

Mark Wahlberg visits 1st MLG



Photo by Sgt. Brian Lautenslager

Actor and producer Mark Wahlberg visits with Marines and sailors of 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward) at Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, Dec. 19. Wahlberg shook hands and signed autographs for Marines and sailors, thanking them for their service. [Click here to view video of his visit.](#)

Story by
Cpl. Shannon McMillan
1st MLG (FWD)

CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan – Actor Mark Wahlberg visited service members of 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward) at Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, Dec. 19.

During Wahlberg's visit, he shook hands and took pictures with service members while thanking them for their service. More than 100 anxious Marines and sailors waited in line to meet Wahlberg.

"I was very excited," said Maj. Rhonda Martin, assistant chief of staff, G-1, Headquarters, 1st MLG (FWD). "He is one of my favorite actors; I really like watching his movies."

He seemed very genuine and took the time to shake the hands of the Marines and talk to them, said Martin.

"He made sure we knew that he ap-

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Marines, Afghans see progress in Marjah

Story and photos by
Cpl. Daniel Woodall
Combat Logistics Battalion 3

MARJAH, Afghanistan — Marines currently conducting operations in Marjah, as well as local Afghan citizens, are seeing noticeable improvements in the former Taliban stronghold.

In a recent Pentagon press brief, Maj. Gen. Richard P. Mills, commanding general, Regional Command (Southwest), stated that combat operations against Taliban forces in Marjah are essentially over.

In February, coalition forces conducted a large-scale offensive in order to drive

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1st Lt. Elizabeth Stroud (kneeling), engineer platoon commander, Engineer Company, Combat Logistics Battalion 3, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward) speaks with residents of Trek Nawa, a community near Marjah, Afghanistan, Dec. 7.

WAHLBERG

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preciated our service,” said Martin, a native of Trotwood, Ohio. “It’s nice to hear it; it makes us feel better knowing we are not forgotten.”

“It’s the least I can do to thank you for what you do,” said Wahlberg to one of the Marines.

Along with meeting service members, Wahlberg promoted his latest movie “The Fighter,” based on the true story of Massachusetts boxer Micky Ward, which co-starred Christian Bale.

Hundreds of service members watched his new movie from a big screen inside a hangar on Camp Leatherneck.

“Everyone was excited to go see the movie,” said Martin. “They were all pumped to see the movie after his visit.”

After the movie, each service member walked away with gift cards, courtesy of Wahlberg.

“I think it was a Christmas present for the service members,” she said. “I think everyone enjoyed the visit and was appreciative for him to come out here and show support.”

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Photo by Cpl. Shannon McMillan

Mark Wahlberg poses for a picture with Maj. Rhonda Martin, assistant chief of staff, G-1, Headquarters, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), at Camp Leatherneck, Dec. 19.

“It’s the least I can do to thank you for what you do.”

-Mark Wahlberg, actor/producer

8th ESB bridge mission in Sangin District

Photo by Sgt. Brandon Owen

Marines of 8th Engineer Support Battalion, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), disassemble a bridge removed from the Helmand River in the Sangin District, Helmand province, Afghanistan, Dec. 7. The 8th ESB Marines arrived in November and continue to conduct engineering operations for coalition forces and local nationals in support of the International Security Assistance Force.



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Photo by Cpl. Daniel Woodall

A heavy equipment vehicle operated by Marines with Combat Logistics Battalion 3, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), moves a metal storage container to be used as the foundation of a bridge in Marjah, Afghanistan, Dec. 3.

MARJAH

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out Taliban forces occupying the rural community. Though coalition and Afghan forces continue to experience isolated resistance from Taliban insurgents, units operating in the area are conducting humanitarian operations and enhancing security measures to ensure the continued welfare and safety of Marjah's residents.

According to one Marjah resident, 24-year-old Sharif, shopkeepers and farmers feel much safer since Marine units began operations in February.

"Before the U.S. got here [in Marjah], it was dominated by the Taliban," said Sharif, through an interpreter. "I also remember when American forces first came here [in 2001]. The whole country was dominated by the Taliban. Since then, the government, the economy and our safety have greatly improved. The U.S. government helped us to fix a lot of problems [the Taliban] caused."

Recently, the American presence in Afghanistan surpassed the nine years and 50 day-mark in which the former

Soviet Union occupied the nation from 1979-1989. Critics of the current Afghan conflict have often drawn comparisons between the Soviet Union's unsuccessful campaign and the future of current operations conducted by coalition and Afghan National Security forces.

However, contrary to the Soviet Union's objective of invading and occupying Afghanistan for the sake of military or political gain, coalition forces have spent the past nine years conducting counter-insurgency and humanitarian operations. These operations, conducted jointly with Afghan National Security Forces, aim to rebuild Afghanistan's infrastructure and foster a self-sustaining nation free from terrorist groups seeking to use the area as a base of operations.

