



----- August 21, 2012 -----



NEWS

From Vietnam to Afghanistan – End of era for icon of Marine aviation

Story and photos by Sgt. James Mercure



CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan – First deployed during the Vietnam War, the CH-53D helicopter made its final flight in Helmand province, Afghanistan, Aug. 16. For the “Ugly Angels” of Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 362, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward), being a part of the final flight that ended a legacy in Marine aviation came with mixed emotions. “It’s bittersweet, but it’s a step forward,” said Lt. Col. Christopher “Ollie” Oliver, the commanding officer of HMH-362 and a pilot for the final mission. “We sent this aircraft out on a high note and if it had to go out, it might as well have gone out in a combat zone.” The squadron first started using the CH-53D Sea Stallion during 1969 and has since participated in

combat and humanitarian operations around the world. ([Read the STORY](#))

Marines bid farewell to friend, brother

Story and photos by Cpl. Mark Garcia

CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan – On a quiet Friday afternoon, more than 100 coalition servicemembers gathered to honor Sgt. Joshua R. Ashley, a fallen comrade during a memorial ceremony in the Regional Command Southwest chapel, Aug. 17. Before the ceremony, Marines constructed a traditional field memorial providing them the opportunity to pay their final respects. The memorial consisted of a kevlar with identification tags signifying never to forget Ashley, a rifle with a bayonet upside down signifying a time of prayer and a break in action to pay tribute and a pair of boots signifying this was Ashley’s last march. Ashley, from Rancho Cucamonga, Calif., was a dog handler with Military Working Dogs Platoon, Headquarters and Supply Company, 1st Law Enforcement Battalion (Forward), I Marine Expeditionary Force Headquarters Group (Forward). He was killed in action July 19 while conducting combat operations in Helmand province. During the ceremony fellow dog handlers and friends spoke of the man and Marine Ashley was and what they would remember most about him. ([Read the STORY](#))



8th Engineer Support Battalion cases colors in Afghanistan, heads home to prepare for next mission

Story and photos by Sgt. Michele Watson



CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan – Marines and sailors with 8th Engineer Support Battalion, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward) stood proudly during a casing of the colors ceremony, marking the end of a successful tour in Afghanistan. Lt. Col. Ferdinand Llantero, 8th ESB Commanding Officer and Sgt. Maj. John Bankus, Battalion Sergeant Major, cased the battalion's colors at Camp Leatherneck, Aug. 15. During their deployment, the battalion made a significant impact on operations in southern Helmand Province. Brig. Gen. John J. Broadmeadow, Commanding General, 1st MLG (Fwd), spoke to the Marines and sailors at the ceremony about their accomplishments at multiple forward

operating bases, patrol bases and combat outposts throughout Regional Command Southwest. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)

Marines with HMH-466 conduct final flight over Helmand province

Story and photos by Cpl. Kenneth Jasik

HELMAND PROVINCE, Afghanistan – For the past seven months, Marines with Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 466 have been resupplying forces on the front lines, as well as tactically inserting them into dangerous areas as coalition forces have been taking the fight to the enemy. The Marines with the squadron completed their last flight before they return home, Aug. 14. “We supported all the Marines in (Regional Command Southwest) every single day,” said Capt. James A. Everett, a pilot with HMH-466. “We moved a ton of people around and a ton of cargo.” In addition to general support missions, the squadron has done numerous flights inserting troops into insurgent-held territory. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)



One team, one fight: Afghan forces work together against insurgency

Story and photos by Cpl. Kenneth Jasik



KAJAKI DISTRICT, Afghanistan – As Afghan National Security Forces take over for Marines operating in Helmand province, they coordinate their efforts through an Operational Control Center-District. The OCCD, advised by Marines with Police Advisor Team 4, Regimental Combat Team 6, in Kajaki District, ensures all the operations of the Afghan National Army, Afghan National Civil Order Police and Afghan Uniformed Police are well-coordinated. “The OCCD is like a (command operations center) for the ANSF,” said Cpl. Franklyn L. Plummer, an assistant advisor with Police Advisor Team 4. “It’s a partnership between the ANA, ANCOP and AUP. It’s so they can communicate together and help each other out. Let’s say

that ANCOP is in a firefight and they are near an ANA post. The (ANCOP) would let the (ANA) know they’re in the area and taking enemy contact. The ANA nearby can move to help.” [\(Read the STORY\)](#)

In Afghanistan, ‘big brother’ is watching

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Brian Buckwalter

PATROL BASE SHIR GHAZAY, Afghanistan – One of a Marine’s best friends in a battle is 67-tons of steel, armor and fire power. In Helmand province, Afghanistan, Marines with Bravo Company, 2nd Tank Battalion, Regimental Combat Team 6, are using the M1A1 Abrams tank to help make the battlefield safer for infantry Marines fighting the enemy. Lance Cpl. Kevin Quigley, tank crewman, Bravo Co., compared the firepower of one tank to an entire infantry platoon. In addition to its main 120 mm main gun, an Abrams tank has a .50-caliber machine gun and two M240 machine guns mounted. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)



