



II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward)

# FAMILY NEWSLETTER



**APRIL 2013**



**INSIDE!**  
**Forging Relationships**  
**This Month in Photos**  
**SFAAT Corpsmen confidence in ANA medics**

# ★ ★ COMMANDER'S COMMENTS

Maj. Gen. W. Lee Miller



Happy belated Easter to each of you and your families. I know holidays can be bittersweet when your loved ones are deployed so once again, thank you for your strength and support as we serve far from home.

We're coming up on six weeks since TOA and settling into a rhythm of long days but short weeks as we work with our Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) counterparts to make sure they are ready to stand on their own against their enemies when we come home. I've already traveled quite a bit around our area of operations and I'm optimistic about what I've seen. The ANSF are engaged in a tough fight against the remnants of insurgent groups struggling to hold on to fading influence and protect their poppy fields. But the capabilities of the Afghan National Army and police are improving each day and they are working well together to share information, plan operations, and create "white space" needed in the communities to allow governance and development to take hold.

Most of our work is focused on two areas: First, guiding, advising and assisting the ANSF to train their trainers and build schools, processes, and institutions that will endure after we leave. Second, we're accounting for all of the equipment brought to Afghanistan throughout the years and preparing to send it home or to other places it may be needed. The force II MEF(FWD) brought with us to RC(SW) is about 10,000 people smaller than the previous I MEF(FWD) force and I expect we'll shrink by about half again by the time we come home in February 2014.

Part of drawing down will be cutting back on some of the basic comforts we've gotten used to during a decade of operations. For example, come the first of May we'll close down the 24-hour sandwich bar and the midnight meal at our main dining facility at Camp Leatherneck. By October we will likely cut back to two hot meals per day with the third meal being an MRE (Meal Ready to Eat – or any one of the creative versions of the acronym your Marines and Sailors have come up with...)

Taking care of your Marines and Sailors is my most important role and I assure you we will plan and execute our draw down with their security and safety in mind, but especially as we close down our forward operating bases I expect the last Marines and Sailors out will live a bit like Spartans for a while. Maybe the best way to put it is that we have to pull back the people who provide our support before we pull back the people who provide the security needed to allow that support– so I ask for your understanding as we go along. If you have any questions, and especially if you start to hear rumors, please drop Michael Cline, your family readiness officer, a line or reach out to my public affairs officer, LtCol. Cliff W. Gilmore, here at [cliff.gilmore@afg.usmc.mil](mailto:cliff.gilmore@afg.usmc.mil). They will give you the straight scoop.

This will be a critical year for us as we prepare to come home, both for us and for the ANSF as they get through the upcoming fighting season with the confidence they can stand on their own and help build a future the people of Afghanistan choose. It's going to be a long year but a good one.

We'll be home before you know it. Semper Fidelis!



## SERGEANT MAJOR

Sgt. Maj. Paul Berry



### Family and Friends of II MEF (Forward),

Hello from Afghanistan! Everyone has been here for a month or more and things are going well. The hot weather is right around the corner but our Marines and Sailors are prepared for it. As I travel with Maj. Gen. Miller, we are constantly impressed with the performance of your Marines, Sailors and our Coalition partners. They are writing the final chapter of Marine Expeditionary Force-level deployments to Afghanistan. We can all be proud of their accomplishments to date. As we move forward, know that our prayers are with you back home.

Back on the home front, there are several great events the family and friends of II MEF (Forward) can enjoy. On April 26th, our family readiness officer is planning a trip to the Indoor Simulated Marksmanship Trainer. Also, May 17-19, the base is sponsoring the annual May Mania celebration and carnival. If you have not attended a May Mania you are missing out. Talk to your friends and go together to enjoy this event. Stay in touch with our FRO for updates on these and other events.

I would like to thank our FRO and the team of outstanding volunteers. The II MEF (FWD) family readiness team was formed late in our deployment workups. Through your selfless efforts, you have formed a great team. I want to personally thank all those who volunteer. Job well done!

# FAMILY NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2013

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## ON THE COVER

Lance Dustin Palmer, right, a heavy equipment operator with 2nd Combat Engineer Battalion, Regimental Combat Team 7, provides feedback to an Afghan National Army heavy equipment operator during a clearing operation near Camp Shorabak, Helmand Province, Afghanistan, March 16, 2013. The operation was designed to eliminate possible enemy firing positions in preparation for the upcoming fighting season. Photo by SSgt. Ezekiel Kitandwe



[www.iimeffwd.marines.mil](http://www.iimeffwd.marines.mil)

