

NOVEMBER NEWS

PREMIERE ISSUE



NAVELSG FWD CELEBRATES 217 YEARS OF SUPPLY CORPS TRADITION

THIS ISSUE INCLUDES:

**CHANGE OF COMMAND / SUPPLY CORPS BALL
TOP SHOTS / BLACK HISTORY MONTH
THE STARS COME OUT TO SEE THE SAILORS SHINE
RUNNING FOR A CAUSE / TOBY KEITH CONCERT
A FAMILY UNITED / FRIDAY MORNING FRENZY
COMPANY AWARDS / GOOD MORNING AFGHANISTAN
AND MORE**



Note From The Editor

Shipmates, families and friends: Ahoy from the sandy shores of Kuwait. It is an honor and a pleasure to introduce our premier "November News" Family Newsletter. My outstanding team has been snapping photos from day one of our mobilization. It is our goal to feature mission accomplishments and the personal and professional successes of our sailors stretching across five countries and their associated bases. My headquarters staff is manned by IT1 Melinda Judson of Marietta, OH, YN2 Kenneth Turner of Citronelle, AL and BM2 Steven Hall of Keokuk, IA. My industrious photographers include MA1 Crystal Jarrett of Baltimore, MD; ABH2 Carlos Barbamarquez of Los Angeles, Ca, BM2 Gary Coles of Smyrna, TN and HM3 Geoffrey Gutierrez-Lagunda of Virginia Beach, VA. They are always on duty with their cameras capturing the world's greatest Sailors serving our country.

We are assisted in our mission by company and unit PAO representatives: BM1 (Aw) Kelly Lynch of ACD-4 in Afghanistan, BU1 Phu Nguyen of MRAP Mission in Afghanistan, GM2 Rudy Heinrich of Alpha Company, YN1(AW)Lisa Rowe of BRAVO Company, AT2 Samuel Laurent and HM3 Earl Turner of Charlie Company and ET1 Vernon Cash of Golf Company.

Working together as a team, it is our goal to showcase NAVELSG FWD SAILORS accomplishing the mission and sharing our deployment experiences with you. **NAVELSG FWD sailors are encouraged to submit articles and photos for inclusion** in our publications. We have an official command Facebook "NAVELSG FWD" page for official command events and a group page named "NAVELSG FWD NOVEMBER CRUISEBOOK." To view the command page you can search GOOGLE and type in "NAVELSG FWD" and link will appear to connect you to the page. A Facebook account is not necessary to view the page. Recommend our page to your family and friends so they can see our Sailors in action.

We will be working very hard over the next several months to bring you Newsletters and Facebook Updates in addition to producing our Cruisebook. Stay Tuned for more.....

Very Respectfully
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GROUP COMMANDER

To the NAVELSG FWD Families, Friends and other Shipmates - Greetings from Camp Arifjan Kuwait! As the Group Commander of NAVELSG FWD, I want you to know that we are very excited to publish our premier edition newsletter. This edition is dedicated to you - the families and friends of our deployed sailors. It's hard to believe that we have been deployed for over four months. Each day of deployment is another day closer that we will all be home and reunited with both families and friends.

I want to reassure you that all sailors are doing an outstanding job and I am very proud of the accomplishments we have achieved thus far in our deployment. I also want to assure you that I take my job and the responsibility to take care of all sailors very seriously. I am also honored to be the Group Commander and have dedicated my leadership to the memory of CAPT Lyman Foster who was the Group Commander during the NAVELSG FWD Bravo rotation. I was his Deputy during the Bravo rotation and the impact of his leadership still touches me today.

Our mission as part of NAVELSG FWD is to provide Expeditionary Support Services (ESS) throughout the U.S. Central Command Area of Responsibility, Marine Air Cargo Handling to the U.S. Marine Corps, and Customs Clearing for U.S. Army personnel and equipment.

Our deployment goals are to (1) provide the best possible logistical support to the joint warfighter, and, (2) mobilize, deploy, and return home with no accidents, injuries, or mishaps - returning home better than when we left.

I am extremely proud of each sailor in the Group and even more proud of the families and friends as I know many sacrifices were made to prepare for mobilization as well as during the deployment. The opportunity to participate in this deployment personifies our core mission to serve our country and support the warfighter in the cause of freedom. It also gives us the opportunity to demonstrate the pride and professionalism of being part of the Navy Expeditionary Logistics Support Group.

I hope you enjoy this premier edition of the newsletter and I look forward to meeting each of you upon our redeployment.

CAPT Daniel Roman Pionk, SC, USN

r/
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THE DEPUTY'S DILIGENCE

Shipmates-

Let me take a moment to reach out to our team of Sailors and their families in our NOVEMBER Rotation premier issue. With approximately four issues during a rotation, we don't have the luxury of re-inventing the process several times while we are here, but we hope that we can find a suitable format that the sailors will encourage their family members to read.

