

DESERT BUZZ NEWS



Commodore's Corner



Men, Women, Families, and Friends of 30NCR,

I am happy to report that your hard charging warriors of 30NCR continue to perform superbly in southern Afghanistan! As many of you may have seen in the slide show presented at your 5 December "Over the Hump" party back home, we had an outstanding "Over the Hump" party of our own here in Kandahar 21 November. We spent the morning engaged in some healthy football, basketball, and volleyball competition, and we gathered around a terrific BBQ dinner in the afternoon. Many thanks to our top notch First Class Petty Officer Association, especially CM1 Boulais, LS1 CO, PS1 Bobadilla, and YN2 Quezada for doing most of the up and down lifting.

We also enjoyed an awesome Thanksgiving dinner together, despite the Spartan ambience of the Harvest Falcon tent we gathered in. The chow was terrific, the camaraderie better, and we even got a photo of one of our many tables online on CNN.

We are bracing for some shifting workload in the wake of President Obama's announcement of additional forces deploying into theater. We are largely responsible for ensuring there are sufficient Forward Operating Bases ready to accommodate the incoming troops. It will mean a lot of work for 30NCR and particularly our subordinate units, but it sure makes the time fly!

In closing, we recently received the Fall 2009 advancement results and were thrilled to learn that EA2 Tejero will be advanced to Engineering Aide First Class and IS2 Dirian will be advanced to Intelligence Specialist First Class! Terrific news to start the month of December. As we race into the holidays, here's wishing you the Merriest Christmas ever! Keep the cards, letters, and emails coming! Until next time, take care and God Bless!

- CAPT Schmader

Words From The CSO



30NCR Families and Friends,

This is getting out of hand...LT Vega must be stopped! It's another month, which means he's pestering us to write random streams of consciousness. I'll cease my complaining because the flip side of the pestering means that time continues to move rather rapidly. We hosted 22NCR's pre-deployment site survey, which is a good milestone, an indication that our time here is finite.

On 11 November we paused to pay tribute to those, like ourselves, who have answered the call to serve our great nation in the armed forces at a wreath laying ceremony with the 649th Readiness Support Group. We all broke bread together for Thanksgiving. The downside is that we weren't with you; the upside is that we were with our second family...albeit in Afghanistan (too bad football didn't start until like 11 p.m.). Everyone enjoyed dinner because we completed our semi-annual body composition assessment and all passed with

flying colors. Since deploying, we've lost a total of 546 pounds as a command.

We had three reenlistments in November, CMDCM Cyr, LS2 Newton, and EA2 Tejero. It's always nice to share in a Seabee's recommitment to his/her profession. We've also had two additions to the 30NCR Family, LS1 Geronimo and LS2 Ekpo have new bundles of joy, so congratulations!

I wanted to give a sense of the great cadre of men and women we have here. Our "over the hump" party was a resounding success. The First Class Petty Officers Association, led by NC1 Zachary Keen, and our Junior Officers did a great job. We participated in a sports competition (ultimate football, basketball and volleyball) in the morning and a BBQ with games and karaoke in the afternoon. Think of a family reunion with music, laughing, games, food, dessert, smiles and good-natured joking and you have a mental image of the day's events.

Lastly, we're at a point in deployment where we've been around one another long enough to begin wearing on each other and things start breaking at home. But, we're all still getting along (most days) and I'm thankful that you've kept things running smoothly... and for that, I'm most grateful. Without question, we wouldn't be able to do what we do as well if it were not for what you do so selflessly for us.

Until next time, be well!

- CDR Simms

Command Master Chief's Corner



Writing about November events means that we are cruising through December... The staff here continues their diligent work supporting various war fighters for the common cause. In this environment the engineering and construction support requirements never seem to dwindle even after completing so much tasking. Even so, spirits remain upbeat and positive. Knowing that our mission is vital to the success of this war has helped to keep us motivated and concentrated on the mission. However, as I walk through the spaces and talk to servicemembers, I can't help but notice that we all miss our loved ones back throughout the U.S. Everyone seems to have a story of what their child is doing in school, what their spouse did for Thanksgiving or even what their families are planning for the rest of the approaching holiday season. Everyone speaks with pride or a sign of excitement when referring to home.

