



# **RECON REVIEW**

## **May 2011**

OEF 10-2 / 11-1



## **A WORD FROM THE COMMANDING OFFICER:**

**2d Recon Family and Friends,**

**As we get into the middle of May, the poppy harvest is now over in the Upper Sangin Valley (USV), and the temperatures are climbing in the 100's. It's now officially hot out! As for our operations, after nearly a month of no fighting in our area due to the poppy harvest, the insurgents have started their operations back up – the widely publicized Taliban Spring Offensive. As we continue with our operations in the USV Green Zone, we are dominating the enemy every time we encounter him. Over these past four months of continuous operations, it has been a tough fight at times, but the men continue to make significant progress in a region that has not seen such a presence in years.**



**Sgt Nicholas Barcelona, 2nd Platoon, Company B, conducts a dismounted patrol through a poppy field in the northern part of the USV.**



**Left: 1stLt Alex Usztics, 3rd Platoon Commander, Company A, speaks with local leaders through his interpreter Rauolph as Sgt Oaks (Civil Affairs) looks on in Herat Yan, Afghanistan.**

**I can tell you all now that I have consolidated both companies in one location. This has allowed us to focus our forces in a smaller area instead of being spread out up and down the valley. We have also been able to make significant improvements to the quality of life for the companies out operating. The patrol base now has large tents for living spaces and company operations centers. We have also been able to put in generators and air conditioners for the living/work spaces, and with the summer nearly upon us, it is much needed. In addition to giving us a better operational capability, it has made it easier for our upcoming Relief-In-Place (RIP).**

**Right: 2nd Platoon, Company B, on a foot patrol in the Upper Sangin Valley.**



**1stSgt Rusty Stowers,  
Company A 1stSgt, out  
with 1st Platoon in an  
observation post (OP) in  
a patrol base (PB) in  
Kang, Afghanistan**



**A large dust storm appears and overruns PB Alcatraz on 4 May 2011.**



**Left: 2nd Platoon, Company A, on a foot  
patrol engaging with Local Nationals (LNs)  
along Route 611 in Herat Yan in the USV.**



**Left: 3rd Platoon, Company A  
engaging with LNs in Herat Yan.**

**L-R: SSgt Tanner, SSgt Esa Rubio,  
HM3 Aaron Herman, HM3 Bryan  
Jones, GySgt Jerry Jordan**

**As I write this, 3d Reconnaissance Battalion has just gotten on deck, and we have initiated our turnover and RIP. That means our return home is not far away, but we still have much to do to ensure we set 3d Recon up for success while keeping the enemy at bay at the same time. For our own movements, the Advanced Party just left here and is making their way back to Camp Lejeune. They will likely get back before this newsletter goes out, but I wanted to say that it is great to be able to get so many of the men back to prepare for our return and to be back home for upcoming life-changing events – several babies are due in May and June and quite a few of the men are first-time fathers.**

**Right: 3rd Platoon, Company  
B, on patrol in Garm Ab in the  
northern part of the Upper  
Sangin Valley.**



**Right: 3rd Platoon, Company A, conducting a claymore shoot in the Eastern Desert of the USV.**



**As I said in last month's newsletter, we have our plans in place for our return to CONUS. As it stands now, our return window is in the second week of June. A good planning factor is the middle of the month, and specific dates will be published by the FRO and FGE personnel back at Camp Lejeune once we get our actual flight dates. Remember to stay flexible since the actual dates and times are always subject to change depending on aircraft allocation and en route problems that may arise.**



**Left: Cpl Stevens, 1st Platoon, Company B, in an improved fighting position providing over-watch on the roof of a local national compound.**

We published a Welcome Home Manual that I hope many of you have gotten. There is a lot of helpful information in there on our return, including Frequently Asked Questions and Tips about the deployment homecoming. When we get back, we have mandatory 'half-day' work days for a week, but I am planning at least one long weekend – either a 72 or 96 (3 or 4 days). A reminder that before we go on leave, we will have a Remembrance Ceremony for our fallen Heroes on Tue 28 June at 0900 at the battalion headquarters (aka A-71) in Court House Bay. The leave period will follow that, covering from 29 June to 17 July.

Right: Sgt Matthew Gay (running the crane) and 1stLt John Mueller (on truck), H&S Company S-4, move an '805' generator to PB Alcatraz to provide air conditioning for the new Base-X tents.



Left: Cpl Roger Phanthachith, H&S Company S-6, prepares the radios for an H&S convoy before it departs to PB Alcatraz.



**2nd Platoon, Company B, on a mounted patrol along Route 611 in the USV.**

**It's been a long, arduous deployment, but we are nearing the end. It won't be over until I have everyone safely back at Camp Lejeune, but the light is at the end of the tunnel now. Your strength and courage throughout our deployment has been inspiring, and your Marines and Sailors have greatly benefited from it. I look forward to seeing many of you upon our return in three weeks! All my best to you...**

**Semper Fidelis,**

**LK Hussey**

**L.K. Sonny Hussey**

**LtCol, USMC**

**Commanding Officer**

***The greatest results in life are usually attained by simple means and the exercise of ordinary qualities. These may, for the most part, be summed in these two: common-sense and perseverance. – Owen Feltham***

**Tige O'Dea, Family Readiness Officer  
2d Reconnaissance Battalion  
(910)440-7811 [Office]  
(910)554-4813 [Mobile]  
[2dReconFRO@USMC.MIL](mailto:2dReconFRO@USMC.MIL)**