For this premier issue I'd like to recount a story that many of my sailors from my former command, Navy Cargo Handling Battalion TEN, have heard, but that I'd like to share with each of you. I grew up in a small rural community of Cecilia, Kentucky. No stoplights, one general store, one bank, four churches and a hardware store. The owner of the hardware store was a retired Master Sergeant in the Air Force who had grown up in the community and had come back to live. In 1972 he had "Two Hot Dogs and a Coke for a Quarter" Day in the downtown area to celebrate the end of summer with a few musicians on hand to entertain. Events unfolded and "Cecilia Days" has grown into one of the area's most attended events in Central Kentucky.

This Master Sergeant has contributed much to my hometown. Growing up, I would always see him walking around with this pin on his jacket lapel that said "Yes You Can" and every time he would see me he would say "Young man, you do good work!" That's very influential on a teenager. To this group of sailors, I would tell you the same thing...You do good work! The transition between customs groups is almost complete. We need each of you to pick up what has been established and continue doing good work. I know each of you can help build this team for maximum results. I look forward to seeing the good work you do over the course of this deployment.

Excelsior!

Deputy



FROM: MASTER CHIEF TO: THE FAMILIES



To the families of NAVELSG FORWARD NOVEMBER, thank you for your support of the men and women of this command as they continue to perform their mission.

Your family member is doing the day to day business of this deployment under conditions that can be challenging. If you need assistance of any type, there are many resources available. Your first stop should be the NOSC that your family member drills at. Each NOSC has a Command Individual Augmentee Coordinator who should be able to assist you. If you have not been contacted by someone from your NOSC, contact the Senior Enlisted Leader of that NOSC for assistance. It will be very helpful to you if you know your family members Noble Eagle Number. If you don't, have your family member send you that number, located in their orders. This number will make it much easier for you to get assistance in case of an emergency.

Whenever I write comments to the Sailors of this command, I always end it with the same saying. This saying applies to the families as well as the Sailor. "Thank you for your service to our country and Navy."

Very Respectfully,
Master Chief Bob Garcia

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CHANGE OF COMMAND

KUWAIT (Feb.3 2012) - Navy Expeditionary Logistics Support Group (NAVELSG)

FORWARD held a change of command ceremony Feb. 3 at Camp Arifjan. Captain Daniel R. Pionk relieved Captain Keith Jones as Commander, NAVELSG FORWARD and with this change represents the fourteenth rotation to be sent over by NAVELSG.

The Commanding General, First Sustainment Command (Theater), Major General Kenneth Dowd and Deputy Commander, Navy Expeditionary Combat Forces Central U.S. Fifth Fleet Task Force 56, Captain James F. Gibson were members of the official party.

MG Dowd complimented NAVELSG FWD, citing their efforts uniquely enabled the rest of the national military assets and the withdrawal of US Forces from Iraq. These efforts were described by the Pentagon as the "most successful logistical drawn in U.S. Military History." Dowd said, it was an honor to witness the professionalism, achievement and excellence of the 595 Navy sailors deployed with NAVELSG FWD to support the First Theater Sustainment Command. MG Dowd thanked the sailors' families for their dedication to their sailors, the navy and the country and their sacrifices they endured while their loved ones were deployed.

LCDR Brian Huntley, NAVELSG FWD Operations Officer, presented a NAVELSG FWD Mike Cruise book to MG Dowd for his participation.

Captain Jones was pleased in the manner in which NAVELSG FWD executed the surge and draw down magnificently while providing a strategic analysis for future NAVELSG FWD missions. Captain Jones attributed the success of the mission to support provided by his sailors, their families and logisticians, civilian employees and the 1st TSC. Captain Jones said he was most proud of the sailors that improved professionally. Fifty sailors qualified Expeditionary Warfare Specialist and many sailors took

advantage of the tuition assistance made available to them during the mob.

Captain Pionk shared with the sailors of NAVELSG FWD and the Camp Arifjan Guests his mission expectations of delivering expeditionary combat service support to the joint war fighter, completing the mission safely, returning home better than we left and the successful Mission Completion of NAVELSG forward Mission.

He went on to describe the robust history of NAVELSG and highlighted the second rotation back in 2004 led by Captain Lyman Foster who had a stellar 40-year career as a Supply Officer in the U.S. Navy, but distinguished himself during the events of 9/11 as he was working in the South Tower of the World Trade Center when the planes hit and led a large contingent of his staff to safety.

"All of the NAVELSG personnel who have served on this mission since that time have worked diligently to provide exceptional combat service support to our joint services." Captain Pionk stated in his remarks.

The mobilized U.S. Navy Reservists of NAVELSG FORWARD provide customs clearing, air cargo support, and expeditionary support services support for Operation Enduring Freedom in Kuwait and Afghanistan as well as Nave Expeditionary Combat Forces Central.