11 Marine Expeditionary Force (Fwd)

**Commander**

Maj. Gen. W. Lee Miller

**Sergeant Major**

Sgt. Maj. Paul A. Berry

**Command Master Chief**

Master Chief Petty Officer

Kelly A. McNulty

**Chaplain**

Cmdr. Patrick W. Smith

**Family Readiness Officer**

Michael E. Cline



# COMMAND MASTER CHIEF

*Master Chief Petty Officer Kelly McNulty*



## Greetings II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward) staff, friends and family,

We are actively engaged in one of the more challenging periods in history, as both the economy and the politics of the nation cause widespread change and adjustment in the way the military currently does business, and how it will proceed in the future. Equally so, there are positive changes occurring here as your sailors and Marines provide training to our Afghanistan National Security Force counterparts who are taking the lead. With change comes apprehension, but the Marines, sailors and our Coalition Forces are ready and actively leading our ANSF partners to a bright and promising future. Remember, the support you give them from home is just as important as the support they provide our ANSF partners. As always, I'm honored to serve with all of you and proud of the incredible work each of you is doing. There will be obstacles to overcome, but I have no doubt that we will continue to prevail just as we have done in the past. We are the greatest Navy-Marine Corps team the world has ever known!

***Just as the Lord has forgiven you, so also you must forgive.***

***Colossians 3:13***

A Harvard Medical School newsletter notes, "when you forgive someone, you make yourself rather than the person who hurt you responsible for your happiness."

The article goes on to say, "one survey showed that people who talk about forgiveness during psychotherapy sessions experience greater improvements than those who don't."

Let's face it, forgiveness often seems unfair. When someone has wronged you, especially if it was a deep and serious offense, it can even seem unjust to forgive. Forgiving someone else's sin against you feels a lot like an admission that the offense was no big deal. The very thought outrages our spirit. Everything in us screams against injustice. We desire revenge. So we dig in our heels and refuse to trust God

knows what He is talking about when he orders, not suggest, but orders us to forgive other people "just as the Lord has forgiven you."

We need a correct understanding of forgiveness. Seething at someone else, nursing a grudge and dreaming of revenge simply pours acid in your guts. It can literally give you ulcers and increase the chance for heart disease and back pain. When God tells you to forgive, He is not saying there will be no reckoning for the crimes committed against you. He is saying, that "vengeance belongs to Me" (Romans 12:19). God does not want you to poison your soul with anger and hate. He wants you free. Entrust your hearts to God, pour your cries to Him and leave the matter in His hands because He's a lot better at doling out justice. Not only will you be obeying the Lord, you will be happier and healthier because of it. Trust God on this.

## CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

*Cmdr. Patrick Smith*



# FAMILY READINESS OFFICER

*Michael Cline*

## **II MEF FWD Combined Families,**

As we begin another month of the deployment, several issues have come up which will help our sponsors and families remain strong and in control of the multitude of events that happen during the absence of our deployed Marines and sailors.

## **Communication**

The first forms of communication from the II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward) family readiness officer are through the unit's E-Marine Site, Marine Online and email. Additionally, trained family readiness assistants have started "Operation Communication," which our family members are being connected to. This is a courtesy check to see how the family members are doing and also helps me update my records in the event of phone number or address changes. This also enables the FRO to stay connected and help with services, referrals, etc.

The II MEF (Fwd) E-Marine Site has a myriad of information for our Marines, sailors and family members. There are navigation links for the command leaders, service members, spouses, parents and extended family members and the Single Marine Program. Clicking on these navigation links takes you to the pages where additional information specific to that category is listed. You are encouraged to periodically view these pages for updates to Marine Corps Family Team Building and Life Skills Workshops, family events, Marine Corps Community Service- sponsored special events, and II MEF (Fwd) combined events.

The Deployment Central outlet has links to the II MEF (Fwd) and II Marine Expeditionary Force Headquarters Group (Fwd) Deployment Central pages, where units and their families can read the latest newsletters, notices, policies and view pictures of deployment and family readiness events. Everyone should also see the II MEF (Fwd) public website and the Regional Command Southwest Facebook that RC (SW) Public Affairs personnel updates.

The homepage leadership tab has photos and biographies of the II MEF (FWD) commanding general, sergeant major and command master chief. The II MEF (Fwd) chaplain and his biography will soon be added. The FRO information includes a new work phone and email. Please ensure you have the most current FRO contact information listed on the E-Marine homepage. A recent addition to the homepage, Military and Family Life Consultant, has been added. The MFLC is in the II MHG H-24 Building and his contact information is listed on the homepage. The MFLC is a licensed professional mental health counselor who provides "non-medical, solution-focused consultation" to military members and their families. Meetings with the counselor are confidential and no records are taken. The MFLC can meet the service member or family member anywhere except for the requestor's residence. If there are any questions on the services provided by the MFLC, please contact Richard Lally. His contact information is on the homepage.

