

Happy New Year



Marines participate in the New Year 5K run aboard Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, at the stroke of midnight, Jan. 1. More than 750 service members and civilians showed up to run the race and celebrate the new year.

Runners welcome 2011

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

CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan – More than 750 service members and civilian contractors took part in the New Year’s 5k race at Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, Jan. 1.

Participants gathered to start the race and celebrate the New Year with friends and fellow service members. The run started at the stroke of midnight.

“I had a great time. It was worth missing a couple of hours of sleep,” said Staff Sgt. Shawn Gray, personnel chief, S-1, Headquarters and Service Company, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), who ran with Marines in his unit.

The below-freezing temperatures didn’t stop the runners from having a good time. A few even showed up at the race wearing costumes – one runner wore a “Grinch” costume, while another dressed up as a banana.

“Even though it’s below freezing out here, it was a lot of fun seeing everyone dressed in their costumes; it was great,” said Gray, 38, from Cottonwood, Ariz.

Back in the United States, many folks celebrate by watching the ball drop in New York’s Times Square, but the midnight run was an unusual way to bring in the New Year while deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

See NEW YEAR, Page 2

Ammunition Marines supply warfighters

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

CAMP BASTION, Afghanistan – When troops outside the wire need a resupply of ammunition, they count on the Marines who work at the Field Ammunition Supply Point to provide them with the rounds they need.

Ready for the request at any time, the Marines at the FASP are at work day and night, ready to send out supplies to whomever may need them.

“You can go a while without food, a few days without water, but not a minute without ammo,” said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Brian J. Walker, officer in charge, Ammunition Detachment, Supply Company, Combat Logistics Regiment 15 (Forward), 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward).

The Marines at the FASP have a vital mission because ammunition is crucial for survival when Marines are engaged in firefights with the Taliban. Ammunition is required by all Marines, even more so when Marines go on missions ‘outside the wire.’ Whether Marines are providing security or in the heat of battle, each

See AMMO, Page 2



Lance Cpl. Jasmine Vazquez picks up a crate of ammunition, Dec. 21.

NEW YEAR

Continued from Page 1

"It was a great way to start the New Year," said Navy Cmdr. Kenneth Wells, physician, Concussion Restoration Care Center, Combat Logistics Regiment 15 (Forward), 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward).

Wells added that the run was a good way to get some exercise and celebrate the upcoming year, Afghanistan-style.

"We came out and did the race together and finished in good style to bring in 2011," said Wells, 48, from Woburn, Mass.

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More than 750 service members and civilians participated in the New Years 5K run, which began at the stroke of midnight, Jan. 1. For more pictures, see page 5.

Ammo: Keeping Marines in the fight

Continued from Page 1

round of ammunition is so important.

The FASP Marines are ready to support their fellow service members whenever they receive a call.

"We make sure every unit or (Forward Operating Base) is equipped with ammunition to sustain their needs," said Lance Cpl. Cory D. Pearce, inventory accuracy control technician, Supply Co., CLR-15 (FWD), 1st MLG (FWD).

The FASP provides ammunition to the majority of the International Security Assistance Force within southwestern Afghanistan.

"We support just about every unit," said Walker, 30, from Jersey City, N.J. "We actually have Georgian ammo here, and we distribute it to them."

The FASP stocks and distributes ammunition for every ground weapon system in the Marine Corps inventory. From M-16s and M-9s to precision guided munitions, tank, and artillery rounds. The FASP can get Marines the ammunition they need, when the need it.

"We have anything to do with the mission from 5.56 and 7.62 rounds to (High Mobility Artillery Rocket System missiles)," said Walker. "We even distribute explosives."

Once a unit sends a request for resupply of ammunition, the FASP works around the clock to send out the supplies to their allies in the fight.

"I may be a little biased, but I think they are some of the hardest working Marines in Afghanistan," said Walker of his Marines.

They may not be on the frontlines, but the Marines at the FASP are essential to combat operations. They take pride in their hard work and enjoy knowing they help provide security for their fellow service members, one round at a time.

"Being in a combat zone, ammunition is a vital commodity," said Pearce, 20, from Tallahassee, Fla. "I know I'm doing my part, which is a huge part. We supply the ones who fight the war."

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Lance Cpl. Tod D. Duncan, ammunition technician, Supply Company, Combat Logistics Regiment 15 (Forward), 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), carries a crate of ammunition at the Field Ammunition Supply Point at Camp Bastion, Afghanistan, Dec. 21.



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Marines continue to mentor Afghan soldiers

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

CAMP GARM-SHER, Afghanistan – Personnel with Combat Logistics Battalion 3's Embedded Partnering Team recently implemented plans to increase the Afghan National Army's ability to conduct independent operations.

In October 2010, the Marines and sailors of CLB-3's EPT began training, mentoring and partnering with soldiers of the ANA's 5th Kandak, 1st Brigade, 215th Corps at Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan. In early December, CLB-3's EPT also began mentoring 1st Brigade ANA soldiers located at Camp Garm-sher in an effort to enhance 5/1/215's operability and further their progression as a unit capable of operating independent from coalition assistance. Garm-sher, which is attached to Camp Dwyer, is a military installation used as a base of operations for the ANA's 1st Brigade logistics headquarters in Afghanistan's Helmand province.