Pionk a native of Parisville, Michigan; a graduate of St Mary's High School, Ferris State University, the Army War College and Regis Jesuit University, has been mobilized two times previously. Once with NAFVELSG FWD Bravo in 2004 where he served as NAVELSG FWD Deputy Commander and as the Chief of Strategic Transportation & Distribution, Multi-CJ Camp Victory Bagdad-National Forces Iraq in 2008.

NAVELSG delivers expeditionary logistics capabilities with mobilization-ready Navy Reserve Forces and Active duty Sailors. They provide a wide range of supply and transportation functions critical for peacekeeping, crisis response humanitarian assistance and combat service support missions. NAVELSG is a component of NECC, a global force provider of adaptive force packages of expeditionary capabilities to joint war fighting commanders.





Supply Corps



On March 10th a ball was held in honor of the birthday of the Supply Corps of the United States Navy at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. The event celebrated the birthday of the Supply Corps, which came into existence on February 23, 1795 when President George Washington appointed Tench Francis the first Purveyor of Public Supplies. To this day the Supply Corps remains one of the oldest staffed corps in the entire United States navy.

The event was hosted by Captain Daniel R. Pionk, Commander, Navy Expeditionary Logistics Support Group Forward. Captain Pionk has a long history of serving as a supply officer and has held various roles throughout his career both in command and in support of supply and logistics. Whether it was serving with Cargo handling units such as Navy Cargo Handling Battalion SEVEN or with Logistics units like Naval Logistics Forces Korea Detachment N4, Captain Pionk has dedicated his career to making sure the supply needs and logistic needs of Navy personnel both ashore and afloat have been met.

Captain Pionk welcomed Rear Admiral Jonathan A. Yuen, Commander, NAVSUP Global Logistics Support, CENTCOM DDC as the evening's guest speaker. Rear Admiral Yuen has a long and extensive history of serving as a supply officer. His journey began in 1983 and has encompassed a wide array of sea duty platforms such as USS Narwhal (SSN 671), USS Constellation (CV 64), USS Nassau as well as shore duty tours as the Navy acquisition contracting officer intern and the aide to the director of the Supply, Programs and Policy Division in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations. Rear Admiral Yuen gave an in depth look into the Supply Corps functionality, and the role that it plays in supporting the warfighter and delivering the needed supply and logistics to help them complete their mission.

Captain Pionk also welcomed many other distinguished guests that represented various branches of the United States military. The guests included Mr. J. "Mickey" McDermott, Senior Executive Service, Special Deputy Inspector General for Southeast Asia; Major General Kenneth Dowd, Commander, 1st Theater Support Command; Brigadier General Jonathan G. Ives, Commanding General, 364th Expeditionary Support Cell; and Brigadier General Clarkson, Deputy Commanding General, 1st Theater Support Command. The support shown by these individuals demonstrates the solidarity exhibited within the supply community and reinforces the idea that the ongoing effort of supply and logistics in theater is not a singular mission but is a team effort.

The event was coordinated and set up by members of Captain Pionk's staff at NAVELSG Forward. The emcee for the event was Lieutenant Commander Michael Bullock, Supply Officer, NAVELSG Forward. The evening was a roaring success and did a tremendous job in honoring the history and the honor of the Supply Corps, while keeping an eye on the great things still to be accomplished.

by AT2 Fenske



TOP SHOTS

Alpha Company

Dahlke, Kyle – Marksman
 Fernandez, Roberto – Marksman
 Irving, Michael – Sharpshooter
 Verdjo, Aymat – Marksman
 Schneider, Anthony – Marksman
 Bell, James – Expert
 Hutyra, Stephen – Marksman
 Halloran, Patricia – Marksman
 Anderson, Steve – Marksman
 Carros, Juan – Marksman
 Barrows, Naaman – Sharpshooter
 Preshong, Jared – Marksman
 Manlulu – Marksman
 Turner, Douglas – Sharpshooter
 Cannon, Claudia – Marksman
 Garcia, Robert – Expert
 Riebel, Angelica – Marksman
 Fenske, Eric – Marksman
 Frick, David – Marksman



Bravo Company

Burheett, Steven – Marksman
 Nguyen, Thina – Marksman
 Marshall, Claudia – Marksman
 Hands, Chris – Sharpshooter
 Santiago, Josue – Marksman
 Steffee, Graig – Expert
 Parra, Dionilio – Sharpshooter



Charlie Company

Wallis, Josh – Sharpshooter
 Lindley, Justin – Marksman
 Zuni, Joe – Marksman
 Jones, Matthew – Marksman
 Voss, Scott – Marksman
 Winston – Qadiyr – Marksman
 Yaskow, Graig – Marksman
 Atkinson, Nathan -- Marksman



Black History Month



Black History Month traces its beginnings to 1926 in the United States, when historian Carter Woodson, and the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, announced the second week of February as “Negro History Week.”