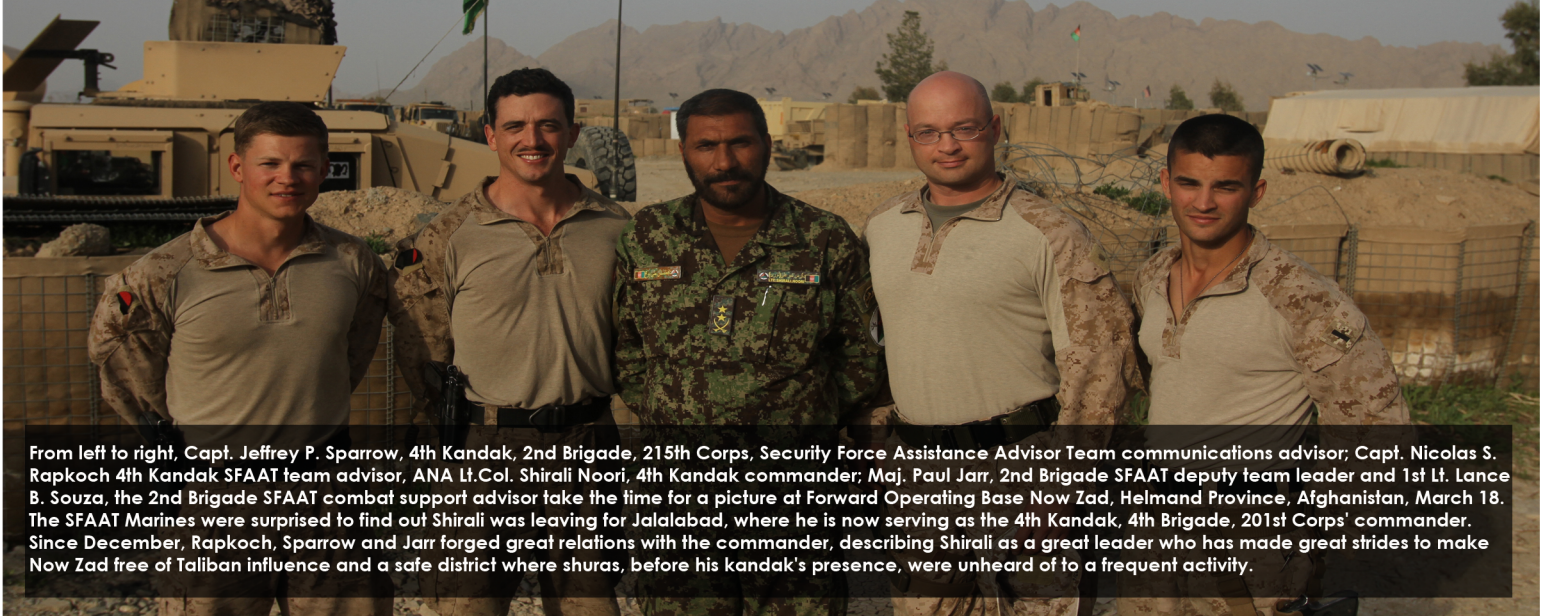
Security Force Assistant Advisor Teams (SFAAT) families can find updates placed on the II MHG (Fwd) E-MARINE site. Most SFAAT specific information can be found by going to the II MHG (Fwd) E-MARINE homepage, and clicking on the "Advisor Team Central Link" on the navigation panel. Once you go to the Advisor Team Central page, you will find the SFAAT leaders listed, as well as several SFAAT newsletters. The II MEF (Fwd) CG's SFAAT guidance is also listed and reinforces the importance of the SFAAT mission in Afghanistan. As the deployment progresses, more information will be disseminated.

A multitude of inquiries from our family members about deployment entitlements, childcare, college tuition, Military Airlift Command Flights and deployment letters, to name a few.

**(continued on to page 13)**

# ANA Kandak Commander leaves big impression

STORY AND PHOTO BY SGT BRYAN A PETERSON



From left to right, Capt. Jeffrey P. Sparrow, 4th Kandak, 2nd Brigade, 215th Corps, Security Force Assistance Advisor Team communications advisor; Capt. Nicolas S. Rapkoch 4th Kandak SFAAT team advisor, ANA Lt.Col. Shirali Noori, 4th Kandak commander; Maj. Paul Jarr, 2nd Brigade SFAAT deputy team leader and 1st Lt. Lance B. Souza, the 2nd Brigade SFAAT combat support advisor take the time for a picture at Forward Operating Base Now Zad, Helmand Province, Afghanistan, March 18. The SFAAT Marines were surprised to find out Shirali was leaving for Jalalabad, where he is now serving as the 4th Kandak, 4th Brigade, 201st Corps' commander. Since December, Rapkoch, Sparrow and Jarr forged great relations with the commander, describing Shirali as a great leader who has made great strides to make Now Zad free of Taliban influence and a safe district where shuras, before his kandak's presence, were unheard of to a frequent activity.

**NOW ZAD, Afghanistan --** Sitting in a meeting room here March 18, Afghan National Army Lt. Col. Shirali Noori spoke to his Marine counterparts, taking brief pauses between his words to hide his emotions.

"I report to Jalalabad in four days," said the saddened Shirali, commander of 4th Kandak, 2nd Brigade, 215th Corps.

Captain Nicolas Rapkoch, a U.S. Marine advisor with 4th Kandak, 2/215th Corps Security Force Assistance Advisor Team, and fellow Marines on his team were shaken and without response. For three months, Rapkoch had worked alongside Shirali and developed respect and admiration for his counterpart.

