



----- July 22, 2014 -----

NEWS

2nd Combat Engineer Battalion honors fallen Marines during ceremony in Afghanistan

Story by Sgt. Jessica Ostroska

CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan – The blazing heat of the morning sun beat down on Marines and sailors as they quietly stood in formation July 8, 2014. The battalion sergeant major took the final role call and three names were called out. No one moved. No one made a sound. Slowly a few Marines appeared from behind a cement-wall barrier carrying three rifles, three pairs of combat boots, three Kevlar helmets and three sets of identification tags, carefully placing the items to form three battlefield crosses. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)



Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps visits Marines, sailors in Afghanistan

Story by Sgt. Jessica Ostroska



CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan – Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. John M. Paxton Jr. held a town hall meeting for Marines and sailors aboard Camp Leatherneck, Helmand province, Afghanistan, July 18, 2014. The town hall meeting began with Gen. Paxton expressing his gratitude to service members for their service and sacrifice to the country and the Corps. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)

The devil is in the details: R3B streamlines retrograde decisions

Story by 1st Lt. Skye Martin

CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan – One by one they trickled in, notebook in one hand, the other wiping a dripping brow resulting from even a brief walk in the sweltering summer heat. Soon, the seats were filled with captains, majors, lieutenant colonels and their counterparts, master sergeants and master gunnery sergeants, from what seemed to be nearly every staff section of Regional Command (Southwest). [\(Read the STORY\)](#)



Morganton, NC, Marine officer receives achievement medal in Afghanistan

Story by 1st Lt. Garth Langley



CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan-- U.S. Marine 1st Lt. Joshua Bridges, a native of Morganton, North Carolina, and assessments and plans officer with Regional Command (Southwest), was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal during a ceremony aboard Camp Leatherneck, Helmand province, Afghanistan, July 13, 2014. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)

1st Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, supply Marines account for \$117 million worth of gear

Story by Sgt. Frances Johnson

CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan – Tracking equipment required to sustain missions for an infantry battalion in a combat zone may seem like it would be the work for an entire battalion itself. For 1st Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, the supply shop consists of only five Marines. The supply section is the responsible holder and maintainer of all of the battalion's gear, equipment and supplies. The job seems intimidating, but the Marines seem to have found their rhythm in order to keep everything organized and flowing smoothly.

[\(Read the STORY\)](#)



Infantrymen engage Taliban insurgents during 4th of July weekend

Story by Cpl. Joseph Scanlan



CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan – While many Americans in the United States were celebrating during the Fourth of July weekend, Marines with Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, were engaging Taliban insurgents in Helmand province, Afghanistan. The infantrymen along with Afghan National Army soldiers operated within close proximity of Camp Leatherneck to continue disruption operations and prevent future attacks on the Camps Bastion and Leatherneck, July 4 - 6. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)

Georgian Army ends mission in Helmand province, Afghanistan

Story by Sgt. Jessica Ostroska

CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan – Soldiers with the Republic of Georgia gathered for a ceremony marking their end of mission with Regional Command (Southwest) aboard Camp Leatherneck, Helmand province, Afghanistan, as they bid farewell to their coalition counterparts, July 15, 2014. While deployed in support of the International Security Assistance Force, Georgian soldiers worked under Task Force Belleau Wood to aid in security force protection within Helmand province. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)



Afghan National Army soldiers train, graduate their own at Regional Corps Battle School for first time in Afghanistan

Story by Cpl. Cody Haas



CAMP SHORABAK, Afghanistan—Soldiers with the Afghan National Army graduated from a six-week combat training course at the Regional Corps Battle School aboard Camp Shorabak, Afghanistan, July 10, 2014. This graduation was significant because it was the first combat training course completely operated by Afghan instructors without any influence by coalition forces. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)

20-year-old Marine sergeant on fast track in Afghanistan

Story by 1st Lt. Garth Langley

CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan - On Sept. 19, 2011, U.S. Marine Sgt. Michael M. Estes left his hometown of Torrance, California, a sleepy Los Angeles suburb, and headed for 13 weeks of grueling recruit training at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego. At the time, Estes was a junior attending Torrance High School. While many of his peers were battling the onset of self-imposed senioritis, preparing for the upcoming academic year and submitting college applications, Estes had visions of becoming “One of the Few.”