According to Dr. Mirwais Hasani, an Afghan National Army medical officer, the ideological contrast between Soviet and coalition operations is not only apparent to Afghan citizens, but also greatly appreciated. Hasani is a first lieutenant with the ANA's 5th Kandak, 1st Brigade, 215th Corps – a logistics unit that frequently conducts operations in Marjah as well as other areas within Afghanistan's Helmand province.

"When [Soviet forces] arrived here, they

did not care about the Afghan people or culture," said Hasani, through an interpreter. "When we work with Marines, or when the [Afghan] people see them on patrols, it is clear they have information about our culture. They learn some of our languages, show us respect and have built hospitals and schools."

Currently, the Marines and sailors of 2nd Battalion, 6th Marines, 2nd Battalion, 9th Marines and 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marines are conducting security operations in Marjah and its surrounding areas. Personnel with Combat Logistics Battalion 3, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), are conducting civil development projects in Marjah as well as providing tactical logistics support to various units operating in the area.

These units, along with many others, will continue to train, advise, mentor and prepare their Afghan counterparts to assume exclusive control of their own country prior to the gradual withdrawal of coalition forces. Until then, coalition forces are striving to apply the same successes found in Marjah to the entirety of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

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'Secret Santa' delivers Christmas cheer

Story and Photos by
Cpl. Shannon McMillan
1st MLG (FWD)

CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan

– 'Twas the month of December and all through desert lands, service members were prepared for the missions at hand. Though they would not be home for the holiday season, there was laughter and joy that came with great reason.

Much like Santa Claus spreading holiday cheer around the world, service members with 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), were visited by a brother in arms, with gifts in hand.

Petty Officer 1st Class James Bowes, safety and environmental chief, 1st MLG (FWD), collected wrapped presents from various organizations from the United States so he could distribute them to Marines and sailors this holiday season to lift their spirits while deployed.

"I wanted to make sure the Marines and sailors have something to open for Christmas," said Bowes, 32, a native of Port Angeles, Wash. "It keeps them conscious that there are people in the States who care about them."

This is the second year Bowes has organized trinkets and pieces of home to be given out to service members. This year, he collected more than 100 wrapped presents for the troops.

"I am lucky because I get stuff from my wife and parents," said Bowes. "I want to make sure that the others are taken care of as well."

Growing up in a family with decades of military history, it was tradition to do something for the service members who couldn't be home for the holidays.

"If we were back home, my family would invite [over] whomever to enjoy the holidays," Bowes said. "I try and do it every holiday season."

Bowes presented gifts to service members in various offices including postal, medical, supply, food service, administration, landing support, and engineer support.

"It makes it feel like home," said Staff Sgt. Alicia Grady, staff noncommissioned officer in charge, Food Service, Headquarters and Service Company, 1st MLG (FWD), who received a wrapped Secret Santa gift from Bowes. "Receiving a wrapped gift and being able to open it is amazing."



Marines with 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward) open Secret Santa holiday gifts at Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, Dec. 13. Petty Officer 1st Class James Bowes, a native of Port Angeles, Wash., collected the holiday gifts from various organizations in the United States to distribute to the service members in his unit as a way of spreading holiday cheer while they are deployed.



Marines open Secret Santa presents.

It's very thoughtful of Bowes to be thinking of everyone else, said Grady, 30, from Gary, Ind.

"Making sure the Marines and sailors are getting something for the holidays, especially since it's on his own time, [is] very nice of him," Grady said.

Lance Cpl. Kenneth Morales, a food service Marine, didn't expect to receive many gifts this year since he is deployed.

"It was like being a kid all over again," said Morales, after opening his present.

Inside his gift box was a thermal

blanket and matching pillow case.

"[It was] really nice since it is getting really cold here," said Morales, 21, Lowell, Mass. "You can see that the people who sent out the gifts put a lot of thought into them."

Service members received an array of presents including thermoses, stuffed animals, hygiene products, sweets, board and card games, books, puzzles and other comfort items they can use during their deployment.

"It not only shows character amongst those who donated their time and service, it shows core value of Bowes, that even though we are deployed and fighting a war, it is the holidays and that we are here with each other and taking care of each other," said Lt. Cmdr. Paul Schiermeier, safety officer, 1st MLG (FWD), who works with Bowes.

Even though it took a lot of time and effort to collect the gifts to distribute, Bowes said it was worth the effort.

"Seeing the expressions on their faces and how much it made them happy made it worth it," said Bowes.

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Delivering Morale



Lance Cpl. Mauricio Tejeda, a motor transport operator with Motor Transport Company B, Combat Logistics Battalion 3, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), helps sort mail in front of the battalion mail room on Camp Dwyer, Dec. 17. The battalion receives approximately 100 care packages every day.