Shirali commanded the 4th Kandak for three and a half years, moving with the unit from Delaram and Sangin districts and finally settling in Now Zad district. His new assignment will take him northeast to command 4th Kandak, 4th Brigade, 201st Corps.

Throughout Rapkoch's time at Forward Operating Base Now Zad, he advised Shirali and his staff daily and watched Shirali improve security in the district while developing his officers and enlisted soldiers.

Rapkoch, a Tacoma, Wash., native, quickly realized Shirali's leadership was critical to the kandak's success.

After hearing the news of Shirali's new assignment, Rapkoch spent the rest of the day wondering how he would tell the other members of his advisor team. He wondered if the new kandak commander would be as respected by the ANA soldiers and the Afghan people.

"It was a sad moment for us, because we really

enjoyed working with [Shirali]," Rapkoch said. "We became emotionally attached to him because he and his guys treated us like family."

Shirali's leadership in the district helped create a safe environment for the people living within its boundaries, said Rapkoch. Shuras, or town hall meetings where Muslims air their grievances and discuss issues, were almost unheard of before the 4th Kandak arrived. Now elders come to the district center regularly to discuss ways the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan can help the people there.

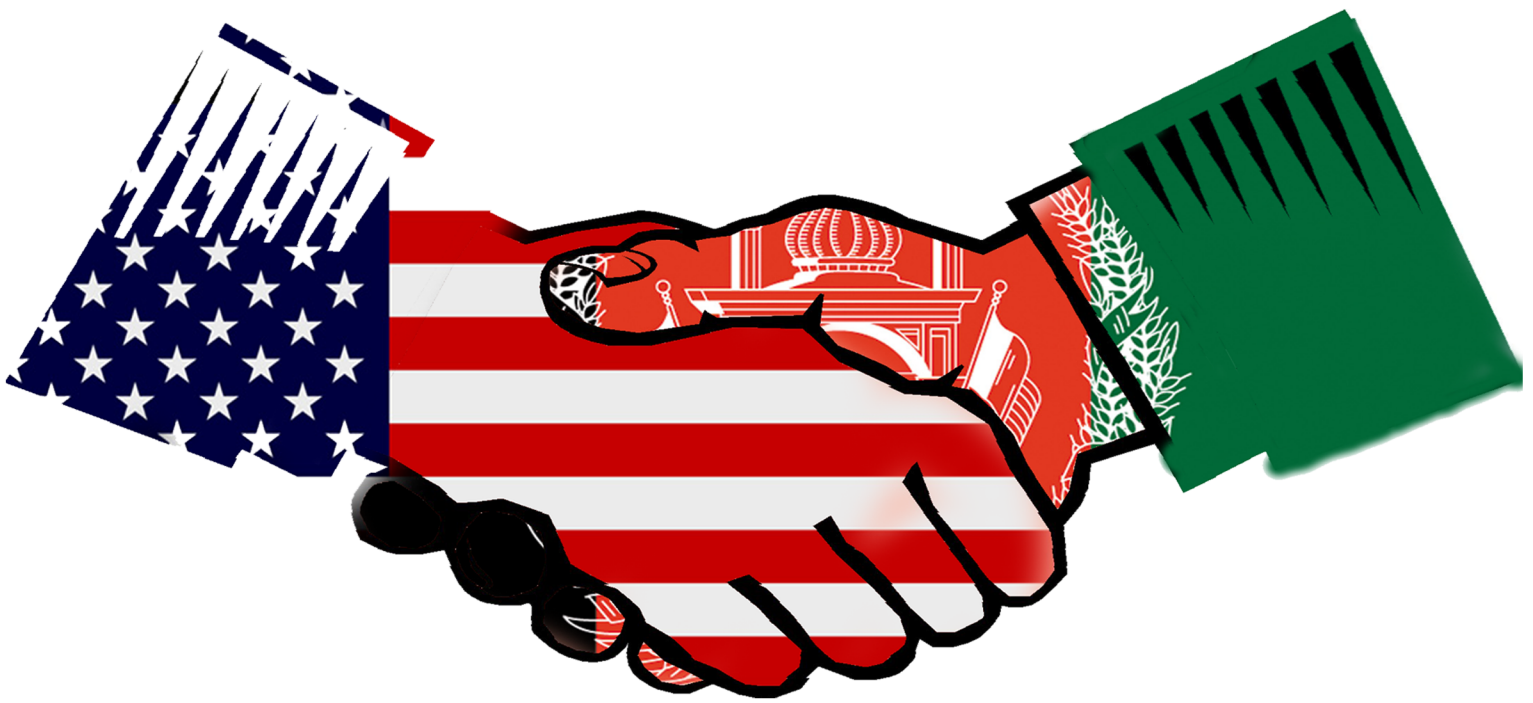
During the last three months, Shirali and his soldiers conducted two major clearing operations in and around the district. Rapkoch accompanied Shirali on the missions to meet with local elders while operations were underway.

