



6th Civil Affairs Group Newsletter

Volume I, Issue VIII

March/April 2006



FROM THE COMMANDING OFFICER

Dear families and friends of 6th CAG,

This is our last newsletter. Very soon we will return home.

Our experiences over the past year have been extraordinary. They span a spectrum from patrolling war-torn streets to facilitating meetings between al-Anbar Governor and the Prime Minister of Iraq. Together, we provided all civil affairs support for the 2D Marine Division's counterinsurgency, civil-military, and humanitarian assistance operations to include Operations SAYAID II, STEEL CURTAIN, FREEDOM EXPRESS and PATRIOT SHIELD II. Whether planning relief, supporting combat operations, facilitating critical infrastructure repair, or mentoring provincial Directors General, our hard work made a difference.

Al-Anbar is the province with the most and the least of everything. It is the biggest and poorest. It has the highest unemployment and most violence. Before Operation STEEL CURTAIN, an unclassified report from a non-governmental organization described "huge signs posted on the roads" from Rawa to al-Qaim proclaiming "The Islamic Republic of Al Qaim." It told of the terrorists' brutal murder-and-intimidation campaign to control local Iraqis. Now, four of our teams and a Civil-Military Operations Center

live there, helping their local leaders stand up. Our time here has been one of great change as we break the legacy of a ruthless dictator, defeat the insurgency, and get the Iraqis on the road to self determination and democratic government.

As we reflect on our accomplishments, we see tremendous progress. Frankly, I believed we would have a positive impact, but that it would not be evident for years. We oversaw Iraqi provincial, district, and municipal governance capacity building, civil administration, and economic development and reconstruction activities across the province – and the affects of our efforts are measurable now.

- Established 11 new city councils and worked with the provincial and 15 municipal governments to restore critical infrastructure and facilitate self-governance.
- Established the Hadithah, al-Qaim and ar-Ramadi Civil-Military Operations Centers and four new Civil Affairs teams to support Iraqi leader engagement, civil administration, reconstruction, and building government institutions.
- Supported the Constitutional Referendum



Col. Brier with 2nd Marine Division's Personal Security Detachment before a convoy into Ramadi.

and first National Parliamentary Election for a permanent government which saw Sunni voter turnouts that shocked the world.

- Assisted in planning, establishing, and running of two displaced person camps for over 5,000 people during Operation STEEL CURTAIN.
- Developed the provincial Directors General, improving their performance and productivity.
- Developed government processes to alleviate project bottlenecks, address reconstruction contractor issues, and enhance the Provincial Reconstruction and Development Committee (PRDC) effectiveness.
- Built, with the Governor, a 103-project reconstruction budget request of \$610.6 mil-

Maj. Tom Shoemake, team leader for CAT 6-3-1, greets a young girl he occasionally sees in the city of Hit. Maj. Shoemake is affectionately referred to as the "Mayor of Hit" because of his teams' extensive work with the citizens to improve the city and their influence in re-establishing the city council.
Photo by: Sgt. Richard D. Stephens



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Headquarters Detachment



Family and Friends of Headquarters,

The time has finally arrived. Unfortunately this is our last newsletter. But fortunately, our deployment is rapidly coming to an end, and we will soon be home.

We sincerely appreciate all the care packages, love and support during our time here. It was a challenging deployment, but you definitely helped to put our minds and spirits at ease by taking care of business at home and through your constant support.

Your Marines and Sailors are very busy wrapping things up here in preparation for redeployment back home. Our replacements, the 3rd Civil Affairs Group, are already on deck and we are in the

process of giving them a thorough turn-over of our duties before the transfer of authority from 6th CAG to 3rd CAG can take place. So far so good. We are also busy completing various administrative and medical requirements, before re-deploying back to the states.

Lastly, we can not forget our key volunteers who really made a great contribution to the information flow and the overall morale of our 6th CAG family. We all appreciate your service and dedication, and we could not have made it through this without you! Our success is your success. You can be proud to know that you belong to a 6th Civil Affairs Group family that will go down in history.

Semper Fidelis, many thanks, and see you soon!