The activities our Seabees partake in when not working remain the same. DVDs, internet surfing, reading and physical training by far the most widely exploited. We have some pretty serious gym rats among us that have made great strides against their personal goals. It has been

a good use of personal time.

As always, we continue to appreciate our families and friends for keeping our lives together back home and staying strong as we complete this deployment. Your support allows our deployed team to focus and work with a clear heads, worry free of trouble back home. As you all prepare for the holiday season, please remember we would all like to be together with our loved ones. However in this moment in time we are instead called to be in Afghanistan to complete this mission. Please remember we cannot get this done without your support! Thank you once again. Merry Christmas.

Stay strong, stay loyal,
-CMDM Cyr

Chaplain's Chat



As I write this article we are half way through our deployment and, accounting for the time it takes to put the newsletter together, by the time you read this it will be right around the holidays. Though we must be apart from our loved ones for the holiday, being more than halfway home is certainly cause enough to give thanks to God.

However, this brings up an important point about being truly thankful. Thankfulness should not be event driven. Yet, this is how our thankfulness is often expressed. When something good happens, or the holiday comes along, it's time to be thankful; but at other times, or when something unpleasant happens, our thankfulness tends to wane.

The Bible says, "Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" (1 Thes. 5:16-18). Clearly, God would have us be thankful all the time; in good times, bad times, and every other time. In other words, true thankfulness is a state of mind, an attitude of life, rather than just a response to a particular event. Some have called it "an attitude of gratitude."

Therefore, the real question is, "How can we cultivate this attitude and make thankfulness a consistent state of mind?" The verses above suggest three things:

1. Learn to count your blessings. One of the benefits of deploying to a poor country like Afghanistan is seeing first hand how prosperous we really are in the U.S. We are truly rich when compared to so many in other parts of the world. Though our economy is weak right now and many are out of work, we have a great measure of job security in the military. The point is, even in the midst of problems, if we step back and look at the big picture we can always rejoice that there are more blessings in our lives than problems.
2. Make prayer a daily habit. Let's face it, we tend to neglect prayer until something goes wrong and only then do we pray with any urgency. Finding time daily to quiet our thoughts before God not only helps remind us of His blessings, but also makes us more conscious of His presence with us in our trials and the good He often works in us through them.
3. Always look for the "silver lining" in problems. Problems are part of life and also very often our best teachers. Without delays we would never learn patience. Without difficult tasks we would never develop perseverance and self-confidence. Without knowing sorrow we could never fully appreciate joy. I hope being apart from your loved one has proven to you the old saying that, "absence makes the heart grow fonder," and has deepened your love for one another. Finding these "silver linings" will help us remain thankful even during times of hardship.

I pray this holiday will be a thankful one for all of us. Even more so, I pray it goes beyond the holiday, or just our good days, until thanking God becomes a way of life for us everyday.

- LCDR Slater

Combat Life Saver Class



Above: From right to left, Construction Mechanic 1st Class Clarence Boulais, Logistics Specialist 1st Class Leon Pizzaro, Engineering Aide 2nd Class Mario Tejero, and Builder 1st Class Peter Edwardson lift a litter containing Engineering Aide Constructionman Wesley Hetrick during combat life saver (CLS) class. Later they practiced administering an IV access. The class served as a refresher for the CLS course completed in homeport.





Veterans Day

-Nov. 11, 2009 Yeoman Seaman Apprentice Cosme Hernandez, Engineering Aide Constructionman Wesley Hetrick, and Construction Mechanic James Goode represented the regiment, U.S. Navy and U.S. Coast Guard at a Veterans Day ceremony.

“It was an honor to be part of the ceremony,” said Hernandez. “I feel proud as a veteran to pay respect to the veterans that came before me.”



Over The Hump





The 30th Naval Construction Regiment celebrated its midway point through deployment with an over the hump celebration. Events included three hours of sports including football, basketball and volleyball. After sports, the



regiment gathered to enjoy barbeque, a game of Navy jeopardy, various card games and karaoke.

