

Regional Command Southwest *Round-up* Weekly PAQ Report

----- August 14, 2012 -----



NEWS

Commanding general talks to SNCOs, NCOs

Story by Cpl. Ed Galo



CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan – The commanding general for Regional Command Southwest spoke to the noncommissioned officers aboard Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, Aug. 5 and the staff NCOs Aug. 4. Major Gen. Charles M. Gurganus updated the Marines about the current state of operations in Afghanistan, troop drawdowns and what to expect in the coming months as coalition forces continue to transfer security responsibility to Afghan forces. “They’re fighting side by side with us,” he said. “That’s a pretty big step. It takes time to grow.” He added that Afghan forces still need Marines for some combat support roles including medical evacuations, but Afghans are working to develop those

capabilities. After Maj. Gen. Gurganus spoke to the Marines, sailors and coalition partners, he opened the floor up to questions. One Marine asked what the general wants NCOs to take care of after returning home from Afghanistan. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)

Afghan National Army's EOD teams safely disarm bombs in Delaram

Story and photos by Cpl. Kenneth Jasik

FORWARD OPERATING BASE DELARAM II, Afghanistan - The deadliest threat to forces operating in Afghanistan is improvised explosive devices, and Afghan National Army soldiers operating in Delaram District have been able to minimize the damage they cause with their explosive ordnance disposal teams.

The ANA's 2nd Brigade, 215th Corps, based in Delaram includes several explosive ordnance disposal teams. Those teams have successfully disarmed more than 30 IEDs in the past month, which is something they can be proud of, said Gunnery Sgt. Mario L. Virgen, Regimental Combat Team 6, 4th Kandak advisor team staff noncommissioned officer in charge. The EOD technicians with Route Clearance Tolay, 4th Kandak, act as a quick-reaction force whenever an IED is found. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)



Leatherneck leaders celebrate Ramazan with Muslim brothers in arms

Story and photos by Sgt. James Mercure



CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan – Coalition leaders, provincial governors and Afghan elders met aboard Camp Leatherneck to share in the celebration of Ramazan at the Afghan Cultural Center, Aug. 7. During the monthlong celebration, Muslims around the world fast during the daylight hours and eat only after the sun sets. The meal breaking the fast is known as iftar and can be shared with others as a form of charity, which is one of the five pillars of Islam.

“This dinner shows the unity of all the forces here tonight,” said Abdul Karim Barahawi, Nimroz provincial governor. Helmand Provincial

Governor Mohammad Gulab Mangal also joined in the meal. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)

UK forces support Afghan operation in Lower Gereshk Valley

Story by TF Helmand and photos by Sgt. James Mercure

Afghan soldiers and police, supported by British troops, have completed an operation to clear insurgents from the Lower Gereshk Valley, in the north of Nahr-e Saraj district. Operation BIG FISH was planned at a meeting of Afghan security officials including the District Governor and the Chief of Police, which was attended by the Commander of Task Force Helmand, Brigadier Doug Chalmers. The security shura meets regularly to discuss the district's security priorities and the allocation of police and army resources.

[\(Read the STORY\)](#)



Afghan combat support soldiers work with Marine advisors

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Brian Buckwalter



COMBAT OUTPOST FIDDLERS GREEN, Afghanistan – The future success of Afghanistan's security depends largely on the abilities of the country's armed forces.

In southern Helmand province, Marines have been training and advising Afghan National Army soldiers on how to be a military force, helping lay the foundation for the ANA's future success. Training runs the gamut from basic infantry training to administrative and logistical support. At Combat Outpost Fiddlers Green, Marines are advising an Afghan combat support kandak, the 4th Kandak, 1st Brigade, 215th Corps. A kandak is the Afghan Army equivalent to a battalion. Combat support includes combat engineers, artillery and

reconnaissance assets. Colonel John R. Shafer, commanding officer, Regimental Combat Team 6, recently met with 4th Kandak leadership to get an update on their progress. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)

Personal Security Detachment allows commanding general to travel throughout Helmand Province, meet with Marines in remote areas

Story and photos by Sgt. Michele Watson

HELMAND PROVINCE, Afghanistan – A great leader makes for a great team, but when that team is comprised of thousands of Marines and sailors spread out at dozens of different locations, a leader must have an understanding of how each area affects his team members. The Personal Security Detachment, 1st Marine Logistics Group, is a specific group tasked with escorting Brig. Gen. John J. Broadmeadow, Commanding General, 1st MLG (Fwd), to all areas of operation throughout Helmand Province, Afghanistan. “Our mission is to provide security for the commanding general while allowing him to conduct his battle field circulations,” said Sgt. Michael Johnson, Personal Security Officer, PSD, 1st MLG (Fwd).

“My sole mission is to act as a personal bodyguard for the CG no matter where he goes.” [\(Read the STORY\)](#)



Six nations with same goal: Better NCO

Story and photos by Cpl. Anthony Ward Jr.



CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan – Noncommissioned officers representing various services throughout the North Atlantic Treaty Organization/ International Security Assistance Forces gathered on Camp Leatherneck for the Coalition Noncommissioned Officer Symposium, Aug. 1. The symposium called for a combination of NCOs and staff NCOs to lead, discuss and demonstrate various skills and exchange information on how to better the NCO corps and enhance the responsibility the position brings. Six countries were represented throughout the symposium to include United States, Danish, Tongan, Afghan, Jordanian and Bahraini forces. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)

Light Dragons destroy huge Afghan insurgent explosives cache

Story and photos courtesy of Task Force Helmand

Few British soldiers from the Light Dragons have discovered and destroyed a huge insurgent cache of bomb-making equipment in Helmand province, Afghanistan, saving military and civilian lives. The soldiers from A Squadron, known as 'The Empire', of the Light Dragons, an elite cavalry reconnaissance regiment normally based at Swanton Morley in Norfolk, found the huge cache whilst on operations with their Afghan Army partners in the Nahr-e Saraj area of Helmand. The operation was specifically designed to take the fight to the insurgents in their own backyard. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)



General Support: Heavy Helicopter Squadron 362 (Pictoral)

Photographs by Cpl. Isaac Lamberth



Cpl. Chan Lathung, a native of Oakland, Calif., and a crew chief with Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 362, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward), scans the surrounding area for insurgent activity during a general support flight over Helmand province, Afghanistan, July 27. The squadron flies several general support flights weekly delivering mail, food and ammunition to troops throughout the area. [\(See the PHOTOS\)](#)

Super Stallions flex big guns (Pictoral)

Photos by Cpl. Lisa Tourtelot

A CH-53E Super Stallion with Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 466 carries an M777 Howitzer from the Kajaki dam area back to Camp Bastion, Afghanistan, Aug. 5. The squadron, known as "Cyclops," teamed with landing support team specialists from Combat Logistics Battalion 4 to help 2nd Battalion, 10th Marine Regiment, retrograde three artillery cannons. [\(See the PHOTOS\)](#)



VIGNETTES

No beans or bandages - St. Cloud native supplying bullets, rockets in Afghanistan

Story and photos by Sgt. James Mercure



PATROL BASE EREDVI, Afghanistan – For Sierra Battery, 5th Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, the responsibility of tracking almost \$6 million worth of ammunition rests in the hands of Lance Cpl. Ryan Chandrapaul. Serving as the ammunition chief and armory chief, the 21-year-old St. Cloud, Fla., native, orders, tracks and secures everything from rockets to machine guns. “Before I deployed, I did support for Mojave Viper and I learned more about ammo in those six months than most do in years,” said Chandrapaul. “So now, I know a lot about the weapons systems and the ammunition fired from them so I can better support any unit I’m with.”

[\(Read the STORY\)](#)

Bowling Green Marines, brothers reunite in Afghanistan

Story and photos by Cpl. Kenneth Jasik

CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan – What do a pilot, motor transportation mechanic and an embarkation specialist deployed to Afghanistan have in common? For three Marines the answer is simple, they are brothers. Gunnery Sgt. James K. Donnelly, a maintenance chief with 1st Maintenance Battalion (Forward), 1st Marine Logistics Group; Sgt. Thomas M. Baker, an embarkation specialist with I Marine Expeditionary Force Forward; and their brother Maj. Nathaniel A. Baker, an EA-6B Prowler pilot with 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing Forward had the opportunity to meet up on Camp Leatherneck regularly, when all three were deployed to Afghanistan at the same time. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)



Troy native serves with Marines in southern Afghanistan

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Brian Buckwalter



COMBAT OUTPOST JAKER, Afghanistan – For some people, history is just another subject in school. For Lance Cpl. Joshua Taylor, being a part of history was a calling. To follow that calling, Taylor, 21, from Troy, Ala., left behind a full-ride scholarship to college to join the Marine Corps. The only reason he even went to college for a year was because it was free, he said. He’s always had an interest in the military. “Action movies had a role in it,” he said, but so did his interest in warfare, tactics and World War II history. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)

Sailor turns passion into career

Story and photos by Cpl. Ed Galo

CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan – Ever since he was in high school, Navy Lt. Ryan Maid had a passion for helping his peers. He first started helping others when he was part of a peer mediation program in high school. Maid, the psychologist who runs the Operational Stress Control and Management program for Regimental Combat Team 6, decided he wanted more and wanted to better help others. “I chose to be a psychologist because I was in a position in a very young age where I was helping individuals, and I was limited in what I could do,” said Maid, from Harrisonville, Mo. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)



VIDEOS

Keeping our honor clean: CLB-4 Loadmasters

Video by Sgt. John Jackson



News story about Combat Logistics Battalion 4 loadmasters and the mission they accomplish while deployed. Available in High Definition. [\(Watch the VIDEO\)](#)

Afghan National Army Engineers Improve Outpost

Video by Cpl. Lisa Tourtelot

B-roll of ANA engineers improving an outpost in Washer District. Scenes include heavy equipment leveling terrain and Afghan soldiers filling and setting up Hesco Barriers. Also available in high definition. [\(Watch the VIDEO\)](#)



Marketed/Republished Combat Correspondent Product

Maj. Gen. David Berger, TFL CG media interviews

Boston Globe

Reuters

MSNBC

The Pentagon Channel

**Patriot Profiles: ‘It’s more than just an arms-to-arms fight over here’
Interview with Capt. Justin Jackson, HMLA-469, Del Mar Times, San Diego, Calif.**

Crucial Air Support for Combat Troops, BFBS, Camp Bastion, Afghanistan

Cpl. Jessica Holland talks to the Yuma Sun, Yuma Sun, Yuma, Ariz

Miramar Minute, featuring Cpl Tourtelot's HMLA-469 Vengeance video, KSWB Fox 5, San Diego, Calif.

Sgt. Jeremy Hight talks to Fox Sports Radio about his favorite football team, his job in Afghanistan, sharing football with his wife, Fox Sports Game Time React, Dora, Ala.

Afghan forces increasingly in security lead in southern Helmand province republished in New York Daylife

Afghans Ready for Security Responsibility in Delaram republished in Blip.TV

Marine from Micronesia wraps up second Afghan tour republished in Soldier Porn

Marine from Micronesia wraps up second Afghan tour republished in New York Daylife

Afghan forces increasingly in security lead in southern Helmand province republished in World's Luxury Guide

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