The Association chose this particular week because it marked the birthday of both Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass. Initially, the hope was that the weekly observance would eventually be eliminated when black history became fundamental to American society and history. Many Americans met Negro History Week with an enthusiastic response; it prompted the creation of black history clubs, an increase in interest among teachers, and interest from progressive whites.

Negro History Week grew in popularity during the following decades, and soon expanded into a month-long celebration and study of black history.

NAVELSG FWD at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait observed Black History Month this past February with a two-part lecture presentation on Black History. Lt. Cmdr. Michael Bullock, NAVELSG Supply Officer, provided several lectures on the observance of black history, as he has for the more than 15 years. Initially, Lt. Cmdr. Bullock became interested in documenting the history of black people because of the lack of information that is generally available to the causal student

of history. Lt. Cmdr. Bullock is familiar with a wide range of African history, and focuses on the achievements of Blacks prior to the Atlantic Slave Trade or Maafa (Great Tragedy).

His lectures exceeded the scope of the official national theme for this year. Lt. Cmdr. Bullock gave one presentation entitled, “Brothers in Arms and the Mighty Sister Soldiers – The Story of Blacks in World Military History.” The purpose of this presentation was to highlight the many personalities and accomplishments of Blacks in the annals of world military history. He began with the origins of civilization on the continent of Africa, and spoke on the numerous African personalities that made indelible marks on history. From the time of the Pharaohs of ancient Egypt, the African military genius Hannibal, to the military exploits of the Moors in Europe, Lt. Cmdr. Bullock facilitated a very informative presentation.

The outcome of this was the demand for an encore presentation entitled, “In Search of History - A Journey into Black History.” The purpose of this presentation was to examine the achievements of Africans from the dawn of civilization and their continuing influence on world affairs. In this lecture, the discussion delved into the irrefutable evidence of the Black African presence in the Nile Valley during the legendary accomplishments of ancient Egyptians. The presentation went further to show

the influence on those Black Africans in Western civilization, even today.

Lt. Cmdr. Bullock made and supported the argument of the tremendous influence of Africans in places off the continent, such as Europe, Asia, and even the presence of Africans in the Americas before Columbus. Each audience that shared in the experience commented on the wealth of information that was presented, and the well-documented sources that were cited for further investigation.

This lecture series inspired many who were present to do further research for a greater appreciation of all the contributions many have made in our nation’s history.



The Stars Come Out To See The Sailors Shine



T

he Expeditionary Warfare (EXW) Specialist candidates with Naval Expeditionary Logistics Support Group Forward (NAVELSG FWD) November experienced a real life lesson in the Chain of Command early in the deployment. On February 8, Naval Expeditionary Combat Commander (NECC) Rear Admiral Michael P. Tillotson, NECC Force Master Chief Farris W. Foresman accompanied by Rear Admiral Frank Morneau, Deputy Director for Expeditionary Warfare Division (N85B), and Commodore Dan Coleman for CTF 56 made NAVELSG FWD a stop on their Battle Space Tour of the Central Command Area of Responsibility

The visit stop featured an Admiral's call at with NAVELSG FWD Sailors and redeploying Navy personnel leaving theater through the Warrior Transition Program. Admiral Tillotson addressed the sailors by discussing current manning status affecting the Navy and Navy Reserves noting that Seabees could see the biggest hits due to the current force drawdown. A lively discussion ensued around the Class Three uniforms being potentially issued for NAVELSG FWD sailors. The trio warmly thanked the forward deployed sailors for their service and their families' sacrifices. Following a question and answer period, the Admirals took a tour of the NAVELSG work centers and made office calls with United States Army Central Command, Deputy Commanding General, and Major General Gary H. Cheek, and Admiral Jonathan Yuen, Director of Central Command Deployment and Distribution Operations Center (CENTCOM CCDOC). Hungry appetites were abounding after the tour and many Sailors had an opportunity to have meet and have lunch with the Admirals and FORCE Master Chief. After lunch, BM1 (EXW) Corey Braxton expressed his amazement with Admiral Tillotson enthusiasm for his sailors and football, despite the admiral being a Patriots Fan.

NAVELSG Rear Admiral Mark Belton and NAVELSG CDMC James Sweet came to visit their forward deployed sailors on Feb 17. Their itinerary featured an Admirals Calls, Office Call with Deputy Commanding General, Brigadier General David G. Clarkson and Director of CCDOC Admiral Jonathan Yuen. Admiral Belton enjoyed the opportunity to meet the forward deployed sailors and to learn about their experiences and skill sets utilized to support the mission.