**Story and Photo by
Cpl. Paul Zellner II
Combat Logistics Battalion 3**

CAMP DWYER, Afghanistan – During the holiday season, little reminders of home in the form of care packages boost morale and spread holiday cheer to troops serving in austere environments such as Afghanistan's Helmand province.

The Marines of Combat Logistics Battalion 3, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward) are feeling the love from home as the mail truck rolls in daily with care packages filled with decorations, baked goods, gifts and more.

"We started receiving care packages in October," said Cpl. Vanessa Vallejo, postal noncommissioned officer in charge, CLB-3. "We have been getting around 100 every day since."

Most care packages are sent from the family and friends of the Marines in Afghanistan as well as non-profit organizations that collect goods and donations to send to service members.

Some of the care packages are also

'I think I can speak on behalf of everyone who's received a care package in our battalion when I say thank you. The holiday season wouldn't be the same without the support from our family and friends.'

-Cpl. Vanessa Vallejo

postal noncommissioned officer, CLB-3

sent from former Marines who served in countries around the world and know first-hand just how much a care package from home means to the Marines in harm's way.

"Even back then, a care package was a huge morale booster," wrote former Marine Donald Downer, who served in China and Korea, in a letter he stuffed inside one of many care packages he sent to the Marines of CLB-3. "We then knew that the folks back home were 100 percent behind our mission."

The Marines of CLB-3 show their thanks in letters and video shout-outs

that are sent back to those who sent their thanks in the form of a care package.

"I think I can speak on behalf of everyone who's received a care package in our battalion when I say thank you," said Vallejo. "The holiday season wouldn't be the same without the support from our families and friends."

During the holiday season the Marines of CLB-3 know that they have two things they can rely on to keep their spirits up, the family of Marines and sailors around them and the love from home.

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8th ESB improves road in Sangin

Story and Photo by
Lance Cpl. Kenneth Jasik
1st MLG (FWD)

SANGIN, Afghanistan – Marines with 8th Engineer Support Battalion, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), conducted route improvement operations in the Sangin District of Afghanistan, Dec. 5.

“We are improving Route 611 in order to provide a safer route for resupply missions and improve the infrastructure of Afghanistan,” said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Marvin E. Klakken, platoon commander, Heavy Equipment Platoon, Service Company, 8th ESB, 1st MLG (FWD). “We are taking a dirt road that’s 12 feet wide and improving it to 24 to 32 feet wide.”

The 8th ESB Marines added shoulders and drainage to stabilize the road, laid down gravel that was extracted from the Helmand riverbed and compacted and smoothed out



Lance Cpl. Josh Davis, heavy equipment operator, Heavy Equipment Platoon, Support Company, 8th Engineer Support Battalion, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), fills a dump truck while conducting road-improvement operations in Sangin, Afghanistan, Dec. 9.

the road with a grader.

The improvements will give the Marines of 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division (Forward), a safer route to patrol since the compacted gravel will make it more difficult for the enemy to lay improvised explosive devices.

“It gives 3/5 a better route

to travel in order to get to (patrol bases),” said Klakken, 36, from Gravity, Iowa.

Marines with Heavy Equipment Platoon worked an average of 15-hour days, using the cover of darkness to complete their mission. This is one of the first route improvement missions the 8th

ESB Marines have conducted since arriving to Afghanistan last month.

“We have a lot of new Marines and they’ve adapted well,” said Klakken. “I’m proud of the Marines and what they’ve done.”

The Marines with the unit are glad to have made a positive impact on both Afghan locals and coalition forces that will travel along the road. Not only does the improved road provide a safer and more efficient route for coalition forces to transport personnel and equipment, but it also allows Afghan villagers to travel more safely to and from the local markets.

“It’s an honor and a privilege to help build this road for Afghans and help out the Marines of 3/5,” said Lance Cpl. Tom J. Bernhofer, a motor transportation operator with Heavy Equipment Platoon, Service Co., 8th ESB, 1st MLG (FWD).

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Utilities Marines bring health, comfort to 3/5 in Sangin

Story by
Lance Cpl. Kenneth Jasik
1st MLG (FWD)

FORWARD OPERATING BASE NOLAY, Afghanistan – Fighting in Afghanistan can soak Marines in sweat and dirt, so hot showers and clean laundry can do wonders for morale, especially for Marines operating out of remote forward operating bases in Helmand province.

Luckily for the service members at FOB Nolay in Sangin, Afghanistan, water purification technicians with Utilities Platoon, Service Company, 8th Engineer Support Battalion, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), provide clean water for laundry service and showers to Marines with 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division.