Afghan National Army improves defenses for front line soldiers

Story and photos by Cpl. Kenneth Jasik



WASHIR DISTRICT, Afghanistan – Soldiers with the Afghan National Army hit a milestone toward their independence from NATO support by improving an outpost that had been overrun by insurgents. ANA engineers with 4th Kandak, 2nd Brigade, 215th Corps, built up the defenses of Outpost Duznoz South, in Washir District, Helmand province, Aug. 1 - 3. ‘They sent the engineers out to create more obstacles,’ said 1st Lt. Michael A. Loyd, 4th Kandak Advisor Team operations officer and engineering advisor. ‘They gave those guys a better chance to defend themselves against the enemy.’ The ANA planned and completed the engineering mission. Marines were present to observe and advise during

the construction. ‘The ANA did a good job,’ said Loyd, 28, from Winston-Salem, N.C. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)

Helicopter Support Team facilitates artillery retrograde

Story and photos by Cpl. Mark Stroud

FORWARD OPERATING BASE ZEEBRUGGE, Afghanistan—A Helicopter Support Team with Landing Support Platoon, Support Company, Combat Logistics Battalion 4, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), retrograded three M777 Howitzers from Forward Operating Base Zeebrugge, Aug. 6. The HST worked with 2nd Battalion, 10th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 6, and Heavy Helicopter Squadron 466, 3rd Marine Air Wing (Forward), to prepare the artillery pieces for aerial lift and remove them from a landing zone near the FOB. ‘My team’s role was the rigging and hooking of the load to the helicopter,’ said Staff Sgt. Steven J. Sullivan, platoon sergeant, LS Plt., Spt Company, CLB-4. ‘We have been doing HST missions the entire deployment ... we were pretty much the experts out here.’ [\(Read the STORY\)](#)



Afghanistan creates unique environment for controllers of the sky

Story by Gunnery Sgt. Tiffany Carter

CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan – The skies over Afghanistan are more congested than ever. The air space is flooded with civilian, coalition and U.S. military assets, to include a flux of unmanned aerial vehicles. That’s where the Direct Air Support Center comes in. The DASC, the control agency within Marine Air Support Squadron 3, provides control and coordination of all aircraft operating in the skies. Their mission is to provide essentially 911 for the troops forward. If servicemembers need a MedEvac or close air support, they call the DASC. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)

Hawaii squadron flies final formation (Pictorial)

Photos by Cpl. Ed Galo



A crew chief with Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 362 sits at the machine gun of a CH-53D Sea Stallion as it flies over Helmand province, Afghanistan, Aug. 9, 2012. The squadron, known as the ‘Ugly Angels,’ will be deactivated later this year after more than 60 years of service. The CH-53D was first used in combat during the Vietnam War. [\(See more PHOTOS\)](#)

Seabees build SWA hut for TF Warhammer

Photos by Cpl. Ed Galo

Builder 1st Class Adam C. Booher, from Bristol, Tenn., assigned to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 11, takes measurements on the roof of a Southwest Asian Hut being built by his crew of Seabees for Task Force Warhammer on Camp Leatherneck. Homeported in Gulfport, Miss., NMCB-11 is deployed to Afghanistan to conduct general, mobility, survivability engineering operations, defensive operations, Afghan National Army partnering and detachment of units in combined/joint operations area - Afghanistan in order to enable the neutralization of the insurgency and support improved governance and stability operations.

[\(See more PHOTOS\)](#)



VIGNETTES

Baja, Calif., native brings motivation, smiles to Marines in Afghanistan

Story and photos by Sgt. Michele Watson



CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan – At age 28, Petty Officer 2nd Class Armando Arias had a bachelor's degree in international business and was working as a real estate agent when he decided to make a drastic life change and enlist. Arias, a religious program specialist with 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), had multiple family members in the Corps, but decided he wanted to choose a different path for himself.

"I go to my grandpa's house and see Marine pictures everywhere," said Arias, 32. "I'm always trying to go against everyone. I had to go against the flow." [\(Read the STORY\)](#)

VIDEOS

Sailor Turns Passion Into Career

Video by Cpl. Ed Galo

Helping others is something Navy Lt. Ryan Maid has always loved doing, from helping his peers in high school to helping Marines on the battlefield. Cpl. Ed Galo brings us more. Soundbites include Navy Lt. Ryan Maid - Operational Stress Control and Readiness program Psychologist. Submitting Unit: Regimental Combat Team 6. Location: Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan. Also available in High Definition. [\(Watch the VIDEO\)](#)



Marines Bid Farewell to Friend, Brother

Video by Cpl. Mark Garcia



On a quiet Friday afternoon, more than 100 coalition service members gathered to honor Sgt. Joshua R. Ashley, a fallen comrade during a memorial ceremony in the Regional Command Southwest chapel, Aug. 17. He was killed in action July 19 while conducting combat operations in Helmand province, Afghanistan. Also available in high definition. [\(Watch the VIDEO\)](#)

Marketed/Republished Combat Correspondent Product

Operation Jaws republished by AL Jazeera

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Lance Cpl. Cristian Barajas, from Bullhead City, Ariz., talks to a WTKF-FM reporter about his duties as a Marine data systems specialist deployed to Afghanistan, his hopes as a boxer and plans to study engineering.

Cpl. Nathan Rohl, from Hammond, Ind., talks to a WTKF-FM reporter about his duties as a Marine data systems specialist deployed to Afghanistan.

Afghans ready for security responsibility in Delaram republished in Reboot Congress.