From the Sergeant Major

Greetings from Camp Fallujah, Iraq.

I would like to send my congratulations to Staff Sgt. and Mrs. Kimmel; they recently had a new addition to the family — a baby boy named Benjamin Stuart Kimmel. The pay raise from his promotion will come in handy.

This month, I visited some more of our hard chargers out west and they are all doing very well and are very focused on the mission. Even though the end is near, our Marines haven't slowed down for a minute. I am extremely pleased with their accomplishments. I stand in awe of their spirit, motivation, and drive that is in keeping with the finest traditions of Marine Corps excellence. Their efforts continue to be recognized by the units they are supporting as well as by our command. These are truly remarkable Marines.

We are all looking forward to the transfer of authority to the 3rd Civil Affairs Group. It is always a relief to see your replacements and turn the reins over to them because then you know we are soon to return home.

The next subject gives me great pleasure to announce the newly selected Marines for promotion from the Staff Non-Commissioned Officer Promotion Board.

Personnel to be promoted:

To Master Gunnery Sergeant are Master Sgt.



See SgtMaj on page 10



Top left: Col. Brier presents Maj. Sizemore with a Navy Commendation Medal.

Top right: Lt. Col. Wells and Chief Warrant Officer 4 Mathew train for their MCMAP gray belt with help from Capt. Singleton.

Above: Staff Sgt. Hemphill contemplates how to win the Global War on Terrorism, and more importantly, how to clear that day's paper jam, during a short break by the Camp Fallujah duck pond.

Left: Lt. Col. Pratt, 6th CAG Executive Officer, says "Marhaba" to an Iraqi child at the Women and Children's ward at Fallujah Medical. The Feb. 13 visit included Maj. Schaffer, Lance Cpl. Pryor, Maj. Bacon and members of

Det 4's Team 2 led by Chief Warrant Officer 4 Melotte. The Marines delivered clothes and toys donated by charitable organizations in the U.S. Photo by: Cpl. Heidi Laredo.

Detachment 1 (Government Support Team) ★ ★ ★

Provincial Civil Military Operations Center (Ar Ramadi)

Life of the Government Support Team in Al Anbar Province

By Maj. Chris Miller

It's Monday morning, February 27th, and I am late getting to the Provincial Government Center. Our Government Support Team and Detachment 1 commander, Col. Burdine, requires that

send e-mails, and then I had to deal with a detained car (the driver had already been detained and sent to an army detention facility). Eventually, I give up and walk over to the government center.

Today, we are having the Provincial Reconstruction Development Committee meeting. When I walk in, the center is teaming with Iraqis – at least 50 people are in the government center, not counting the governor and the department heads of the various government services departments. For Det 1, this represents a huge success in our ever-pressing mission of governance.

Why is this unique? Walk into any city hall or

State Capital building anywhere in the United States, and this is what you would see. But in downtown Ramadi, this is flat-out amazing.

When Det 1 first arrived, you might not have seen anyone in the government center – not even the governor's secretary or even the governor. That's right, some days you could legitimately won-

der if the government center was abandoned. On good days, we felt lucky if five people showed up during the day. And then things started to change.

At first it was a couple of department heads (e.g., of water or education) and a trickle of citizens with complaints about battle damages, a missing family member, or trying to get clearance to do

See GST on page 11

Maj. Tim Doherty and Chief Warrant Officer 5 Pete Supplee meet with the DG of electricity.



Maj. Chris Miller speaks with the Provincial Council Chairman at the government center with the help of Charles, an interpreter. The chairman was assassinated earlier this month.

each Government Team Leader get to the government center by 10 a.m. This follows our daily 0745 meeting in the Provincial Civil Military Operations Center, daily clean up, and a last minute rush to complete unfinished business from the previous day or any new tasks that came in over night. I am late this morning because I had several must-

Provincial Support Team



Lt. Col. Krizan addresses the PRDC.