“We purify water with the Target Water Purification System, and we distribute it to shower and laundry services,” said Cpl. Andrew C. Grencer, a water purification technician with Utilities Platoon, Service Co., 8th ESB, 1st MLG (FWD).

The water purification technicians spend a lot of time setting up their systems and ensuring every detail is perfect because they understand how important clean, hot water is for the Marines.

“Setting up our TWPS takes a lot of work, and after that we need to make sure everything is running fine,” said Lance Cpl. Nick D. Stewart, a water purification technician with the platoon. “We are constantly checking the water for cleanliness.”

In addition to purified water for showers, the utilities Marines provide laundry service, a rare luxury the infantry

Marines at the small FOB appreciate. The 3/5 Marines simply drop off their bags of dirty laundry, and the 8th ESB Marines do the rest.

“They love having us here,” said Grencer, 29, from Endicott, N.Y. “They love that they don’t have to take cold showers and that we wash their clothes. Any time we go to a FOB without running water, they love it when we get it running and they get to take their showers.”

The 8th ESB Marines began conducting operations in Sangin just a few weeks ago, taking over from their predecessors with 9th Engineer Support Battalion, who purified nearly 4 million gallons of water and cleaned 72,000 pounds of laundry for Marines and sailors during their 7-month deployment.

The water purification technicians enjoy bringing health and comfort to the Marines at FOB Nolay.

“When people are glad that they got a shower, I get a good feeling,” said Stewart, 21, from Silverdale, Wash. “I know I helped raise their morale.”

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Cpl. Michael Ball, 27, from Naples, Fla., military policeman, S-3, Combat Logistics Battalion 11, Combat Logistics Regiment 17, 1st Marine Logistics Group, searches a non-combatant role player for anything suspicious before allowing him to enter the evacuation site during a Non-combatant Evacuation Operation training exercise at Camp Pendleton, Calif. Dec. 7.

Marines conduct evac training

**Story and Photo by
Lance Cpl. Khoa Pelczar
1st MLG**

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. – Marines with Combat Logistics Battalion 11, Combat Logistics Regiment 17, 1st Marine Logistics Group, conducted a Non-combatant Evacuation Operation training exercise at White Beach, Dec. 7, to prepare for their upcoming deployment with the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit.

A NEO mission is an evacuating drill conducted by Marines with the intent of evacuating all non-combatative personnel from danger zones, explained 2nd Lt. Ryan Betters, officer in charge, LS Detachment, CLB-11, CLR-17, 1st MLG. With the support of 3rd Tracks, 1st Marine Division, Marines with CLB-11 learned how to conduct a NEO mission.

"This is a great opportunity for us to be able to come out and train in a different environment," said Sgt. Christopher Gentz, landing support specialist, Landing Support Detachment, CLB-11, 1st MLG. "It gets the Marines ready for the deployment and gives them more knowledge about the job."

Gentz, 26, from Sparta, Mich., won't be deploying with the unit, but he's passing down everything he knows about NEO missions to his Marines.

"We have a great crew supporting us," said Cpl. Roosevelt Jones, heavy equipment

operator, Engineer Detachment, CLB-11, CLR-17, 1st MLG. "[The instructors] are very informative and clear on what they want us to do, which helps most of our junior Marines here to follow the instruction as this is the first time that some of them get to do something like this."

During the training, Marines were divided in three squads – operators, security element and role players, explained Betters, 31, from Batavia, N.Y. The squads rotated with each other to learn the different elements of the operation. The operators learned how to operate the NEO Tracking System while the security team secured the area for them. The role players' mission was to help the Marines familiarize themselves with any type of situation they might encounter.

"The purpose is to get the Marines ready for deployment and field test the new NTS," said Betters.

The NTS allows Marines to keep track of non-combatants they're evacuating as the system can pick up wireless transmission from satellite, said Betters.

"There are many challenges to overcome as it's not the same as doing it in the classroom," said Betters as he observed the Marines on the first day of training. "I have no doubt that they will pull through as I've already seen improvements."

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Engineers build landing pad for 'eye in the sky'

**Story by
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FORWARD OPERATING BASE NO-LAY, Afghanistan – Marines from 8th Engineer Support Battalion, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), constructed a landing pad here in Sangin, Dec. 4, for an unmanned aerial blimp that will be used to keep video surveillance of the surrounding area.

The blimp has the ability to keep Marines in or around the forward operating base safe by providing a constant eye in the sky. The blimp's high-powered cameras provide a means for early detection of any possible dangers in the area.

The process of constructing the landing pad required the use of a lot of heavy machinery to level out the ground.

"Before we started the area was covered in about a foot of moon dust [dirt]," said Sgt. Joseph M. Shurin, the site foreman with Heavy Equipment Platoon, Service Company, 8th ESB, 1st MLG (FWD). "First, we cut off the moon dust, then began leveling."

