgents threatening the protected communities in Nad 'Ali. The operation began with a helicopter insertion into the area early in the morning and after a long march the men of 1 Platoon approached the group of compounds which intelligence had identified as an area of interest. On arrival at the compounds, A Company Sergeant Terry Johnson asked Corporal Jamie Seymour to secure the area as he spoke with a local elder. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)



Afghan Army, Marines investigate Wushtan

Story and photos by Lance Cpl. Tyler Reiriz



WUSHTAN, Afghanistan- Helicopters landed in a field during the early morning darkness, May 17, delivering the Marines of Baker Company, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, and soldiers of the Afghan National Army to the outskirts of the town of Wushtan to begin Operation Sangin United Horizons. The Marines of Baker Company acted as the main effort of the operation, with the other companies of 1st Battalion acting in supporting roles. "Wushtan is known as a facilitation hub," said Capt. Peter Ankney, commanding officer of Baker Company. "A lot of the insurgent activity that we see in Sangin and Musa Que'la is fed from that facilitation hub." Baker Company made up the main effort of the

operation aimed to disrupt insurgent activity in the region. They moved in from the south and investigated areas of suspected insurgent activity, searching for weapons, improvised explosive device making materials, narcotics and insurgents. **(Read the STORY)**

Marines get 'hot hookup,' pioneer new technique

Story and photos by Marine Cpl. Lisa Tourtelot

HELMAND PROVINCE, Afghanistan - Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 2, the "Night Owls," made history earlier this week when they completed the first "hot hookups" between landing support Marines on the ground and a hovering Kaman K1200, "K-MAX," unmanned helicopter in Helmand province, Afghanistan, May 22. In the nearly 20 years of its commercial and military use, no organization had ever attempted to hook cargo to the K-MAX while it was in unmanned flight. "This was particularly important because it was a milestone in unmanned aviation," said Maj. John Norton, the officer in charge of Cargo Resupply Unmanned Aircraft Systems with the Night Owls and a Rochester, N.Y., native. "It's a stepping stone to increasing our capabilities in the unmanned aviation spectrum." **(Read the STORY)**



Landing support Marines conduct first helicopter support team mission with unmanned aerial vehicle

Story and photos by Marine Sgt. Michele Watson



CAMP DWYER, Afghanistan – The Marine Corps has recently used the unmanned aerial vehicle, commonly known as a drone, as a cargo transportation platform in Helmand Province. The UAV is able to bring supplies, equipment and gear to preprogrammed coordinates placed in a computer system. A new step forward was taken when landing support specialists with Combat Logistics Battalion 5, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward) conducted the first series of hot hook-ups with the UAV at Camp Dwyer Afghanistan, May 23-25. Hot hook-ups are when LS specialists attach cargo to a hovering air platform. The Kaman K1200 unmanned aerial

vehicle is controlled by an aerial vehicle operator for takeoff and landing but is preprogrammed to fly independently and hover once it has reached its destination. **(Read the STORY)**

Adm. Handley visits Seabees in Helmand, Farah provinces

Story and photos by Petty Officer 1st Class Jonathan Carmichael

HELMAND PROVINCE, Afghanistan – Seabees assigned to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 11 experienced a rare opportunity when they received a visit from Rear Adm. Mark A. Handley, commander of 1st Naval Construction Division, May 15, 2012 in both Helmand and Farah provinces of Afghanistan. Accompanying Handley was Command Master Chief John F. Mulholland, 1-NCD. Also visiting were Capt. Kathryn A. Donovan, commodore of 22nd Naval Construction Regiment, and Command Master Chief Mark E. Kraninger, 22-NCR. After several meetings at the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward) headquarters on Camp Leatherneck, Handley was welcomed to Camp Krutke, by Cmdr. Lore Aguayo, commanding officer of NMCB-11. **(Read the STORY)**



Marine Engineers Transfer Authority in Afghanistan

Story and photos by Marine 1st Lt. Tyler Morrison



CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan – After a successful deployment providing general engineering support to both 2nd Marine Logistics Group (Forward) and 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), 9th Engineer Support Battalion relinquished their responsibilities to 8th Engineer Support Battalion in a transfer of authority ceremony here, May 30. Lt. Col. Scott Baldwin, 9th ESB commanding officer, and Sgt. Maj. Wesley Schaffer, the battalion sergeant major, took their place in front of a formation of Marines and sailors from both units and added an Afghan Campaign streamer to their organizational colors. The new streamer symbolizes all the hard work 9th ESB put forth throughout their deployment,

and its addition to the unit colors will ensure their dedication is always remembered. Ninth ESB's leadership then cased their colors, symbolically ending their deployment. **(Read the STORY)**

Logistics Marines, sailors transfer excess medical supplies to Afghan National Army

Story and photos by Marine 1st Lt. Tyler Morrison

CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan – Marines and sailors with the Marine Air-Ground Task Force Material Distribution Center, Supply Company, 1st Maintenance Battalion (-) (Reinforced), 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward) sorted, staged and delivered more than \$85,000 worth of consumable medical supplies to Afghan soldiers with Regional Logistics Support Command-Southwest, May 24. This was the first of many scheduled donations of excess medical supplies to RLSC-SW, which serves as the regional logistics hub for the Afghan National Army. After the decision was made that U.S. forces in Afghanistan will begin to drawdown, members of 1st MLG (Fwd) began to identify excess gear and equipment that would not be needed once there were fewer boots on the ground in Helmand Province. **(Read the STORY)**