The six-month mission of the Provincial Support Team to “*build governance capacity utilizing reconstruction projects, while simultaneously strengthening the provincial government’s operational competence & internal governmental capacity and autonomy,*” has effectively been met and, in many cases, successfully exceeded. The PST, comprised of Cmdr. Andy Bodnar (of the 30th Naval Construction Regiment) and Lt.Col. Krizan, has indeed “*bred governmental legitimacy and momentum,*” the desired end state.

Despite the numerous difficulties brought about by language and cultural differences, and security and permissibility challenges, the PST worked with great focus and energy to help the directors gen-

eral of the provincial government, the governor and the Provincial Reconstruction Development Committee move 39 projects through the eight-step project continuum from inception to contracting. The tally of the various projects from the nine ministries totaled over \$7.2 million dollars.

The most complicated and influential projects were far from extravagant, but were aimed at providing the citizens with essential services – those simple yet basic needs so many of us at home take for granted. The five water treatment units, six school projects, several sewer pumping station projects, telecommunication projects, and electrical projects not only

See PST on page 14

Coming Home

by Cpl Matthew Thrift

Fallujah CMOC. It's hard to believe, but it's just about time to leave. We will leave with mixed feelings. We are eager to come home to our families but sad to leave our team and one of the most interesting places we have ever seen.

Fallujah is a unique city with exciting nightlife, intense political atmosphere and unexpected comedy. Here, we are the starring actors whose actions will decide the climax. We've made friends of enemies, brought the prime minister and other major decision makers to the table with local leaders, and together witnessed the rebuilding of this symbolic city. We've been a conduit for the concerns of the people of Fallujah. We've also promoted and witnessed the beginning of the turnover of responsibilities to, and the growth of the Iraqi government.

As individuals we've learned much from our duties and had plenty of face time with the Iraqi people. We have undoubtedly won some hearts and minds. Lance Cpl. Kim and Lance Cpl. Pryor charmed the Iraqis so much they received offers of marriage from the Iraqi men. Lance Cpl. Ramos-Carr has made badges well into the thousands, making movement through the city easier for the citizens. He is now over-qualified for a job at the DMV. Standing their posts, Cpl Johnson and Cpl Thrift have developed an indefatigable vigilance. "Are you plotting against me?" Cpl Johnson often asks our Iraqi guests, just to make sure. The Iraqis get a kick out of this and laughter ensues. Doc Reed has taken up plumbing and bouncing. Gunnery Sgt. Ramirez won a game of Monopoly (and Risk, and Chess, and ...) Finally Maj. Schaffer has definitely learned the value of patience in her dealings with the Fallujan city leaders.

It's been a great and enriching experience. We are eager to come home and share it with family and friends.



Top: Joe, Cpl. Johnson, Ansam and HM-1 Reed greet Iraqis.
Above: (L to R) Interpreters: Ansam, Jeffry, Mo and Joe, Marines: Cpl. Johnson, Lance Cpl. Kim, Maj. Schaffer, HM-1 Reed, Cpl. Thrift and Gunnery Sgt. Ramirez.
Below: Lance Cpl. Kim and Jeffry issuing IDs card to an Iraqi



Iraqi Police Station by Cpl. Matthew Thrift



Cpl Thrift standing in front of completed Iraqi Police Station.

In the alley on the East side of the Fallujah CMOC, a little girl calls out, "Meester, Meester, Choc-o-lat-ay!!!" The Marines standing post overlooking the alley toss down a bag of

candy to the girl. Just as the young girl takes her gift, an older, chubby girl comes from nowhere and snatches the candy. The little girl cries until the Marines toss down an-

other bag. Today, there is a post manned by the Fallujah Police just north of the Marine's post overlooking the same alley. The little girl whose candy is stolen on a regular basis can not look up and see men from her own hometown standing guard. Unlike the Marines, the alley is its own jurisdiction. Perhaps soon the chubby girl will face justice.

The Iraqi Police (IPs) now man all posts on the north side of the compound now that their new station is complete. This new station is the first to be built (funded by the coalition forces) from the ground up...by Iraqis!! The Iraqis built it in just over 100 days, with the guidance of a contractor named John Steele. The facility was built according to Iraqi tradition of sacrificing a sheep, and placing it's blood on the foundation for good luck.