"Despite the shooting going on around him," said Rapkoch, "he was able to remain calm even when he knew the people he was talking with might have been protecting the enemy."

"It's evident when he speaks, people are listening to him and want to follow him," Rapkoch added. "He knows his troops will go anywhere he directs them to go and the enemy also knows that. And he wants the people [in Now Zad] to know of his good intentions."

Shirali has spent most of his life at war. His experience as a tank commander during the Soviet invasion and as a freedom fighter during the Afghan civil war which followed "made him the effective combat leader he is today," Rapkoch said.

"He's been in more complex and dire situations than the one we're in right now," said Rapkoch.



But Shirali said he is tired of war, and he believes peace will only come when Afghans support the government.

The only way to achieve that, is by him and his troops treating the people with dignity and respect.

The kandak commander made respect a theme among his troops. He treats them as he expects them to treat the local members of the community they encounter during missions.

Rapkoch likened the way Shirali works with his subordinates to that of Marines, the bond Marines share on the battlefield and the idea of decentralized leadership.

"He genuinely cares about his soldiers," Rapkoch said. "During briefs, he'll bring in his men and have them do the briefs, so one day they'll be able to be in his position.

"He knows there are many different cultures among his men, but he likes to focus on the similarities, not the differences," said Rapkoch.

Rapkoch said Shirali understands the advisor team's role in Now Zad is to communicate and make suggestions. He said the time is coming when the team must leave and Shirali understands there's a "reason behind our role and that our method works."

Shirali considers himself lucky to have served with Marines. He said the professionalism they displayed while working with his kandak will have a lasting impression.

"We used to sit down daily for breakfast, lunch and dinner," Shirali said. "The Marines were very good to us and taught us a lot."

Shirali said he and his men are very grateful for the training they conducted with the SFAAT, which included courses on explosive ordnance disposal, vehicle maintenance and first aid.

"Most importantly the Marines came from

***"Most importantly the Marines came from thousands of miles away, leaving their families, to risk their lives to protect us and help the future of Afghanistan."***

***- Lt. Col. Noori Shirali  
ANA Kandak Commander***

thousands of miles away, leaving their families, to risk their lives to protect us and help the future of Afghanistan," said Shirali.

U.S. Marine Maj. Paul Jarr, the executive officer for 2/215th SFAAT, spent a month in Now Zad helping the team set up operations, ensuring they had the tools needed for mission success.

Jarr said he quickly realized Shirali was a genuine person and had great intentions for his Afghan soldiers and the people of Now Zad.

"He was adamant to find out who his soldiers really were," Jarr said. "He was definitely combat effective. He has the tools to assess where he's at, the capabilities and strength of his men, and he just knew what it took to take the fight to the enemy rather than allowing the enemy to bring the fight to them."

The Marines serving with the team are Shirali's fourth set of advisors. When the last team of advisors left, Shirali was on leave and didn't get the chance to say goodbye. He made it a point during the meeting to extend his gratitude and say farewell.

"Well, don't get up in the middle of the night and leave without saying goodbye this time," Rapkoch jokingly said to Shirali.

"It's impossible," Shirali said. "We are brothers, here. I won't ever miss that opportunity again. You are my family."



Cpl. Damien Blevins uses an acetylene torch to remove bolts off of a Mine-Resistant, Ambushed Protected All-Terrain Vehicle at the Motor Transport Maintenance Lot aboard Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan March 25. Blevins is a motor transportation mechanic with Combat Logistics Regiment 2.



Doc, an improvised explosive device detection dog (IDD) with 2d Combat Engineer Battalion, retrieves a bumper during a training session at Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, March 19, 2013. IDD dog handlers, often volunteers from their home units, are matched with a dog and work together to perform route clearance and other duties in a combat environment.

# THIS MONTH IN P H T O S



Marines exercise at the gym at Forward Operating Base Hanson, Helmand Province, Afghanistan, March 23, 2013. Maj. Gen. W. Lee Miller, Commander, Regional Command (Southwest), and other key personnel, traveled to Camp Dwyer and FOB Hanson to visit with Marines and discuss force protection and retrograde.



Afgan National Army Capt. Kamal, Route Clearance Tolai commander, uses this sandtable kit to plan his tolai's missions on Forward Operating Base Nolay, Sangin District, Helmand province, Afghanistan. Captain Scott Graniero interacts with Kamal to advise him with any concerns Kamal may have. Graniero is the engineer advisor for the Security Force Assistance Advisor Team which arrived to FOB Nolay in November 2012 with the mission to guide, assist and advise.



A Marine with the Warfighter Exchange Service Team (WES Team), Combat Logistics Regiment 2, walks away after disposing of trash at the burn pit in Forward Operating Base (FOB) Zeebrudge, Helmand province, Afghanistan, March 6, 2013. The WES Team travels to Patrol Bases and FOBs from Camp Leatherneck to provide PX supplies, cash and postal services to fellow deployed servicemembers.

