

NEWS

Victory in Nawa: voice of progress

By Cpl. Jeff Drew

Editor's note: This is the third installment in a four-part series chronicling a trek across Nawa district.

CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan -- The third day of the Nawa Victory Walk began early. Marines with 1st Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment, woke as the sun rose, then filled up on energy bars for breakfast. They checked their equipment, refilled water containers, met up with their Afghan National Army counterparts, and headed for the front gate. [\(story\)](#)



CLB-1 Engineers, locals improve critical intersection in Marjah

By Lance Cpl. Alfred V. Lopez



MARJAH DISTRICT, Helmand -- province, Afghanistan – Combat engineers with Alpha Company, Combat Logistics Battalion 1 and local workers improved road conditions by repairing a key bridge here, Nov. 12. The bridge, which needed critical foundation repairs, is vital for both local travel and military missions on a major intersection between Marjah and Nawa. "Today's project involves a bridge which has wing-walls that are eroding," said 1st Lt. Steven Thomas, a platoon commander with Alpha Co., CLB-1 and a 25-year-old native of Lancaster, Calif. "Our goal is to replace those wing-walls to make them

last longer and make the bridge more stable for the civilian and military traffic." Wing-walls provide the bridge with structure to the heavy support foot and vehicle traffic passing through the intersection. [\(story\)](#)

7th ESB brings commerce, growth to Helmand Province while supporting Operation Eastern Storm

By Cpl. Katherine M. Solano

Engineers with 7th Engineer Support Battalion, 2nd Marine Logistics Group (Forward), conduct route repairs along Route 611 in Helmand province, Afghanistan, in early November. The repairs were conducted in direct support of Operation Eastern Storm and also helped build stronger relationships with the local population. Soundbites include Chief Warrant Officer 3 Brandon Smith, the officer in charge of Heavy Weapons Platoon, Security Company, 7th Engineer Support Battalion, 2nd Marine Logistics Group (Forward) and Staff Sgt. Davison Slivers, the staff non-commissioned officer in charge of Motor Transport Platoon, 7th ESB, 2nd MLG (FWD). [\(video\)](#) [\(story\)](#)



Republic of Georgia's 33rd Light Infantry Battalion concludes deployment to Afghanistan

By Cpl. Clayton Vonderahe

COMBAT OUTPOST SHUKVANI, Afghanistan -- The Republic of Georgia's 33rd Light Infantry Battalion has served in Shukvani, Afghanistan under the command of U.S. Marine regiment, Regimental Combat Team 8 for seven months and completed their deployment to the area, Nov. 10. The 31st Light Infantry Battalion is now patrolling the area for the battalion's second tour to Afghanistan. [\(story\)](#)

New girls in town: FET resets

By Cpl. Katherine Keleher

CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan -- A surge of over 40 Marines with the Female Engagement Team came to Camp Leatherneck, Helmand province, Nov. 11-15, where they were able to kick up their boots and talk about their experiences in Afghanistan since they began their deployment. During their time on Camp Leatherneck FET received reset training, which the unit conducts every 45 days. In their reset training classes the Marines covered topics such as Rules of Engagement, escalation of force and basic lessons learned on relationship building with the local Afghan populace. [\(story\)](#) [\(video by Cpl. Meredith Brown\)](#)



Marine aviation key to major offensive in Afghanistan

By Cpl. Brian Adam Jones

CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan -- Under the veil of darkness, a team of Marine Corps CH-53 heavy-lift helicopters sped over the Helmand River valley in early October. Carrying nearly 100 Afghan commandos and their Marine advisers, the helicopters delivered them into the valley, just south of the Kajaki Dam. The Afghan and American troops were the first coalition forces in a massive offensive, Operation Eastern Storm, aimed at rooting out one of the last insurgent strongholds in the region. [\(story\)](#)

TRAINING

Nothing lost in translation: Afghan soldier takes reins as explosives reduction course instructor

By Cpl. Timothy Solano

CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan -- It's another training day at Joint Sustainment Academy Southwest, where Afghan soldiers are learning specific occupational specialties and general military skills just as they do every day. However, one course offers a unique learning advantage because the instructor is an Afghan National Army soldier and speaks his students' language, Pashto. "It's my job to teach the students how to safely sweep for, and identify and destroy improvised explosive devices in place," said Hamidullah. "I also teach them about connecting C-4 lines and fuses." [\(story\)](#) [\(video by Cpl. Meredith Brown\)](#)





ANA route clearance platoon sweeps through counter IED course

By Staff Sgt. Andrew Miller

CAMP DWYER, Afghanistan -- Afghan National Army soldiers with the 4th Kandak, 1st Brigade, 215th Corps Route Clearance Platoon participated in counter improvised explosive device training hosted by Regimental Combat Team 5's Explosive Ordnance Disposal here, Nov. 10. The training featured scenarios similar to those the ANA are likely to face while operating here in southern Helmand. The safe environment offered the soldiers an opportunity to become proficient with the most up-to-date tactics, techniques and procedures for defeating the IED threat.