**Battalion Webpage:**

**<http://www.marines.mil/unit/2ndmardiv/2ndrecon/Pages/default.aspx>**

## Promotions for May 2011

### A CO

SSgt David Fontenot  
Cpl Timothy Brant

### B CO

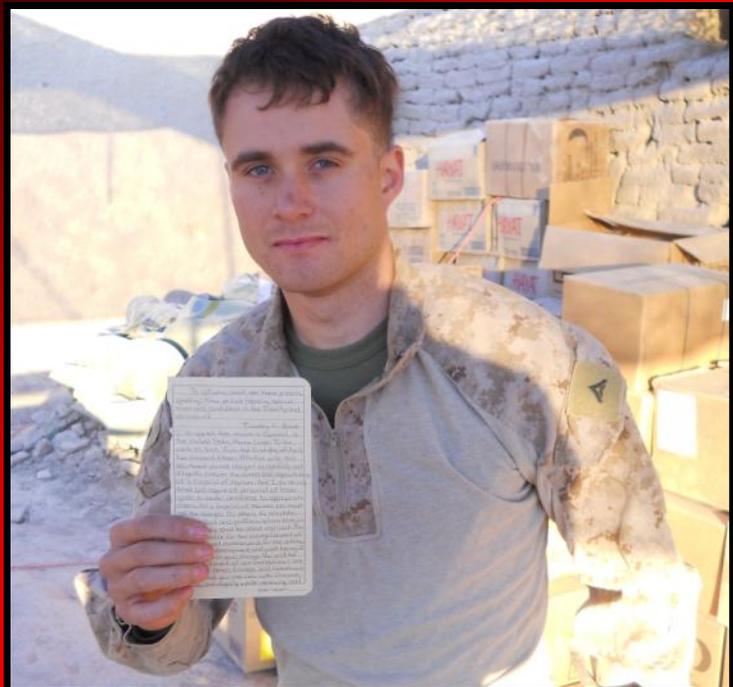
Sgt Dustin Johnson  
Sgt Jonathon Robinson  
Sgt John White

## Reenlistments for May 2011

### A CO

Sgt Michael A. Boyd

Due to the lack of printers in the field, Company A hand wrote Cpl Timothy Brant's field promotion warrant.



## The Chaplains Corner

### ARE YOU READY FOR THE RETURN AND REUNION?

The Return and the Reunion of your Marine or Sailor is just around the corner! If you are like me, I am in the super-excited mode of getting home to be with my wife and family. I have even built my list of things I want to do when I get home. Number one on my list is a great home cooked meal, and I would imagine my wife's is an outstanding meal cooked by someone else at some fancy restaurant out in town.

I, like all other military people, have acronyms I love, and one of mine is ACE which stands for anticipation, contemplation, and expectation. These are all words that we are all currently doing as we ready for the return and reunion of our loved ones. I am personally anticipating many things, and as I contemplate each situation, I begin to form my personal expectations of each given situation. I have some very deep desires that I want fulfilled, or maybe a better way of expressing it is the fact that I have some very high hopes of each situation, but all of this is contained within my brain housing group (my mind). Now I need to communicate it to my spouse or my significant other.

Communication is the key to any successful relationship, no matter the situation (money, food, travel, marital bliss, and \_\_\_\_\_ anything else). I would say that 99% of all married couples or committed relationships deeply desire for the other partner to be blessed. Take for instance my earlier statement on food. I have eaten 7 months of food that has been prepared void of any love, and I desire a meal prepared that is seasoned with my wife's love. I would imagine that my wife would prefer for our first day back together to be spent completely with one another and not tied to cleaning up after our first meal together. After 7 months of being apart, I would rather be with her than us wasting precious time cleaning up the house. So it is very easy for me to have dinner out in town and let them serve us as we take time to be together.

Regardless of the level of commitment you have to another person, take the time to truly talk with each other, actively listen to one another's needs and desires, and take the time to really understand each need. Relationships are truly about fulfilling one another needs, hopes, and desires, and it will only happen through good communication skills.

## The Chaplains Corner

Another thing to remember as you communicate is the fact that you have been apart for 7 months, and there are 7 months of significant events to catch up on. You probably already know this, but dams on rivers were originally designed to protect the land from being flooded in the spring time. Same goes with information. You can have a season apart, but do not flood one another with too much information. If you slowly open the flood gates, the land can absorb the water that has been released. Same goes with information. Take the time to relate the stories so the mind can process the information. Unfortunately, even with all of the great technology that we have I am sure that on both sides of the relationship, one or both of you have had to make decisions without the other knowing about it.

I would challenge you all to truly examine the depth of your relationships and see how deep you can truly go. I mentioned to you all at the pre-deployment brief to keep track of all of the great things your partner contributes to the relationship, especially the ones that have gone unnoticed for years and make sure to point them out. Focus your relationship on the positive things. We all have our short-comings. We all need to improve. But be an optimist and focus on the good, complement on the good, and I guarantee you that your relationship will be strong.

As we return, I am here for you and your spouse or partner. I will make myself available for you. As your Chaplain, I am committed to seeing you through whatever troubled waters enter your life or what joyous things we can celebrate together. May the Peace of God surpass your understanding!

Blessings,  
Chaps Jake



You may want to call your Chaplain if your husband is mowing the lawn in PPE and with a mine roller attached to the mower.