# SFAAT corpsmen advisors growing increasingly confident in their ANA counterparts



**SANGIN, Afghanistan** -- On March 20, Afghan National Army soldiers with 5th Kandak, 2nd Brigade, 215th Corps, engaged in a firefight with insurgents in the Sangin District, during which three soldiers were wounded and required medical evacuation.

At Forward Operating Base Nalay, ANA medics at the 2nd Brigade Aid Station readied their ambulances, medical supplies and litters.

Medical staff with the Marine-led Security Force Assistance Advisor Team, Petty Officer 1st Class Federico Sanchez, the SFAAT's medical chief advisor and two corpsmen, Petty Officer 3rd Class Jeffrey Casassa and Seaman Mason Heberly, immediately made their way to the aid station.

They observed as the ANA medics assessed the casualties and ensured the medics used procedures taught during simulated mass casualty exercises in the past. They wanted to make sure the most seriously wounded were given priority because "it's live or die at that point," said Heberly.

After the ANA medics loaded the casualties into ambulances bound for the next echelon of medical care at Camp Shurabak, near Camp Leatherneck, the corpsmen walked back to their living quarters confident the ANA medics are taking their advice to heart and making great strides in taking care of their own.

For nearly two months, the corpsmen have conducted weekly mass casualty drills with the ANA medics, whose ability to treat real-life casualties on March 20 was evidence of their dedication to learning.

## Mass casualty drill

The ANA medics are getting better, Heberly said, but there's always room for improvement through continued drills -- so the corpsmen ran another mass casualty drill at the aid station, March 26.

Before the exercise, Heberly told role players who acted as patients what their injuries were. Some patients were

missing limbs, some had gun-shot wounds and others had third-degree burns. Some patients were categorized as urgent and some were priority -- urgent being the most important and priority following.

Heberly told the ANA medics to begin treating the wounded and he stepped aside. The corpsmen have previously assisted the medics during the exercises, but as the medics become more proficient the corpsmen guide, advise but step back and assist only when necessary.

The ANA medics moved to their patients quickly, one per person.

The medical advisors' ultimate goal is to get the ANA medics to move with a sense of urgency because time is not on their side. Each week, the medics accomplish the exercise faster and more efficiently.

"We've really stressed the golden-hour rule to the ANA," said Heberly. People wounded in combat have a much greater chance of surviving and recovering in they are treated within the first hour of being wounded.

Communication is one of the areas Heberly deemed most important for proficiency as a medical team, which he said prevents "overlooking and overdoing things."

"Mass casualty [scenarios] can be chaotic," the Winfield, Kan., native said. "Once you're treating casualties, everyone needs to understand their role and how to best contribute. Otherwise you're going to have too many people trying to do too many things at once."

After the exercise, Heberly gathered all the soldiers and reminded them blood loss can have a detrimental impact on one's life and how important it is to get patients to a higher echelon of care as fast as possible.

Heberly clapped in approval. Heberly said he was overall impressed with their speed, how they applied the tourniquets and how they communicated.

"You guys did a great job," Heberly said. "You guys improved since last time and you will continue to get better."

## Routine medical care

When it comes to noncombat-related issues, the ANA medics are also less reliant on their U.S. counterparts.

During a routine visit to the ANA BAS, Petty Officer 1st Class Federico Sanchez watched as the medics administered a penicillin shot to a sick soldier. Sanchez was there to explain how a blood pressure monitor works, but didn't want to interrupt their work.

This is routine for them now," said Sanchez, a Reno, Nev., native. "Every now and then, we'll come here



and they'll be busy drawing blood or examining a patient lying down on the table. We just wait until they're done."

Since the corpsmen arrived to Sangin in November 2012, the ANA BAS added six medics and two doctors, bringing the total staff to 16 enlisted and five officers.

The medics have learned and applied the administrative tasks involved in running the aid station. Duties include keeping inventory of medical supplies and tracking patients who have visited for illnesses and injuries.

"Now, they understand the reason for the system we've taught them," Heberly said. "If they see a repeat patient, they look in their books and are able to see the patient's history."

### **The way forward**

Two weeks ago, Sanchez was approached by the medics' sergeant major who just arrived to the brigade. He wanted Sanchez to help him in the planning process, such as making training schedules and work rosters.

"He really wants to learn troop leading skills," Sanchez said. "I'm glad he showed the initiative because, though the medics know what they're doing, they need that guidance to make them an effective, organized aid station."

Sanchez said it is critical the ANA medics and their leaders develop confidence in their abilities, and noted a recent incident as an example of what he is trying to accomplish.

"I talked to one of the doctors one day about air evacuation requirements," said Sanchez. "It so happened the next day, a local national was brought in because he was shot in the head. It turned out the bullet grazed the Afghan's head and wasn't deemed life threatening. The doctor, initially thinking an air evacuation was necessary, made the right call for a ground evacuation."