[\(story\)](#)

Afghan uniformed police, Marines build bonds through trial by fire

By Cpl. James Clark

KAJAKI SOFLA, Afghanistan -- For the last decade, many different roads and paths have been deemed the key to success in Afghanistan – described as courses taken to ensure a positive outcome in a country that has not known true and lasting peace for a generation. However, one course of action has been embraced more times than the rest. In Kajaki Sofla, the men of 1st Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, and the Police Advisory Team attached to the unit, work toward the goal – the establishment of a credible and functional security force. On the front lines are the Afghan Uniformed Police. [\(story\)](#)



Working ourselves out of a job': Extensive training leads CLB-1 EPT to success with ANA

By Cpl. Katherine M. Solano

CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan -- Like those before them, Combat Logistics Battalion 1, 2nd Marine Logistics Group (Forward), made a concerted effort to put together a well-rounded group of Marines to create their Embedded Partnering Team. The EPT is responsible for training, mentoring and advising Afghan National Army units as they work to become independent from coalition forces, a priority of 2nd MLG (FWD) as they prepare to transfer authority to 1st MLG (FWD) in the coming months. According to 1st Lt. Owen Finnegan, the CLB-1 EPT assistant officer-in-charge, not only were the individual Marines handpicked, but their pre-deployment training was crafted, planned and carried out over the span of multiple months. [\(story\)](#)



HEROES

Exeter honours 3 Commando Brigade after Helmand deployment

Thousands of well-wishers lined the streets of Exeter yesterday as more than 650 Service personnel, just returned from a six-month deployment to Afghanistan, proudly paraded through the city centre. The parade commemorated the homecoming of 3 Commando Brigade from Operation HERRICK 14 and was followed by a service of Remembrance and thanksgiving at Exeter Cathedral. [\(story\)](#)



Lest we forget: remembrance service honors Garmsir fallen

By Cpl. Reece Lodder

FORWARD OPERATING BASE DELHI, Afghanistan -- Since 2006, coalition forces have fought to bring security and stability to the once insurgent-heavy Garmsir district. Five years later, coalition forces are near transitioning control of the district to the local government. Amidst this progress, the sacrifice of coalition forces that lost their lives here remains etched into Garmsir's history. Members of the Afghan National Security Forces joined Marines with 1st and 3rd Battalions, 3rd Marine Regiment, and British forces to honor the fallen during a remembrance service

here, Nov. 11. "These lives are important for us to remember together today," said Maj. Andrew Green, the commanding officer of 512 Specialist Team, Royal Engineers, British Army. "We support each other in our joint mission, so remembering together shows respect for those we've lost." [\(story\)](#)

Garmsir citizens, Marines honor fallen police chief

By Cpl. Reece Lodder

GARMSIR DISTRICT, Afghanistan -- Spread out within a maze of concertina wire and concrete barriers at Garmsir's district center, Afghan National Police members partnered with Marines from 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment to provide security for the funeral of District Chief of Police Lt. Col. Sayfullah Khan Rashidi here, Nov. 13. Sayfullah died after his vehicle was destroyed by an improvised explosive device that detonated as he was traveling on a Garmsir road, Nov. 6. Two other ANP members were killed in the explosion, which occurred on the first day of the three-day Islamic festival of sacrifice Eid al-Adha. [\(story\)](#)



MARINE CORPS BIRTHDAY

'America's Battalion' celebrates 236th Marine Corps birthday in Afghanistan

By Cpl. Reece Lodder



GARMSIR DISTRICT, Afghanistan -- For the second year in a row, "America's Battalion" celebrated the Marine Corps birthday in Helmand province, Afghanistan. A year ago, the Marines and sailors of 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment were wrapping up a deployment in Nawa district. They're back in Afghanistan, but not in Nawa. Upon arriving in Garmsir district this past week, 3/3 began relieving their fellow Hawaii-based unit, 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment. The "Lava Dogs" are nearing the end of their deployment, which began in April. [\(story\)](#)

Celebrating the Marine Corps birthday in every clime and place

By Cpl. Colby Brown

GARMSIR DISTRICT, Afghanistan -- Celebrating a birthday while deployed to Afghanistan is not an ideal experience. Away from family and friends, birthdays often go unrecognized. But for the Marine Corps' birthday, celebrating in a combat environment makes the experience even more meaningful. "As Marines, we are America's fighting force, America's nine-one-one," said Sgt. Maj. Dwight D. Jones, 1/3 sergeant major and a native of Detroit. "Celebrating the birthday while forward deployed epitomizes that and it gives the birthday that little something extra that makes it special." [\(story\)](#)