The Marines worked day and night on the project and finished in less than four days. This is one of the platoon's first projects since their arrival to Afghanistan in November.

"Doing this in Afghanistan gives these Marines a chance to do some things they would otherwise never get to do," said Shurin, 33, from Westchester, Ohio. "They don't get to do this type of work in the States. They've done a good job and learned a lot."

The Marines' efforts will help provide extra security for coalition forces in the area.

"The blimp keeps a protective eye over us, and it provides a good amount of security," said Lance Cpl. Steven E. Sanders, a heavy equipment operator. "Hopefully, it will [help us] spot suspicious activity and prevent anything bad from happening."

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CLB-3 improves transportation, security in Marjah

Story and Photos by
Cpl. Daniel Woodall
Combat Logistics Battalion 3

MARJAH, Afghanistan – Combat engineers with Combat Logistics Battalion 3, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), completed several projects in direct support of Marine units in Afghanistan's Helmand province, Dec. 3-8.

The Marines spent the first three days constructing a bridge and observation post for two units currently operating in Marjah, Afghanistan – 2nd Battalion, 6th Marines and 2nd Battalion, 9th Marines, both with 1st Marine Division (Forward).

According to Staff Sgt. Madalin L. Petre, platoon sergeant, 2nd Platoon, Engineer Company, CLB-3, 1st MLG (FWD), constructing the bridge primarily serves to accomplish a military objective. The bridge's location provides a tactical advantage for military units operating in the former Taliban stronghold of Marjah.

The bridge and observation post are located near a road dubbed "IED alley" due to the amount of improvised explosive devices that coalition and Afghan forces have discovered along the route.

The engineers hope the bridge will facilitate transportation for military personnel and vehicles using a nearby intersection, while the observation post will provide 2/6 and 2/9 with much-needed surveillance of the area.

"[Prior to the bridge's construction], the only available crossings were more than a mile from each side of the area," said Petre, a native of Lakewood, Ohio. "The observation post was constructed to control the IED threat – it will help [2/6 and 2/9] keep eyes on the route."

From a civilian standpoint, both projects in Marjah also benefit the Afghan community. According to 1st Lt. Elizabeth Stroud, 25, engineer platoon commander, Engineer Company, CLB-3, 1st MLG (FWD), enhancing the area's security will limit violence and boost the local economy.

"The surrounding compounds [near the bridge] were the site of a flourishing bazaar that once was," said Stroud, a native of Hutto, Texas. "There's still some fear in Marjah and the local [Marjah citizens] I spoke to said they were thrilled to be able to access the area. The freedom of movement that both the



Equipment operated by Marines with Engineer Company, Combat Logistics Battalion 3, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward) finalizes construction on a bridge in Marjah, Afghanistan, Dec. 4. Combat engineers with CLB-3 constructed a bridge and guard post in support of Marine units operating in the area.

bridge and observation post provide will have a huge impact."

"This bridge benefits us all," said Sharif, a 24-year-old resident of Marjah, through an interpreter. "This bridge allows us to cross [over the water] in a busy area and it connects two neighborhoods. We'll use it for vehicles, animals, people – we appreciate it. It may not be that big, but it's effective."

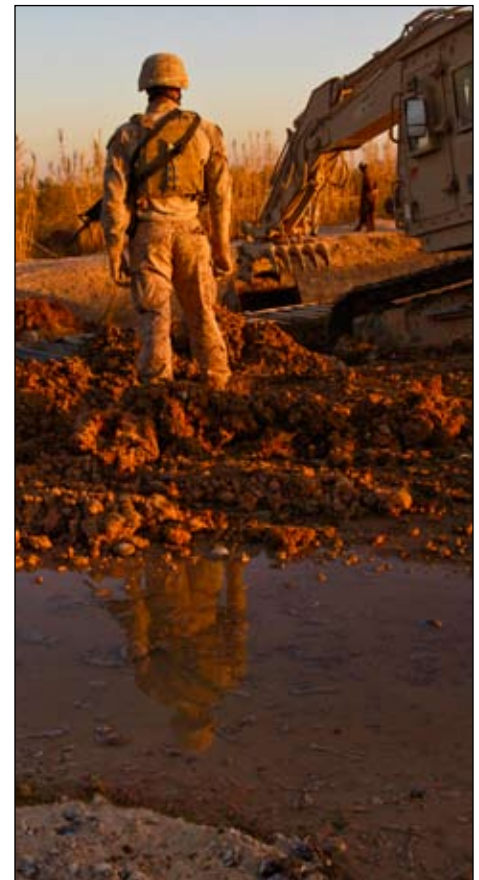
After the bridge and observation post were complete, the combat engineers transitioned to Patrol Base Poole – south of Marjah – to support the Marines and sailors of 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marines.