[\(Read the STORY\)](#)



1/2 motor transport Marines aid Camp Leatherneck while retrograding vehicles home

Story by Sgt. Jessica Ostroska



CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan – Motor Transport Marines with 1st Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, have a distinct and important role keeping the coalition forces with Regional Command (Southwest) mobilized aboard Camp Leatherneck, Helmand province, Afghanistan. “Our job is to provide motor transport support to our battalion, but here we also support the task force since they don’t have their own motor transport section,” said Gunnery Sgt. Stephen S. Galinski, motor transport chief, 1st Battalion, 2nd Marines.

[\(Read the STORY\)](#)

HMLA-467 conducts first combat deployment supporting operations in Helmand province, Afghanistan

Story by Sgt. Frances Johnson

CAMP BASTION, Afghanistan — Marine Aircraft Group-Afghanistan has different air assets contributing to the last operations in Regional Command (Southwest), and Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 467 brings the multirole versatility needed for combat operations in southern Afghanistan. The unit, known as the Sabers, is currently deployed from Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, North Carolina, and is comprised of Marines with varying specialties to man and maintain the AH-1W Cobras and UH-1Y Hueys.

[\(Read the STORY\)](#)



PHOTOS

Denmark Army lowers flag in Regional Command (Southwest), Afghanistan

Photos by Sgt. Jessica Ostroska



Coalition members stand in formation during a flag-lowering ceremony for soldiers with the Danish Contingent aboard Camp Leatherneck, Helmand province, Afghanistan, July 21, 2014. This year marked the 17th rotation and final deployment to Afghanistan for DANCON. The ceremony marked the end of mission for the Denmark Army with Regional Command (Southwest).

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

Wounded Warriors visit Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan

Photos by Sgt. Jessica Ostroska

Army Sgt. Adam Hartswick, a wounded warrior from State College, Penn., is welcomed by fellow soldiers and Marines during his visit to Camp Leatherneck, Helmand province, Afghanistan, July 10, 2014. The visit was with Operation Proper Exit, an organization that helps wounded warriors who are recovering from being injured in battle. [\(See the PHOTOS\)](#)



Weapons Company security patrol

Photos by Cpl. John Martinez



Petty Officer 2nd Class Matthew Belmonte, a senior line corpsman with Weapons Company, 1st Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, observes his surroundings during a security patrol in Helmand Province, Afghanistan on July 16, 2014. Patrols are conducted to disrupt enemy operations against the Bastion - Leatherneck Complex. [\(See the PHOTOS\)](#)

Training Day

Photos by Cpl. John Martinez

U.S. Marine Sgt. Matthew Outinen, a military working dog handler assigned to Weapons Company, 1st Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, pets his military working dog, Teddy, after he successfully completes a training exercise aboard Camp Leatherneck, Helmand province, Afghanistan, July 14, 2014. Dogs are trained to find improvised explosive devices and are used as a safeguard for Marines while on patrol. [\(See the PHOTOS\)](#)



1/2 Weapons Company controlling Camp Leatherneck main entry point

Photos by Cpl. John Martinez



Cpl. James Ritchie, right, and Lance Cpl. Vincent Accordi, both with Weapons Company, 1st Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, inspect a driver's papers for stamps and signatures before he can be granted access to Camp Leatherneck, Helmand province, Afghanistan, July 12, 2014. All vehicles are screened and searched before being granted access at the Main Entry Point, ensuring the safety of all personnel aboard Bastion-Leatherneck Complex. ([See the PHOTOS](#))

VIDEO

2nd Combat Engineer Battalion honors fallen heroes

Video by Cpl. Cody Haas

A memorial service was held in honor of Staff Sgt. David H. Stewart, Cpl. Brandon J. Garabrant and Cpl. Adam J. Wolff aboard Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, July 8, 2014. ([Watch the VIDEO](#))



On Point

Video by Cpl. Cody Haas



Corporal Jonathan Cortes, a machine gunner with 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, explains life as a machine gunner in the Marine Corps aboard Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, July 8, 2014. ([Watch the VIDEO](#))

Sergeant Thomas Spitzer Memorial

Video by Cpl. Cody Haas

A memorial service was held in honor of Sgt. Thomas Spitzer aboard Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, July 2, 2014. ([Watch the VIDEO](#))



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