The Deputy Commander of U.S. Naval Forces Central Command Charles Gaouette visited Kuwait sailors and hosted another Admirals Call for the IA, GSA, OSA IAMM forward deployed sailors and redeploying sailors. He briefed the sailors on world affairs that are impacting current operations in theater, the force drawn down, and "Living the Army Dream." Sailors deserve improved conditions "It is difficult being tasked and not getting support from the people you are supporting," stated the admiral.

Chief of the Navy Reserve, Vice Admiral Dirk J Debbink, rounded out the Live Chain of Command Lesson for the EXW candidates. He and FORCE Master Chief Chris Wheeler hit the sandy deck plates with a tour of the Theater Confinement Center, NAVELSG FWD, and the traditional Admiral's Call. VADM Debbink coined numerous sailors during his visit for their outstanding service to the Navy and their Country. After an informative lunch with the sailors Wheeler and Debbink challenged the sand sailors to a 5k Race. What an opportunity the EXW Candidates had to meet in person their chain of command. HOORAH!!!

Running for a Cause: Sexual Assault Awareness Month 5k

By IT1 Melinda Judson

It was a warm Saturday morning on April 7th when several hundred participants from Camp Arifjan strapped on their running shoes for a worthy cause. The street in front of the Zone 1 MWR was packed with Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, and Airman ready to run in support of April's Sexual Assault Awareness Month 5K Run. As the starting buzzer sounded and the runners took flight, flashes of Blue and Gold PT Uniforms could be seen throughout the masses.

The half-way point is marked by volunteers handing out water, encouraging and cheering on the runners. Bottles of water were thrown haphazardly along the sides of the road by the runners. Many caught their second wind after hydrating, pushing themselves on the second half of the race. The look of determination on the faces of the runners motivated each other to push themselves faster to the finish line.

The last leg of the race cuts in front of the Oasis and then through a side street before arriving at the Zone 1 Track, the runners push themselves to make one lap around the track and to the finish line. There they're greeted by more volunteers with water and cheers. After the race they collect the coveted 5K t-shirt, relax, stretch, and get group photos taken.



BRAVO Company Sailors Attend Toby Keith Concert

BY: YN1 Lisa Rowe



YN1 LISA ROWE

Camp Buehring, Kuwait- NAVELSG FWD, BRAVO Company enjoyed some well-deserved entertainment on 26 April, 2012, when country singer Toby Keith performed live at Camp Buehring in a concert hosted by the USO. Service members from Camp LSA, including Sailors from Camp Morell and NAVELSG FWD BRAVO Company, flocked to make the hour-long bus ride to see arguably America's most patriotic country singer.

The concert was a tremendous boost to the morale of the troops, many returning from challenging tours in Afghanistan. For this show, the artist known for songs like "Courtesy of the Red, White, and Blue," and "American Soldier" took a slightly different approach. Fans attending the concert were given red plastic cups in theme with Keith's 2011 hit song "Red Solo Cup," from his studio album Clancy's Tavern. The show ended in an emotional performance of Toby's tribute to the troops, "American Soldier."

A few lucky Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen were brought backstage to meet the band and receive autographs. Petty Officer Second Class Craig Steffe and I from BRAVO Company were among those chosen for this "meet & greet" with the performers. I thanked Toby and the band for the great show, and Keith commented, "It is my pleasure to perform for America's finest".

Toby Keith and his band have participated in USO tours for over nine years, supporting the military with shows at often remote installations in Afghanistan, Iraq, Kuwait, and South Korea. In December 2011, Keith was named "Artist of the Decade" by the American Country Awards



Air Cargo Detachment Four, (ACD-4), is

composed of 20 sailors. Four of which are station at Kandahar Airfield and 16 at Camp Leatherneck/Camp Bastion.

ACD-4 personnel are responsible for supporting the Marine Aviation Logistics Support group 16(MALS-16) and the 3rd Marine Air Wing which consist of AV-8B Harriers, V-22 Ospreys, CH-46s and C-130s in both locations. The Air Cargo Det personnel are on call 24 hours a day 7 days a week supporting these activities. The Marine squadrons are responsible for completing various combat missions that are very essential to the AOR. Their primary responsibilities are to locate, pick up and drop off supply items and aircraft parts for the MALS detachment utilizing heavy equipment such as MMV's, 7.5 ton trucks and 15 ton stake truck. There are times when parts need to be located throughout the base that are mission critical. Air Cargo personnel expeditiously locate these mission critical parts to ensure the Marines mission does not stop or be delayed. Recently, ACD-4 Kandahar Det has offered their services on various occasions to help out a Navy detachment from Carrier Air Wing 2(CVW2) attached to the USS Abraham Lincoln who is deployed in the Persian Gulf. The Carrier Air Wing detachment is responsible for assisting aircraft that have been diverted to Kandahar Airfield due to mechanical problems. ACD-4 assists by ensuring they have adequate transportation and tools to repair the aircraft and get them back to the ship. Since, they have been deployed to Afghanistan Air Cargo has been responsible for moving cargo valued at \$361,621,094.66. by BM1 Lynch