According to 1st Sgt. William J. Banks, senior enlisted mentor, EPT, CLB-3, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), the purpose for dividing their partnering team is to implement a rotating training schedule that allows them to provide direct support to ANA units operating throughout Helmand province. Currently, CLB-3's EPT is responsible for mentoring more than 350 ANA soldiers.

"True to form, we're here to advise, mentor and focus on providing



An Afghan National Army soldier puts the final touches on the foundation of a building, which will be used for a combat operations center aboard Camp Garm-sher, Afghanistan, Dec. 10.

[5/1/215] with tactical logistics support," said Banks, a native of New York City. "We give them the tools to be successful. The by-product of our efforts is in the ANA's ability to accomplish [logistics patrols] by themselves."

Though CLB-3's EPT are taking a more "hands off" approach to advising their counterparts, the soldiers

with 5/1/215 are not yet conducting all of their operations independently. Any combat logistics patrols through areas deemed hostile still require the Marines' direct support.

"Though it's for security purposes, accompanying the ANA is mutually beneficial," Banks continued. "Though they may already be capable [of independent operations], we provide a sense of comfort in those areas. One of the challenges of mentoring the ANA is to convey our points in such a manner that they learn without realizing it. A lot is done through building relationships, establishing rapport and influencing their actions without insulting anyone. We have to recognize the cultural differences to make a difference."

Combat Logistics Battalion 3's EPT, and several other coalition embedded teams operating throughout Afghanistan, will continue to mentor ANA units to prepare them to operate independently.



Afghan National Army soldiers attend a medical class taught by sailors with Combat Logistics Battalion 3's Embedded Partnering Team at Camp Garm-sher, Afghanistan, Jan. 1.

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Sgt. Alan L. Lewis, Marine Corps Community Services specialist, Headquarters and Service Company, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), cashes out Marines from Bravo Battery, 1st Battalion, 10th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division (Forward), atop Observation Post Athens near the Kajaki Dam, Dec. 26. Marines with 1st MLG (FWD) arrived in Kajaki on Christmas day to provide goods such as snacks and other comfort items to the Marines in the area.

Bringing a bit of home to Marines in Kajaki

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

KAJAKI DAM, Afghanistan – Being located in one of the most remote forward operating bases in Helmand province, Afghanistan, the Marines operating in Kajaki have an even greater appreciation for small luxuries, like the ability to purchase snacks and other comfort items from the local convenience store or post exchange. But you won't find any convenience stores around here.

That's why two Marines with 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), made a special trip to the Kajaki Dam to bring the Marines a bit of home on Christmas, Dec. 25.

Sgt. Alan L. Lewis, a Marine Corps Community Services specialist, Headquarters and Service Company, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), and Cpl. Alex P. Jones, Disbursing clerk, H&S Co., 1st MLG (FWD), brought a few small comforts of home in the form of a "mobile PX," a makeshift post exchange stocked with snacks, drinks, magazines and other items they wouldn't normally find on the small FOB.

The Marines are happy knowing they helped boost their fellow Marines' morale on Christmas.

"We brought to the Marines in Kajaki just a little bit of home," said Lewis, 24, from Pittsburgh. "Basically, things you



Cpl. Alex Jones disburses casual pay to Marines in Afghanistan, Dec. 25.

would find in the (Army and Air Force Exchange Service) on Camp Leatherneck."

The Marines with 1st Battalion, 10th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division (Forward), who are used to operating in Kajaki's austere conditions, enjoyed the arrival of the mobile exchange on Christmas day.

"It's better than nothing," said Cpl. Sean R. Kennedy, a radio operator with Bravo Battery, 1st Battalion, 10th Marines, 1st MarDiv (FWD). "If you put in your request you get what you want; anything that they bring is better than if they didn't bring anything."

The trip was a success for many reasons, said Lewis.

"Sales for the trip here went very well," said Lewis, "but more importantly we were able to service over 218 Marines in under 24 hours."



Marines wait in line to purchase items from the 'mobile PX' from their remote forward operating base near the Kajaki Dam, Helmand province, Afghanistan, Dec. 25.

For the two 1st MLG (FWD) Marines, the most important part of the mission was bringing the comforts of home to Marines who otherwise wouldn't have had access to the small luxuries their mobile PX provided.

"I feel great about being able to do this," said Lewis. "It's nice to bring a little bit of home to anyone, no matter where they are. Everyone's always appreciative that we're here."

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RACING INTO THE NEW YEAR



Photos by Cpl. Shannon McMillan

Service members aboard Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, cross the starting line to begin their 5 kilometer fun run at the stroke of midnight to bring in the New Year, Jan. 1.



(Above) A Marine leads the pack during the New Years 5K run, Jan. 1. (Bottom left) Marines aboard Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, participate in the New Years 5K run, which began at the stroke of midnight. (Above middle) A few participants of the race even dressed up in costumes to run the 3.1 mile race, including the 'Grinch.' (Far left) A motivated Marine pushes through the pain during the run while wearing his flak jacket, which weighs at least 30 pounds!