The corpsmen advisors are their counterparts' moral support. They point the medics in the right direction and hope they make the right calls. The medics learn through trial and error during the drills, but Sanchez said there is no room for error in a real-life situation.

"We have to reinforce, reinforce, reinforce," said Sanchez. "They've got this."

The National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agency's free 16 hours of childcare per child has been put on hold due to sequestration. We will inform the II MEF (FWD) families of the program's continuance when the program resumes.

The II MEF (Fwd) Combined Play Group consisting of Families from II MEF, II MHG (Fwd) and SFAAT will have the first ever event on April 6th from 3-6 p.m.. For those interested, please contact Ivana Almand at [ivana.almand08@gmail.com](mailto:ivana.almand08@gmail.com). The II MEF (Fwd) Combined Play Group flyer is located on the II MEF (Fwd) E-Marine site under the "parents and extended family member" page, as well as the II MHG (Fwd) E-Marine site under the "advisor team central" page.



# Combat Entitlements

**Hostile Fire/Imminent Danger Pay** is \$225.00 per Month, prorated by day.

**Family Separation Allowance** is \$250.00 per month and starts after the first 31 days of deployment

**Hardship Duty Pay Location** is \$100.00 per month for personnel over 30 days in Afghanistan. This is prorated and location dependent.

**Combat Zone Tax Exclusion** exempts military pay from federal and state taxes. This exemption is capped, so senior personnel should check with their tax advisors and plan accordingly.

**Deployed Per Diem** Depending where a service member is, they may be eligible for deployed per diem.

**Deployment entitlements PowerPoint** will be put in the II MEF (Fwd) and II MHG (Fwd) E-Marine sites under the "unit resources" tab under Download Center.



# TUITION ASSISTANCE

Tuition assistance was discontinued at the start of the month. However, Congress ordered the Department of Defense to restore funding for TA. Please be patient as we go through sequestration and budget cuts. Service members will be briefed on the ramifications of the Marine Corps Tuition Assistance Program by their chain of command, but the Post 9/11 G.I. Bill is still available.



# MILITARY AIRLIFT COMMAND

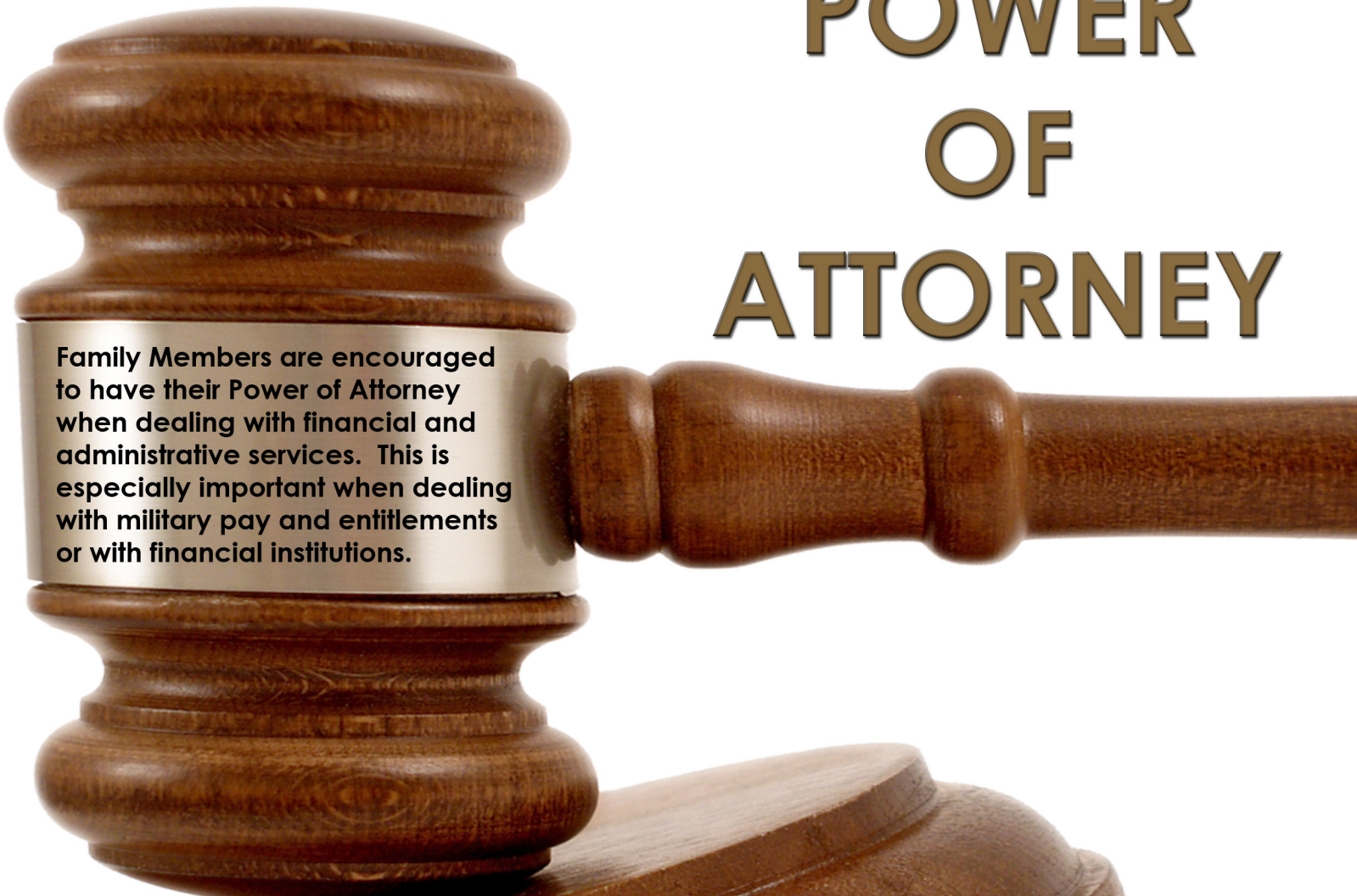
Family members interested in traveling via Military Airlift Command (MAC) flights must have a letter from II MHG Administrative Branch verifying their eligibility to travel as an unaccompanied dependent of a deployed service member. Your FRO can provide a template for this letter and II MHG Admin Branch has already approved several requests. When you go to II MHG Admin Branch be sure to take personal identification and passports for each traveler. MAC flights are an inexpensive and fun way to travel but be sure to allow extra time in your travel schedule. Seats are assigned on a space available (or Space-A) basis and priority is given to active duty service members on orders or in an emergency travel status. For more information on Space-A flights look online at: <http://www.amc.af.mil/amctravel/index.asp>.