While at PB Poole, the combat engineers modified a large portion of unoccupied terrain to increase living spaces and fortified a bridge they had constructed in October.

Though one mission comes to a close, the Marines of CLB-3's Engineer Company will continue to support elements of Regimental Combat Team 1.

"Our whole philosophy behind [supporting fellow units] is if we have the time, materials and ability to support them without hindering our main mission, we'll do it." Stroud added. "It's something we should take pride in because we're all in this together and we certainly want to do what we can in the short time we're here."

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Sgt. David C. Gentry, 25, combat engineer, Engineer Company, Combat Logistics Battalion 3, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward) monitors the progress of a bridge-construction project in Marjah, Afghanistan, Dec. 3.

Nickle bids farewell to CLR-15



Col. Stephen D. Sklenka (left), from Marietta, Ga., incoming commanding officer, Combat Logistics Regiment 15, 1st Marine Logistics Group, accepts the regimental colors from the outgoing regimental commanding officer, Col. Bruce E. Nickle, from Vienna, Va., during a change of command ceremony at Camp Pendleton, Calif., Dec. 10.



(Above) Col. Bruce E. Nickle, from Vienna, Va., commanding officer for Combat Logistics Regiment 17, 1st Marine Logistics Group, bids farewell to the Marines and sailors of Combat Logistics Regiment 15, 1st MLG, during a change of command ceremony at Camp Pendleton, Calif., Dec. 15. (Right) Col. Bruce E. Nickle hugs his daughter, Daisy, after the change of command ceremony. [Click here to view video of the ceremony.](#)



Story and Photos by
Lance Cpl. Khoa Pelczar
1st MLG

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. – Marines with Combat Logistics Regiment 15, 1st Marine Logistics Group, conducted a change of command ceremony here, Dec. 10.

Col. Bruce E. Nickle, from Vienna, Va., passed the CLR-15 colors to Col. Stephen D. Sklenka, from Marietta, Ga., signifying the transfer of command from Nickle to Sklenka.

“It’s been an honor to serve with the Marines and sailors of CLR-15,” said Nickle, who is also the commanding officer for Combat Logistics Regiment 17, 1st MLG. “Being the commander for two different regiments, I have these Marines and sailors to thank you for making my job a little bit easier.”

With half of CLR-15 deployed to Afghanistan, they were short on staff, said Nickle. Marines in the regiment stepped up to fill the higher billets. They took the initiative to take care of the regiment and to train their Marines and sailors for deployments.

“Marines and sailors, I was fortunate to see you guys in action while deployed to Afghanistan with Combat Logistics Regiment 15 (Forward),” said Sklenka, commanding officer for CLR-15, 1st MLG. “I’m really looking forward to be working with you.”

Sklenka plans to uphold the legacy of CLR-15, he said. He’ll make sure that everyone gets the training to prepare for any future deployment.

“For the Marines and sailors of CLR-15, you will get my absolute best. I promise you that,” said Sklenka. “I have no doubt that you will do the same. Semper Fidelis.”

Releasing from duty as commanding officer for CLR-15, Nickle will have more time to focus on his family and the Marines and sailors of CLR-17.

“It was a wonderful opportunity, but it’ll be good to command one regiment again,” said Nickle. “The main reason for that is I’ll have more time to mentor the Marines who work with me. That’s an important part of being a regimental commander.”

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Beast wins 'Best of the West'

Story and Photos by
Lance Cpl. Khoa Pelczar
1st MLG

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. – The 1st Marine Logistics Group football team, the Beast, ended their season as the 2010 Best of the West champions at the 14 Area football field, Dec. 11, after defeating Twenty-nine Palms' football league champions, Marine Wing Support Squadron 374 'the Rhinos.'

Established last year, the Beast was considered an underdog, said Marvin Hill, head coach of the Beast. They started the season ranked second to last in the league, but they showed up every game and proved how determined they were to be the best.

The game did not start the way the Beast expected it to. Their passes were inaccurate, their runs ended short, their blockers were not where they should have been on most of the plays, and their defense had a difficult time marking their opponents. As a result, they remained scoreless in the first half.

Hill wasn't happy at the end of the first half knowing that the Beast could have done much better. He attempted to motivate the team.

"This is our last game of the season; we need to come together and play like a team," he said. "At the end of the night, people will remember the Beast



Jarvis Foster, number 3, kick returner for the 1st Marine Logistics Group football team, the Beast, breaks a tackle during the 2010 Best of the West Championship game against the Marine Wing Support Squadron 374 football team, the Rhinos, at Camp Pendleton, Calif., Dec. 11.