YOU CAN GET THERE FROM HERE



A FAMILY UNITED

by: ITC MICHELLE BROSKOVICH



Deployments are a time for Sailors to focus on goals for both personal and professional development. Aviation Ordnanceman 1st Class (AO1) Christian Castro, 36, of Rancho Cucamonga, Calif.; deployed with Navy Expeditionary Logistics Support Group (NAVELSG) FWD Navy Customs, achieved his lofty goals. Mobilization readiness is paramount to members of the Navy Reserve. Castro, a computer engineer, drilled with Fallbrook Explosive Detachment out of the Moreno Valley Navy Operational Support Center (NOSC) in California when he was tagged for mobilization. Drilling reservists are tasked with always having their personal readiness in order prior to deploying.

Castro, originally from San Jose, Costa Rica moved to the U.S. at the age 15. In 1996, a year after high school he enlisted in the United States Navy. After serving four years of active duty he affiliated with the reserves in 2000 and attended Westwood College

where he graduated Summa Cum Laude in 2003.

During a trip to Costa Rica in 2004, Castro met a young lady, Marianela, at a family gathering. The young lady grew up a mile from Castro's home yet they had never met before. They struck up a special friendship that was nurtured through long distance communications - email, social networking and phone calls. Over the next six years both completed their education and continued on with their lives, while maintaining this special friendship.

In June 2010 Castro planned a two week visit to Costa Rica to visit family and Marianela. Marianela had recently ended a relationship and had an 8-month old son, Mathias. Castro described the special connection and attraction they shared. He felt strongly about Marianela and this was a milestone moment in his life. After spending two weeks together he was "convinced something needed to be done." Castro had to return to the States to

his job and continued their long distance communications.

By July he knew he wanted to spend the rest of his life with Marianela and baby Mathias, so he asked for her hand in marriage. On Sept. 19, the couple was married in a civil ceremony in Costa Rica. Castro and his new family participated in a legal ceremony on Sept. 21 that gave young Mathias the last name Castro, completing the family unit.

Prior to getting married, Castro began researching immigration options for his new family. He had spoken to several immigration lawyers and realized the cost to retain one was at least \$3000 in addition to a \$1000 visa processing fee. He decided to proceed on his own to attain the necessary immigration paperwork for his new family.

The immigration process is very lengthy, involved, and detailed. American citizens desiring a spousal visa must provide the necessary documentation to prove they are financially able to take care of their families. Researching the options he learned about the requirements for spousal visa application process. This process entails the citizen documenting and demonstrating proof of the established relationship, to include letters, emails photos to substantiate the marriage in addition to legal documentation of birth, marriage certificates, immunization and health records and passport photos. This was a huge undertaking where any mistake in the process could cause a delay of several months. Marianela also had to undergo an investigative interview and a health examination as part of the immigration process.

With his mobilization pending, Castro continued to research what options he could pursue while deployed outside the U.S. He learned that the National Visa Center would expedite the document processing eliminating four months of the process due to his active duty orders.

While training at Ft Dix, New Jersey Lt. Cmdr. Mike Moody, the Officer in Charge of the Customs pre-mobilization class, took an interest upon learning about Castro's family situation and drafted a letter to the National Visa Center on Castro's behalf. The letter was added to the spousal visa application on May 28, 2011. Knowing the application would be approved in less time than anticipated relieved a huge burden on Castro's mind prior to leaving the U.S. for Kuwait. Moody's letter helped Castro focus and be mission ready.

"AO1 Castro is an outstanding Sailor," said Moody. "Writing a letter for him was a privilege. It really is a great thing to see the process speed up and enable him to get his family united and to the States quickly after returning from mobilization."

Castro advanced on the deployment to the rank of First Class Petty Officer, his family visa application was initially approved mid-July 2011 and the final visa approved in Mid-March of 2012.

In addition to these positive personal and professional milestones, they planned a big church wedding in Costa Rica upon Castro's return from Deployment in April 2012. After wedding he will be bringing his family home to the United States. Mission complete!

FRIDAY MORNING *FRENZY*



Every week on Friday morning Navy Expeditionary Logistics Support Group Forward (NAVELSG FWD) N4 Supply Department, Navy Customs, and the Warrior Transition Program (WTP) come together to help send home several, very eager sailors that have been on deployment, away from their family and homes, for up to a year. NAVELSG FWD supports U.S. Navy Customs in collecting and inventorying gear and equipment that was issued to these sailors during their deployment. This includes approximately 54 items and weighing well over 100 pounds. These sailors have been held accountable for this gear for several months and have had to carry it around with them as they travel from duty station to duty station. These sailors arrive in Kuwait through WTP, however serving in various geographical locations throughout the Middle East. Despite their place of duty, one thing is certain; they are all eager to return the gear and head home.