“Thank you for an extremely well-orchestrated day,” said

Capt. Kelly J. Schmader,

30NCR commander.

The celebration could not have happened without a hitch if it wasn’t for the coordination of Navy Career Counselor 1st Class Zackary Keen, First

Class Petty Officer Association (FCPOA) president. As a key player in organizing the celebration Keen planned

the day meticulously.

“I have personally received many compliments and congratulations on a ‘job well done’, but this was a team effort and I cannot accept all the credit,” said Keen. “I would like to give special thanks to my team.”





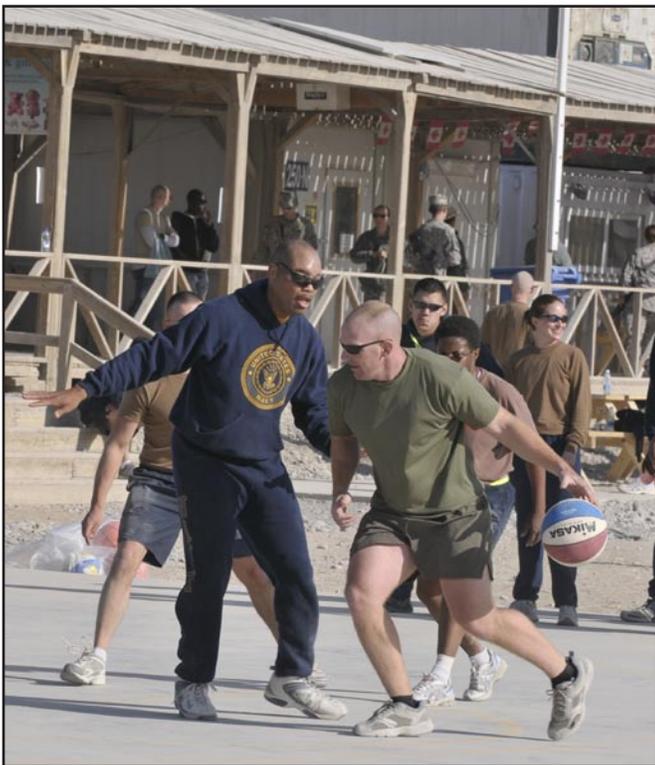
SW1 Nelson and CM1 Boulais – two key players in organizing the event;

Special thanks to:

FCPOA for volunteering to set-up and clean-up;



LS1 Co, LS1 Pizzaro, LS1 Deguzman, LS2 Ekpo and the rest of the Logistics Department- the food was great!!



More special thanks...



CM1 Boulais and YN2 Quezada – for a great sports day;