Players of the 1st Marine Logistics Group football team, the Beast, celebrate with their trophy after winning the 2010 Best of the West Championship game against the Marine Wing Support Squadron 374 football team, the Rhinos, at Camp Pendleton, Calif., Dec. 11.

and not each individual on the team. We are one Beast. We've been here before, and we've always come through. So dig deep and let's go out there and take back our house."

The message seemed to have gotten through to each player as they came out for the second half with a changed attitude. They were more confident and determined. Like a pack of hungry beasts, they knew what they wanted and they would stop at nothing until they got it.

Half way through third the quarter, Jarvis Foster, number 3, wide receiver for the Beast, put six points on the score board after successfully catching a 23-yard-pass for a touchdown. Christian Proud, number 34, kicker for the Beast, kicked the extra point. The Beast took a 7-0 lead.

Four minutes later, the Rhinos answered with their own touchdown. But the Beast were able to stop the extra point attempt, allowing them to stay ahead 7-6.

Three minutes later, Eric Rogers, number 24, running back for the Beast, proved why he was chosen to be Camp Pendleton's 'Most Valuable Player of the League' by breaking many tackles and rushing into the Rhinos' end zone for another touchdown. Proud once again scored the extra point, bringing the score to 14-6.

With a little more than six minutes left in the game, the Rhinos capitalized on



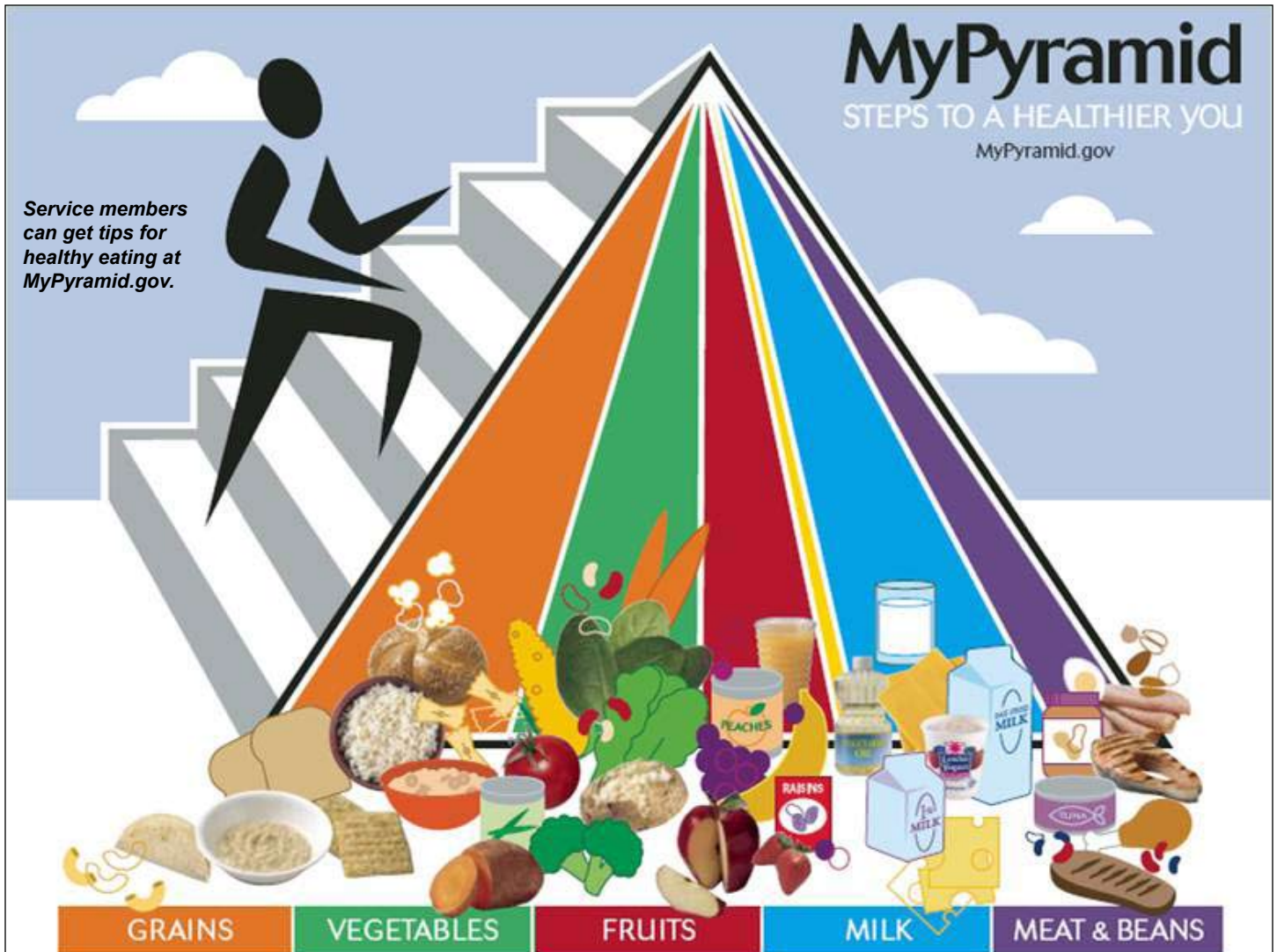
Seth Phillips tackles the Rhinos' ball carrier.