The Supply Department's goal is to efficiently and effectively collect all of the issued gear and ship it back to the appropriate US Navy or Army base, which include Fort Jackson, Fort Dix, Fort Bliss and Fort Polk to

name a few. There are 6-8 tables set up (depending on the size of the group redeploying) with one NAVELSG Supply member and 1 to 2 Customs personnel at each table. While each sailor goes through their gear, the Supply staff member inventories the each item on a checklist, the Customs staff member inspects the gear, checking for contraband that cannot be returned to the states. Some of the key material or items that are on the recovery list include ammo, magazines, and medical items, such as Atropine. All of their gear that the sailor is returning gets repacked into one rucksack and one seabag that they were issued and is then tagged with the appropriate destination. Some other examples of the items collected are their protective vests with armor plates, several different pieces of cold weather clothing, a sleeping system, and a variety of magazine pouches. After all of their gear is collected, inventoried, and repacked the redeployer signs the form stating they have returned all of the gear they were issued and are no longer accountable for it! At this moment you can see the relief on their faces and sense that a weight has been lifted, literally and figuratively.

After all of the sailors receive a copy of their receipt and have left the hangar bay, NAVELSG Supply

members get busy with the shipping process. The staff members stack triwalls full of rucksacks and seabags containing pounds and pounds of gear. Each triwall has to be marked, banned, and then placed in the appropriate conex box to be shipped back to the U.S. via a 10K forklift. The entire process from the when we clap in the sailors to the last triwall is stacked in the conex box can take anywhere from 3-6 hours depending on how many redeployers are going home that week. We push through anywhere from 60 sailors to 200 sailors and stack anywhere from 5 to 20 triwalls full of equipment. Gear drop takes a lot of hard work and can take a lot of time, but is a very fun experience for the redeployers and the staff members. It is a great feeling to help lighten the load of a fellow shipmate who has served our country overseas and is now ready to go home.

This "Friday Frenzy" evolution is known to us as the "Gear Drop" and it is a very upbeat and exciting time for the redeployers. As they come into the hangar bay they receive a well-deserved round of applause by the staff of WTP, NAVELSG N4 Supply Dept, and Navy Customs personnel. Music is playing, people are cheering, high-fiving one another left and right! Every staff member is very appreciative of all the hard work and time these sailors have put forth and the main goal is to make sure they have an easy, smooth transition back home.

On behalf of NAVELSG FWD, Navy Customs, and the Warrior Transition Program, "thank you to all of those who have served in the Armed Forces, fighting for what you believe in, whether overseas or within our beloved country".

"THANK YOU" to all of the friends and family members of those who have served, without your support; we couldn't complete our mission.



AM3 Jodie Braswell
United States Navy
NAVELSG Forward Supply
Camp Arifjan, Kuwait

BRAVO COMPANY AWARDS

BY AE2 JOSEPH PAPIN

Camp LSA, Kuwait- With the final group of Sailors from MIKE wave departing within the next week, and November wave taking full ownership of Customs operations at Camp LSA, BRAVO Company conducted a symbolic and fitting awards ceremony in the new Customs processing facility at Camp LSA. On Wednesday the 25th of April 2012, Captain Pionk, Group Commander of NAVELSG FWD, presented end-of-tour awards to three MIKE wave sailors and promoted one NOVEMBER wave Chief to Senior Chief.

Petty Officer First Class (OS1) Mario Mendoza was awarded the Army Achievement Medal for his outstanding service while assigned to GOLF Company in Afghanistan. Petty Officer Second Class (ABH2) Elizabeth Barahona was awarded the Army Achievement Medal for exemplary performance while serving with GOLF Company, and was also recognized as Sailor of the Quarter for 1st Quarter 2012. Petty Officer Second Class (ABF2) James Baylis was awarded a Flag Letter of Commendation from Brigadier General Ives, U.S. Army, for his outstanding service as a Customs Border Clearance Agent and Section Leading Petty Officer while attached to BRAVO Company.

Following the awards ceremony, Chief Derek Lindsay was recognized for an accomplishment very few earn - the promotion to Senior Chief Petty Officer. Senior Chief Lindsay is presently serving as Operations Department Chief at BRAVO Company.



GOOD MORNING AFGHANISTAN

Good morning,

I hope all is well where you are. We're not doing terribly bad I guess. Still alive and kicking which absolutely beats the alternative. As far as the base goes, well, it's a base out in Afghanistan. We can't really be expecting much can we? It's been dustier than usual. When most areas get a rainy season, we get a windy season mixed with sand storms. Great! Besides that, the weather hasn't been too bad temperature wise.