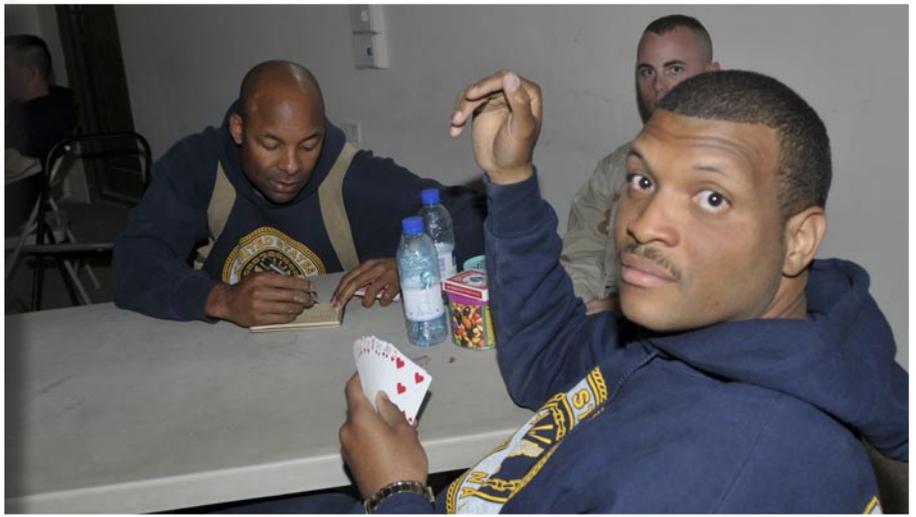
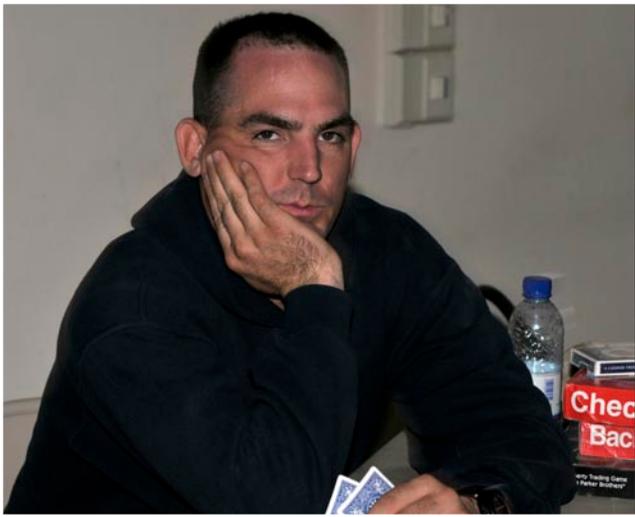
ITC Franklin and YN2 Quezada did an excellent job on Navy jeopardy;

Lt. Cmdr. Schelzig for bringing comic relief and doing a great job as the master of ceremonies;
SW1 Banaszak – it wouldn't have been a party without the karaoke.











Electronic's Technician 2nd Class Derrick Maldonado reenlisted Oct. 24, 2009 during a brief ceremony at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan.

"I reenlisted to finish my tour and do my duty for my country," said Maldonado. Maldonado reenlisted for two years. He plans to exit the Navy after his next duty station. Through networking he has secured several job opportunities in the IT field.



ET2 Maldonado Reenlists



Engineering Aide 2nd Class Mario Tejero reenlisted Nov. 09, 2009 during a brief ceremony at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan. Tejero reenlisted for three more years.

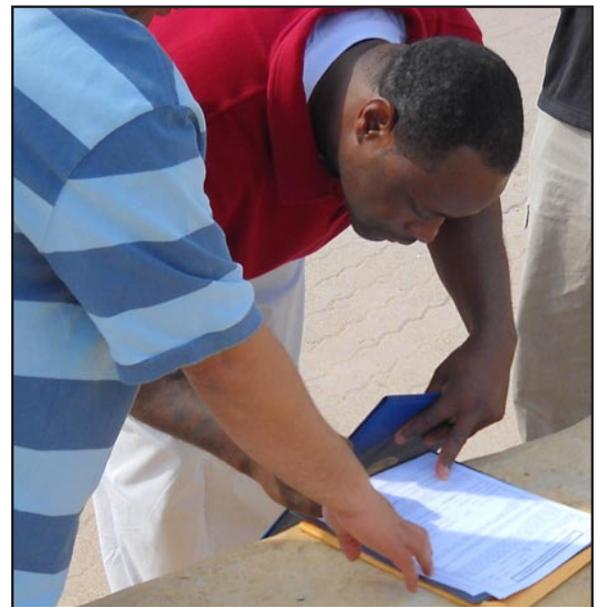
Originally Tejero planned to separate from the Navy but reenlisted to support his wife through college.





Command Master Chief Thomas Cyr reenlisted Nov. 10, 2009 during a brief ceremony at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan. According to Cyr, this will be his last reenlistment before retiring after more than 30 years of service and dedication.





In Kuwait, Logistic Specialist 2nd Class Aaron Newton reenlisted Nov. 16, 2009.



Left: Equipment Operator 1st Class Alan Schwarz explains the plan of the night to Seabees and Soldiers before unloading a C-5 Galaxy.

Seabees Complete Logistics Milestone in Kandahar Airfield

Seabees assigned to the 30th Naval Construction Regiment (30NCR) and Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 22 unloaded more than 100 tons of camp gear and equipment Nov. 19, 2009.

