

Regional Command Southwest *Round-up* Weekly PAO Report

----- January 7, 2014 -----



NEWS

Marine leaders, Sgt. Dakota Meyer visit RC [Southwest]

Story and Photos by Cpl. Austin Long



CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan - Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. James F. Amos and Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps Sgt. Maj. Michael Barrett visited Marines and sailors with Regional Command [Southwest], Dec. 23-26.

Amos was accompanied by his wife, Bonnie Amos, and Medal of Honor recipient Sgt. Dakota Meyer. The four visited Marines and sailors at forward operating bases throughout Helmand province to celebrate the holiday season. ([Read the STORY](#))

This is my life: Marines in Afghanistan

Story by Cpl. Paul Peterson / Cpl. Austin Long

HELMAND PROVINCE, Afghanistan - The war in Afghanistan is the longest sustained conflict in American history. For more than 12 years, Marines have cycled in and out of the country. Most Marines today have never known a time when deployments didn't loom on the horizon. It's become a facet of their lifestyles, and it's shaped the people who lived through it.

Now, as the war in Afghanistan comes to an end, four Marines with 1st Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment shared a little bit about who they are as members of that select community. Their attitudes, leadership styles, experiences and reasons for serving are different. They're honest and hopeful, rancorous and rash, proud and blunt. Three are combat veterans. One is serving his first tour overseas. ([Read the STORY](#))



VIGNETTES

Commandant and Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps visit troops in Afghanistan

Photos by Sgt. Gabriela Garcia



Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. James Amos and Sergeant Major of the U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Maj. Micheal P. Barrett visited deployed Marines during Christmas as a way to show their support during the holidays. ([See the Photos](#))

Afghan National Army takes the lead in training its own

Photos by Cpl. Austin Long

The Regional Corps Battle School recently graduated 142 soldiers to be the lead instructors for all future RCBS courses. With the instructors, the school will be autonomous from coalition forces and will be self-sustaining. ([See the Photos](#))



VIDEO

Alpha Company Reset Training

Video by Sgt. Eric Wilterdink



U.S. Marines with Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment conduct Improvised Explosive Device (IED) lane training on Camp Leatherneck, Helmand province, Afghanistan, Dec. 20. The Marines went through different scenarios that are similar to what is seen on the battlefield to perfect their IED finding and marking tactics. ([Watch the Video](#))

This Is My Life: Cpl. Dennis Cox

Video by Cpl. Paul Peterson

This is My Life is a photo-based journal documenting the lives, personalities and leadership styles of Marines currently serving in Afghanistan. This is Cpl. Dennis Cox's third deployment and his second to Afghanistan. The New York City native enlisted at the age of 18, inspired in part by the events of 9/11. He left for his first deployment as a rifleman. Now, at the age of 24, he's returned to Afghanistan as a sniper supporting Marines conducting foot patrols in Helmand province. Cox is both serious and relaxed but fun loving at the same time. He wants to continue his line of work after the military. ([Watch the Video](#))



This is My Life: Lance Cpl. Patrick Tomassi

Video by Cpl. Austin Long



This is My Life is a photo-based journal documenting the lives, personalities and leadership styles of Marines currently serving in Afghanistan. Lance Cpl. Patrick Tomassi, 20 year old, Odessa, N.Y., native, can't seem to ever stop smiling, even when told to. He's been in the Marine Corps for about two years, and this is his first deployment to Afghanistan. Being the new guy, he's often called on to complete miscellaneous projects. His goofy smile fades from time-to-time, but Tomassi's go-to-it attitude and optimism carry him. ([Watch the VIDEO](#))

This Is My Life: Cpl. Charles Kristel

Video by Cpl. Paul Peterson

This is My Life is a photo-based journal documenting the lives, personalities and leadership styles of Marines currently serving in Afghanistan. Cpl. Charles Kristel is blunt and authoritative but also respected. Kristel, a Schenectady, N.Y., native was wounded during his previous deployment to Afghanistan. A stocky, deep-voiced man of few words, many unrepeatable in print, Kristel joined the military at the age of 20. After only three and a half years in the Marine Corps, he's elevated himself to a position of leadership through strength of will, demonstrated competence and unbending character. [\(Watch the VIDEO\)](#)



This is My Life: Sgt. Bryan Early

Video by Cpl. Austin Long



This is My Life is a photo-based journal documenting the lives, personalities and leadership styles of Marines currently serving in Afghanistan. At 25 years old this is Sgt. Bryan Early's third deployment. He uses his past experiences to lead his Marines today. A Libby, Mont., native, the Marines know Early by his natural, happy mood. He tries to think of his men as little brothers. It reminds him he is responsible for the lives of other people's sons. He has a wife and a two-year-old son. [\(Watch the VIDEO\)](#)

Regional Corps Battle School Stands on its Own

Video by Lance Cpl. John Tucker

The Regional Corps Battle School at Camp Shorabak, Afghanistan, recently graduated more than sixty officers and 100 instructors, giving the school complete autonomy from coalition forces. [\(Watch the VIDEO\)](#)



Marketed

Regional Command (Southwest) Marines completed holiday greetings for local television stations in the U.S.

Republished Combat Correspondent Product

[Clean Sweep Soldier of Fortune](#)

[Commandant Presents Helmets to 1/9 Marines Business Insider](#)

[Lt. Cmdr. Robert Krejci sends holiday greeting from Afghanistan David Letterman](#)

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