Maintenance Marines keep battalion rolling

Story and photos by Marine Cpl. Mark Stroud



CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan —“Maintenance is the lifeblood of the battalion,” said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Troy C. Havard, maintenance officer, Support Company, Combat Logistics Battalion 4, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward). If maintenance is the lifeblood, then the motor transportation mechanics of Support Co. are the beating heart. “[The Marines in the maintenance bay] do the majority of the maintenance work in the battalion,” said Cpl. Bryan M. Robertson, motor transportation mechanic, Support Co., CLB-4. “We fix almost everything unless it is very minor, and then the line companies can do it.” The Marines faced a rapid adjustment period at the beginning of the deployment

when they assumed their maintenance responsibilities. An integral part of this adjustment involved familiarizing themselves with new equipment. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)

CLB-5 supports retrograde operations at multiple forward operating bases

Story and photos by Marine Sgt. Michele Watson

HELMAND PROVINCE, Afghanistan – Marines with 1st Platoon, Alpha Company, Combat Logistics Battalion 5, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward) continued their daily resupply efforts in support of 2nd Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 5, May 25. Prior to leaving their lot at Camp Dwyer, the Marines thoroughly checked their tactical vehicles to help ensure a breakdown-free trip. “The biggest obstacle we face on these convoys is the possibility of trucks going down, but we always find a way to make it work,” said Cpl. Kyle Cordin, manifest noncommissioned officer, 1st Plt., Alpha Co. The trucks go through continuous preventive maintenance and inspections to ensure they are prepared for each combat logistics patrol. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)



Camp Leatherneck PMO encourages morale, welfare, discipline on base

Story and photos by Spc. Chelsea Russell



CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan - The drawing on the whiteboard clearly illustrates the key points of a vehicle inspection May 12. Sgt. Irma Rosales, watch commander for I Marine Expeditionary Force Headquarters Group (Forward) Provost Marshal's Office, outlines the different aspects of the search, calmly warning her fellow Military Policemen to be on the lookout for anything suspicious. As she finishes her brief, Rosales smiles brightly and tells the mix of coalition MPs to be ready to roll out in 15 minutes. There's no telling what the MPs may find during their search. One thing is for sure though; being an MP could never be termed dull. Each day

holds something different. “It's not monotonous,” said Staff Sgt. Roy Calica, Staff Noncommissioned Officer in Charge for I MHG (Fwd) PMO. “You get to do different things. Every call you go to has a different set of circumstances that dictate how you handle the particulars of that case.” [\(Read the STORY\)](#)

Seabees celebrate Asian Pacific American Heritage Month in Afghanistan

Story and photos by Petty Officer 1st Class Jonathan Carmichael

HELMAND PROVINCE, Afghanistan – Seabees assigned to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 11 celebrated Asian Pacific American Heritage Month with food, cultural videos, and static displays, May 26, 2012, while deployed to Afghanistan. The battalion's Diversity Committee hosted the celebration on Camp Krutke, Camp Leatherneck for a few afternoon hours. Those that were able to attend were treated to fried lumpia, videos of cultural dance from different countries in Asia, and displays containing notable Asian Pacific Americans as well as historic, cultural, geographic, economic, and demographic information. This year, the theme for Asian Pacific American Heritage Month is "Striving for Excellence in Leadership, Diversity, and Inclusion." It puts focus on increasing appreciation and understanding of the contributions of Asian and Pacific Americans to our nation.

(Read the STORY)



HEROES

Memorial Day for Marines at Afghanistan's Helmand post honors fallen warriors

Story and photos by Marine Master Sgt. Grady Fontana



CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan—As the blistering sun sets, disappearing in the horizon, a solemn wind of silence breezes through the dusky sky along with the first hints of cool evening air here at this remotely located operating base in Helmand province at precisely 7:12 p.m., May 28, 2012. Flanked by a bugler, who plays the ceremonial hymn, Retreat, three formations of U.S. Marines and Sailors, British service members, along with Afghan National Army soldiers stand in orderly fashion at center stage of the Task Force Leatherneck compound here, to witness the lowering of the colors and to reflect on those who have perished during generations of war in service to America. Prior to the

lowering of the colors, and in observance of Memorial Day, Maj. Gen. David H. Berger, commanding general of 1st Marine Division (Forward), and TFL, the ground combat element of Regional Command Southwest, which covers Helmand and Nimroz provinces, led the TFL formation to pay tribute to fallen warriors from all conflicts. **(Read the STORY)**