# DEPLOYMENT LETTERS

Family members do their best to handle everything that transpires while their sponsor is deployed. Deployment letters make some issues easier, providing an official document signed by the commanding officer or representative to verify a sponsor is deployed. The letters can help with financial institutions, retailers and other discounted services. The II MHG Administration Branch has several templates. Please contact your FRO if you need one.



# POWER OF ATTORNEY



Family Members are encouraged to have their Power of Attorney when dealing with financial and administrative services. This is especially important when dealing with military pay and entitlements or with financial institutions.



# INDOOR SIMULATED MARKSMANSHIP TRAINER (ISMT)

On April 26 at 9:30 a.m. spouses, parents and extended family members are invited to attend a simulation of Afghanistan which will allow you to experience the environment and get some hands-on time with the weapons used in the field. This is to familiarize spouses, parents and extended family members with the challenges faced by their deployed loved ones. The event is open to adults only and is being currently being planned. Contact your FRO for more information and watch eMarine for updates!



## II MEF (FWD) COMBINED BALL-A-RINAS KICKBALL TEAM

The II MEF (Fwd) Ball-A-Rinas kickball team has formed with members of the II MEF (FWD), II MHG (Fwd) and SFAAT family members. The team will play in the Spouses Lejeune Area Kickball Association Kickball league. The first practice went on March 20 but the first game was cancelled due to rain. The team picks up its next game on April 7. Practices are usually held at Paradise Point fields near the tennis courts. For those who were unable to make the first meeting and/or practice but are interested in joining the team, contact Jill Bright at [jmkbright@aol.com](mailto:jmkbright@aol.com).

# From the FRO

Thank you to our deployed Marines and sailors and their spouses, parents and extended family members. Thanks, also, to the family readiness assistants and volunteers who assisted with the II MEF (Fwd) Christmas Party, Ice Cream Social and Easter Egg Hunt Social. You are truly heroes in my eyes.

Should you need to get in contact with me, my contact information is below.



**(910) 450-5939**

**(910) 546-7996**



**michael.e.cline1@usmc.mil**

**Warm Regards,  
Michael**

# Just a reminder

## FUTURE EVENTS

**May Mania** May 17-19, 2013 at W.P.T. Field. Expect this fun-filled event to be like last year's. A carnival will feature rides, a children's activity area, a luau-themed photo booth, lots of musical entertainment, and "Show Us Whatcha Got" showcasing local singing talent. There will also be a beer garden and marketplace area with lots of food and cooking demonstrations.

**4th of July Celebration** will be hosted at the Camp Lejeune W.P.T. Field in early July. Fireworks, food and entertainment will be provided. Details to follow.

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!!

**II MEF (Fwd) Spouses Ball** November 16, at Marston Pavilion from 6 - 10 p.m. More information will be provided as the date nears.

**II MEF (Fwd) Christmas Party** December 7, Goettge Field House from 10:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. More information will be provided as the date nears.



1. Log in to E-MARINE: [www.E-MARINE.org](http://www.E-MARINE.org)
2. Select the "Invite Family Members" link in the "Getting Started" menu.
3. Enter in the first & last name and email address for family members you would like to invite and indicate which unit site to invite them to.
4. The family members will be added to your family member list and an invitation to join the site will be sent to them by email.
5. Once they complete their registration form, they will automatically approved for your unit's site.