an opportunity when they had an open man deep down field. The Rhinos scored another touchdown, but failed on their 2-point conversion attempt, leaving the score 14-12.

With seconds left on the clock, the Rhinos had possession of the ball. They decided to attempt a field goal to steal the win. However, the Beast's defense blocked the field goal, ending the game and becoming the 2010 Best of the West champions.

"What a great way to end the season," said Hill. "I'm on cloud nine right now. This win means a lot not only to the team but this base as well since this is the first time in three years that Camp Pendleton has won the 'Best of the West championship'. I'm so proud of the players, they played like champions. That's why they're the Best of the West."

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Service members can get tips for healthy eating at MyPyramid.gov.

Healthy Holiday Habits

Story by
Cmdr. Vicki Jernigan
Contributing Writer

CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan

– Yes, even on deployment, the holiday celebrations are upon us! With all of the mission requirements of our everyday lives in Afghanistan we often forget to take a few minutes to say, “I need to take better care of myself so I can take care of others.”

Whether we are talking about healthy living for the operational setting or giving support by telephone, letters and/or emails to our family or significant others back in the states, our world-wide mindset should be to utilize even the simplest tools we have available to make this time away from family and friends a little easier.

Basic nutrition seems so easy

to some and so difficult for others. Whether you’re eating Meals Ready to Eat, tray rations or a meal at the Dining Facility, paying attention to your water, dietary fat, carbohydrates, protein, vitamins, minerals, and fruits and vegetables will help you stay physically healthy and more alert.

If you are one who prefers the meat and bean groups, you can use the food guide pyramid and substitute those instead of the meat, poultry and fish group. Learning how to read labels and learning how many calories you need a day with appropriate portion size, will set you on a “good start for 2011.”

Another excellent resource available is www.mypyramid.gov. This tool allows you to set up your individualized plan, analyze your food intake and ask questions if needed. Using your gender and age, the chart also will calculate

what your 24-hour intake of calories should be according to the American Dietary Program. For example, an active female between the ages of 19 and 30 should be taking in 2,400 calories per day, and for an active male between the same age, 3,000 would be the appropriate caloric intake.

We all encounter stress every day. What we choose to do with that stress, or how we choose to deal with it, is up to us as individuals. Take 15-20 minutes twice a day and think about what makes “YOU” happy, or about the things you want to do and accomplish when you get back home. Helen Keller was quoted as once stating, “Although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of the overcoming of it.”

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Photos from around 1st MLG



Photo by Sgt. Brandon Owen

Cpl. Eric Dominguez, radio operator, bridge platoon, 8th Engineer Support Battalion, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), walks along the flooded banks of the Helmand River during a bridge retrieval mission in the Sangin District, Helmand province, Afghanistan, Dec. 7. The 8th ESB Marines conduct engineering operations for coalition forces and local nationals in support of the International Security Assistance Force.



Photo by Lance Cpl. Kenneth Jasik

Lance Cpl. Josh Davis, a heavy equipment operator with Heavy Equipment Platoon, Support Company, 8th Engineer Support Battalion, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), fills a dump 7-ton while helping to build a landing pad, on Forward Operating Base Nolay, Oct. 20. The landing pad will be used for a blimp that has a camera attached to it and will keep a protective watch over Marines in the area.



Photo by Lance Cpl. Khoa Pelczar

Pfc. Jessica Martinez, 20, from Los Angeles, military policeman, S-3, Combat Logistics Battalion 11, Combat Logistics Regiment 17, 1st Marine Logistics Group, posts security as her fire team dismantled from an Amphibious Assault Vehicle during a Non-combatant Evacuation Operation training exercise at Camp Pendleton, Calif., Dec. 7. Marines with CLB-11 are preparing themselves for their upcoming deployment with the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit.



Photo by Lance Cpl. Kenneth Jasik

Lance Cpl. Andrew C. Grencer, a water purification technician with Utilities Platoon, Service Company, 8th Engineer Support Battalion, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), turns on a water pump at Forward Operating Base Nolay in Helmand province, Afghanistan, Dec. 5. Water purification technicians with 8th ESB provide laundry and shower services for Marines with 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division (Forward), who operate from the FOB.