Seabees: We build, we fight breast cancer

Story and photos by Petty Officer 1st Class Jonathan Carmichael

HELMAND PROVINCE, Afghanistan – Seabees assigned to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 11 braved extreme temperatures and dusty Afghanistan air while running a "Race for the Cure" on May 27, 2012 in the name of fighting breast cancer. The battalion's First Class Petty Officer's Mess sponsored the 5k run, which generated more than \$3,000 in donations for the cause. All proceeds went to support the "Susan G. Komen for the Cure" organization through its North Mississippi affiliate. Runners wore pink bracelets, pink ribbon decals, and pink stickers displaying various motivational words such as "love," "strength," and "hope" on their clothing to symbolize the fight against breast cancer. **(Read the STORY)**



VIGNETTES

Wing Chaplain provides spiritual help on the fly

Story and photos by Marine Cpl. Isaac Lamberth



COMBAT OUTPOST NOW ZAD, Afghanistan - Marines and sailors have fought alongside each other for more than 230 years, with Navy corpsmen, doctors and nurses continuously keeping Marines fit for battle. However, one area that is sometimes overlooked is the spiritual readiness of Marines. To answer this call, Navy Cmdr. Francis Foley, the command chaplain for 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward), visited the Marines and sailors aboard Combat Outpost Now Zad, Helmand province, Afghanistan, May 27. "It is such a great feeling when the chaplain comes out here to visit us," said 1st Lt. Rick Chapman, the executive officer for Police Advisory Team, 2nd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment. A native

of Palm Harbor, Fla., Chapman said the visits not only increase morale, but also allow service members to seek spiritual guidance. **(Read the STORY)**

Competitive spirit, hard work pays off for California Marine

Story and photos by Marine Cpl. Anthony Ward Jr

AFGHANISTAN - U.S. Marine Sgt. James C. Palacios was instilled with a competitive spirit from an early age. That competitive spirit helped him grow into the leader that he is today. Like many youth from San Bernardino, Calif., Palacios played several different sports before settling on one that fed his desire to compete. "In high school I wrestled, played volleyball and baseball," said Palacios, 25. "But with wrestling the accomplishment of when you beat your opponent or beat someone that's bigger than you, just that inner pride... it shows what you're made of." "As soon as I joined the wrestling team nothing competed with that pride," he added. "When you're on a team, you can play a perfect game but you can still lose from someone else's mistake. When your going one on one, if you lose its because either he's better than you or you didn't try hard enough." **(Read the STORY)**



Des Moines Marine seeks experiences to share with future grandchildren

Story and photos by Spc. Chelsea Russell



AFGHANISTAN - People know Marines like to live life on the edge and as a professed adrenaline junkie Cpl. Christopher Sharpe constantly strives for the next big thing. He worked as a lifeguard before he joined the Marines. One day he got up off his lifeguard stand and decided he wanted to do something more challenging with his life. He walked into the recruiting office and signed up for a five-year commitment. "I thought to myself, well, when I get old I want to be able to tell my grandkids and my kids that I did something crazy," said Sharpe. "So, I decided to join the Marine Corps." The Marine Corps suits Sharpe's passion for an active lifestyle. He enjoys surfing, mountain biking, snowboarding and getting out in nature. Playing video games could never satisfy his desire to live his life to the fullest. Sharpe chose the Military Police field because it offered him a wide range of opportunity. He interacts with people on a daily basis as a patrol supervisor and desk sergeant with 1st Law Enforcement Battalion Provost Marshal's Office Leatherneck. **(Read the STORY)**

VIDEOS

Maj. Gen Charles M. Gurganus Media Roundtable

Video by Marine Staff Sgt. Brian Buckwalter

The Regional Command Southwest commanding general, Maj. Gen. Charles M. Gurganus, speaks with Southern Calif.-based reporters during a video teleconference media roundtable. Gen. Gurganus discusses the progress made in the RC(SW) area of operations and answers questions from reporters about the transition of security operations to Afghan forces and the drawdown of US troops in the area.

(Watch the VIDEO)



Keeping Our Honor Clean: WES Team

Video by Marine Sgt. John Jackson



This is part three of a series of videos about 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward) noncommissioned officers and their professionalism, hard work and dedication to the mission while deployed to Helmand Province, Afghanistan. The Marines travel the battlespace providing morale services to fellow deployed service members as part of the Warfighter Exchange Services Team. **(Watch the VIDEO)**

Marketed/Republished Combat Correspondent Product

Lance Cpl. Leddy talks to a KBBE-FM/KNGL-AM reporter

Old Bridge, N.J. native serving in Afghanistan by Cpl. Ward used by My9TV for an on air salute to servicemembers from NY and NJ.

HM3 Sherwin Abris talks to a WTKF-FM reporter in Jacksonville, N.C.

1st Lt. Michael Loyd talks to a WTKF-FM reporter in Jacksonville, N.C.

Marine's blood saves Afghan soldier's life by Staff Sgt. Brian Buckwalter Republished on Soldier Porn(blog)

Marines get 'hot hookup,' pioneer new technique by Cpl. Lisa Tourtelot republished on: MSNBC, Yahoo News, GIZMODO, Smithsonian Air & Space magazine, Military Times.

Marine SSgt. Eric Ramirez talks with a Fox Sports Game Time React – Fox Sports

Marine SSgt Terrance Hoyte talks to Fox Sports Game Time React – Fox Sports

Marine Sgt. Nathan Rogers on Radio Lia