The Seabees, deployed to southern Afghanistan, unloaded two C-5 Galaxy airplanes in a span of two dark and freezing nights.

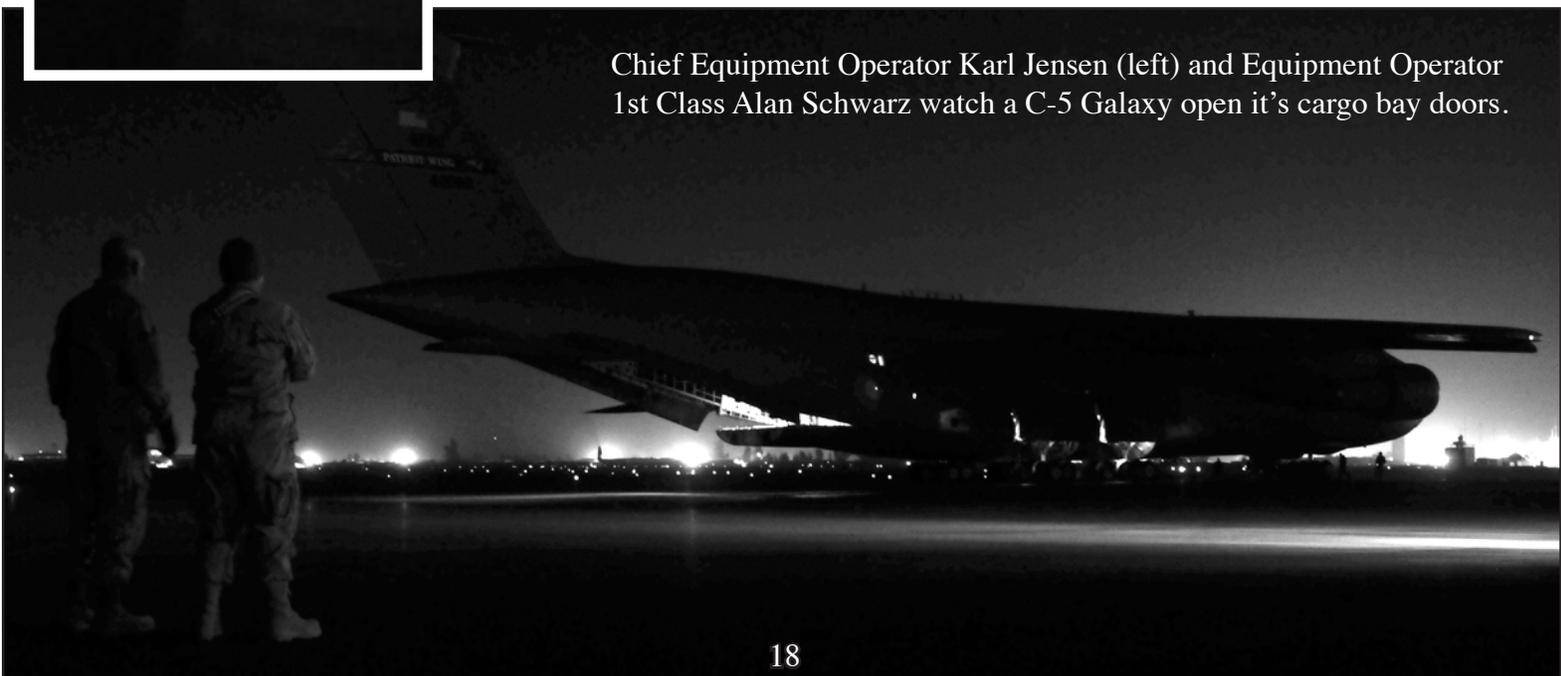
“No damages and no injuries in the night time frame, that’s what I call successful,” said Equipment Operator 1st Class Alan Schwarz, movement control center night shift petty officer. “This is what we typically do. We support ourselves by being able to move ourselves whether it be cargo or personnel.”