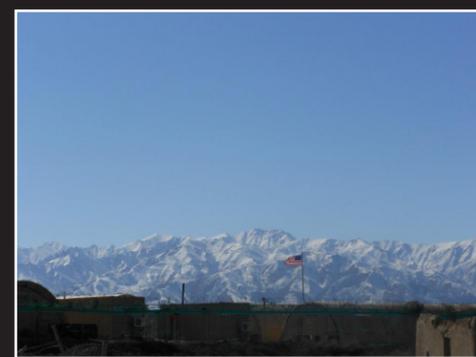
The dining facilities food doesn't have many choices, and when the base has shipping problems with supplies it really gets bare in there. For the most part we're able to get good veggies, meat and fruit on occasion. I guess in places like this we just have to eat to live and worry about living to eat when we get back home. Oh man! I'm telling you, when I get back I am gonna eat so much of that good American fast food, I am going to gain like 20 pounds no problem.

As for what we do here for our off time, the MWR facilities and the base try to put things together to keep us entertained. We're able to log on to the internet and make phone calls most of the time. Since it's been warming up, there is usually a 5k race to get into on the weekends. They give out pretty cool t-shirts if you run fast enough. Let's see, they also have a country dancing nights in one of the gyms. Although I haven't gone, it seems to get a lot of attention. They also have poker nights around twice a week and a salsa night. I've made it a goal to attend one of this salsa lessons. As of this point I dance with two left feet, but am looking to change that eventually. J

Work has been quite busy. In a nutshell, we're in charge of making sure our trucks get upgraded with the latest gadgets as well as managing repairs for damaged vehicles. In this neck of the woods, there are a lot of repairs to make and gadget upgrades come out every couple months to keep up with the changing battle tactics. For me work is fun. I get to coordinate with several different people from different groups with different specialties to get things done. It keeps the time ticking fast and keeps me moving. For me, the last thing I need to do is be stuck behind a desk all day long staring at a screen.

One of the down sides to our jobs is the risk we take when dealing with the locals. We have to load and unload our trucks on to flat bed 18 wheelers owned by third country nationals. We also have to escort these guys to convoy staging areas and out the gate for unload evolutions. I really don't have a problem with these guys, but we run the risk of dealing with shady characters every time we interact with them. I hate to be that way, but you never know. I could fill a book with the stories that come out of this place, but there's no need. All in all, we're doing ok here and will be back before you know it. Good luck with all that you are doing and say hey to the people. See you in a few.

Phu Nguyen





The Charlie Company the Sea Port of Debarkation (SPOD) Customs Team conducted Customs inspections of 24 Helicopters and 4 containers of organizational gear and associated equipment for US Army Det. 1, 642nd ASB. This Navy Customs team includes: BM1 Anthony Perez, MR1 Tommy Burnett, EM2 Angie Ko, BM1 Craig Bishop, and AT2 Samuel Laurent.

CHARLIE COMPANY AWARDS

Captain Dan Pionk and Master Chief Bob Garcia visited Charlie Company to present end of tour awards to redeploying sailors. EM2 Angie Ko, EN2 Christopher Farias, BM2 Nanette Lewis and ABH2 Lawrence Llorente were the recipients of Flag Letters of Commendation from Brigadier General Jonathan G. Ives of the 364th Sustainment Command for their outstanding mission support while deployed with NAVELSG FWD. BMC Albert P. Hreha JR, was awarded the Army Commendation Medal for his accomplishment and leadership during his tour. Captain Pionk and Master Chief Garcia congratulated and thanked the Charlie Company sailors for their hard work, dedication to the mission and their families scarifies during the deployment.



NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE

HAPPY BIRTHDAY CPOS

On April 1st the United Navy Chief Petty Officer celebrated its birthday.



5k FUN RUNS

A RECAP OF ALL THE RUNS AROUND BASE.



SOFTBALL TEAMS

A CLOSE-UP LOOK AT OUR SOFTBALL TEAMS.



SUNSHADE REMODELING

NOVEMBER WAVE HOME IMPROVEMENTS



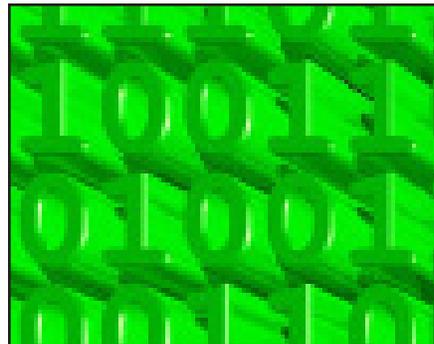
MUSTACHIO BASHIO

A HAIRY EXPERIENCE



DIGITAL CORNER

USEFUL COMPUTER INFORMATION



THE HISTORY PAGE

THE WAR OF 1812



GIFTS FROM THE GIRLS

THE GIRLS COME THROUGH AGAIN.