LOCAL HOLIDAYS

Eid: Marines and Kajaki locals reconcile

By Cpl. James Clark

KAJAKI SOFLA, Afghanistan -- In celebration of Eid al-Adha, an Islamic holiday, 1st Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, and Afghan National Security Forces took steps to foster ties with the local citizens of Kajaki Sofla. The area had seen little evidence of the Afghan government in the past six years, and until the outset of Operation Eastern Storm, served as a safe haven and logistical hub for insurgent forces in Northern Helmand province. The holiday, which spans multiple days, is a religious celebration with a focus on making amends with enemies, explained Sgt. Chris Gonzalez, Civil Affairs team chief with 4th Civil Affairs Group in support of Company B, 1/6. [\(story\)](#)



VIGNETTES

Meritorious promotion, re-enlistment in a combat zone: one Marine does it all

By Cpl. Katherine M. Solano



HELMAND PROVINCE, Afghanistan -- Sgt. Jennifer Chitwood, the manpower chief with Headquarters and Service Company, 2nd Marine Logistics Group (Forward), can be described with one word: stubborn. Mere hours from earning the title of United States Marine, Chitwood had to cease training due to a pelvic fracture. She admits she was devastated as she watched the new Marines she had trained with for the past 13 weeks, the standard amount of time in recruit training, complete their training and become Marines. Eleven months and an unshakable amount of determination later, the Cincinnati native graduated boot camp. [\(story\)](#)

'Making a difference' pushes one Arizona Marine to excel on fourth deployment

By Cpl. Katherine M. Solano

CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan -- Nine years in the Marine Corps, four deployments and less than four weeks until he steps foot on American soil once again, Staff Sgt. Davison Slivers has spent a collective two-and-a-half years defending his country in both Iraq and Afghanistan. A Marine with that sort of experience has a lot to offer to those he leads, evident by the profound respect his Marines express for him. As the Motor Transport Platoon staff non-commissioned officer-in-charge with 7th Engineer Support Battalion, 2nd Marine Logistics Group (Forward), Slivers has many Marines under his leadership and watch. He is also the convoy commander on many types of operations conducted by 7th ESB. [\(story\)](#)



Royal Army officer helps improve maternal healthcare in Helmand

By Tristan Kelly

On her recent deployment to Afghanistan, a Royal Army Medical Corps officer got involved in the drive to improve maternal healthcare in Helmand. After decades of conflict, the provision of healthcare in Afghanistan leaves a lot to be desired. The Afghan Government now sees this as a priority area which if improved could help turn the population away from the Taliban insurgency: "It is letting the population have the basic human services that they need and showing them that the government is supporting them . . .," explained Capt. Samantha Toop, from the Royal Army Medical Corps, Medical Liaison Officer in the Helmand Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT). [\(story\)](#)



VIDEO INTERVIEWS

Buffalo Marine Reflects on Past
By Cpl. Tommy Bellegarde
Lance Cpl. Dingyi Duan, of Buffalo, N.Y., a high mobility, artillery rocket system crewman with Romeo Battery, discusses growing up in China and the challenges he faced when moving to the United States and enlisting in the Marine Corps. [\(link\)](#)

Navy Chaplain Lt. Charles Ferguson
By Cpl. Meredith Brown
Ferguson discusses being a chaplain and working with the [\(link\)](#) Afghan National Army chaplain equivalent.

Col. Mike Lawrence
By Cpl. Timothy Solano
Lawrence discusses the significance of a recent conference with Nimroz province leaders that took place aboard [\(link\)](#) Camp Leatherneck.

MEDIA COVERAGE

“After the fighting, a plague of empty classrooms”
By Lawrence Dabney
Faster Times
Dabney discusses the state of the education system in Marjah. [\(link\)](#)

“A soldier’s tale – with one eye shut.”
By Pete Aleshire
The Payson Roundup (Ariz.)
Lance Cpl. Ammon Carter -- a combat cameraman from Payson, Ariz., talks about his work and the Marines hope to win over villagers who had long lived in fear of the Taliban’s rule, despite the continued threat of terror, interview generated from media interest in a Division photo accompanying a story titled, “Marines, Afghans enjoy pace of Nawa district’s unique countryside.” [\(link\)](#)

‘Ross Kemp: Back On The Frontline’
By Lorraine McBride.
This Kemp’s third documentary series from Afghanistan. He joins the Royal Marines of 45 Commando to mark 10 years since the arrival of British forces in Helmand. [\(link\)](#)

LINKS

Regional Command Southwest
2nd Marine Division
RCT-5
RCT-8
2nd Marine Aircraft Wing
2nd Marine Logistics Group
Task Force Helmand
Task Force Helmand on Facebook
Task Force Belleau Wood on Facebook
FaceBook

ROUND-UP summarizes Public Affairs Office activity from Regional Command Southwest, commanded by Maj. Gen. John Toolan and covering Helmand and Nimroz Provinces, Afghanistan. Content created by Marine Corps Combat Correspondents, Navy Mass Communication Specialists, Combat Camera and UK media operations under Task Force Helmand.