Unloading a plane is not a simple procedure, especially when unloading a C-5 Galaxy, the largest military aircraft in service. 30NCR’s embarkation staff was required to coordinate numerous units including NMCB 22, 149th Transportation Company and air field ground crews.

“We had to coordinate unloading the aircraft, loading of trucks, movement, unloading and then repeating that process again for the next C5,” said Ens. Robert

(Continued next page.)

Chief Equipment Operator Karl Jensen (left) and Equipment Operator 1st Class Alan Schwarz watch a C-5 Galaxy open its cargo bay doors.



Milewski, movement control center officer. “Planning wise it was making sure that all entities were ready to go and in place with the proper equipment.”

The flights were delayed several times before finally arriving, but after three months of embarkation experience in Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan, the Seabees of 30NCR’s Unit Movement Control Center have learned to be ready to spring into action and expect the unexpected.

“Everything to do with embark is always at a tentative time,” added Schwarz. “Nothing is ever locked in.” The 48 pallets and two 40-foot semi-trailers of camp gear off-loaded consisted of three kits made up of generators, tents, environmental control units and electrical equipment to support 25, 50 and 60-person Seabee teams.



“The kits are a step up from the one man tent each Seabee is issued,” said Lt. Cmdr. Patrick Jors, assistant logistics officer. “If we have to push out a detail of Seabees for an emergency mission, these kits can go with them. Imagine you are cold, wet and tired, after working at a project then you go to your cold one man tent, where you probably don’t get any sleep, and wake up early the next day to do it all again. Now imagine instead you go to a cot in a warm tent, with power and all your friends.” While Seabees don’t need these kits to push out, these packaged shelters do provide an increase in quality of life, morale, and give battalions an increased ability to set up expeditionary camps.

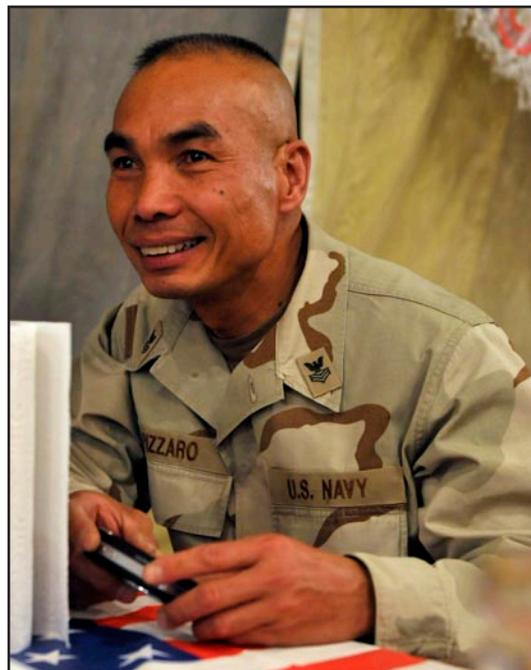


“I’m extraordinarily proud of the crew that I have,” said Chief Equipment Operator Karl Jensen, movement control center chief. “These guys are real go getters and make it happen every day.”

Getting gear and equipment from one side of the world to the other is not an easy task, but the Seabees here on Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan have met the challenge.



T H A N K S G I V I N G





Above: Logistic Specialist 1st Class Mark Co (right), Logistics Specialist 1st Class John Deguzman (middle) and Logistic Specialist 2nd Idongesit Ekpo pose for a photo after receiving 2nd place in sports during the over the hump celebration.

Below: Logistics Specialist 1st Class Mark Co works at his desk in the logistics department.



Petty Officer 1st Class Mark Co

Logistic Specialist 1st Class Mark Co is the logistics division leading petty officer.

“I make sure that all financial reports, material status and logistics functions are met accordingly and information is submitted on schedule,” said Co.

Co supervises two personnel in the logistics department. In addition, he is the command urinalysis coordinator and assistant command fitness leader. “I can’t wait for this deployment to be over and be with my family,” said Co. “I will be searching for new orders once we get back and focusing my mind on going back on board a ship. All I can say is been there, done that.”