During the construction, the insurgents made it clear that they did not want it built. Their efforts were indicative of the

See IP on page 6



Detachment 1 (Government Support Team)



Al Qa'im Civil Military Operations Center

The End of the Deployment By Chief Warrant Officer 4 Williams

Like most mornings, I awaken to the broadcast of the morning prayers from the mosques and the howling dogs in Husaybah. This morning brings us one more day closer to home. The thought of this reenergizes us and helps us focus on ending this tour with the same level of enthusiasm with which we started.

For the members of the Al Qa'im CMOC, we reflect on what we have accomplished since arriving in Husaybah and at the same time we plot our course of how we are going to finish this tour successfully. We have testimonials of how small projects with



minimal dollars have made major strides at winning the hearts and minds of the Iraqi citizens in the region. We have seen high dollar projects become reality, but more importantly these things are happening as a result of the combined efforts of the AQCMOC team and the participation of the local officials. The people that care about their city and their country are coming to us with new ideas and suggestions about how to better serve the community.

Our local leaders have gathered the courage to travel outside the city to meet with their respective ministries as evident by the mayor's recent visit to Ramadi to meet with the governor, and the education director's trip to Baghdad to seek support for additional school supplies and to relay the efforts of civil affairs in the region.

Recently, the AQCMOC members and Team 3, Det 3 were invited to dinner at the mayor's home. As in many cultures, one learns a great

deal through a memorable dining experience and socializing with others. The mayor spoke openly about the progress that has been made in the region and the need for the citizens to have patience and to be cooperative. The mayor also talked



"Play Station" Mike, Mayor Farhan and LtCol Glover.

freely about how becoming mayor has become more challenging for him and his family. We can all relate to this.

The mayor further discussed the importance of creating jobs and educating the youth. In departing, Sgt. Scott requested a "to go" box (more culture sharing) for Doc Britt.

So, fellow CAGsters, as the sun sets on another day, and we are one day closer to completing our mission and departing to be with our family and friends.

A Lance Corporal's Hard Work Never Goes Unnoticed

The day always starts early. As always, some wake earlier than others and to no one's surprise, it's the motivated lance corporal. Everyone has one. At the AQCMOC it's Lance Cpl. Brendan Hetherman. Lance Cpl. Hetherman always wakes with a smile and cleans the offices so they are ready for the day's work.

Lance Cpl. Hetherman is also the motor transport Marine in charge of all the vehicles for the AQCMOC. This is a very time-consuming task which he readily accepted. Before convoys, he is the first one to the vehicles to prepare them, and he's the last one to depart, making sure they are fueled and ready for the next trip. With the surprises that arise at the AQCMOC,



there is always the lance corporal in the background, but he is never unnoticed. Lance corporals can't wait to put on the blood stripe of the NCO and prove that they're ready. Lance Cpl. Hetherman is ready.

Lance Cpl. Hetherman and Sgt Scott enjoy some well-earned time off at AQ.

Not So Civil

By Lance Cpl. Brendan M. Hetherman

As most of our families know, we are the 6th Civil Affairs Group. But not all is civil about our jobs. We try to function around winning the hearts and minds of the local people. That can not always happen, as I hope everyone knows. We come across IED's, sniper fire, small arms fire, and all other sorts of attacks, which I find to be annoying due to the fact that our group is out here risking our lives so that the people of Iraq can have a better life. I guess it is the same here as it was back in our colonial days or even closer to our time but only history books could tell me and that type of stuff was left out.

While our job as CAG is to help rebuild a country that has been war torn for many years, even before Operation Iraqi Freedom started this country was in a shambles because of the fact that their dictator had no mercy on these people. I have seen a totally destroyed city start the rebuilding process all by itself with little help from the CAG, meaning that the Iraqi people out here want to start a better life. After operation Steel Curtain the city government was in place right away. The local tribal leaders met on a

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Detachment 1 (Government Support Team)



Hadithah Civil Military Operations Center

Reconstruction efforts in Husaybah

By HM2(FMF)Britt



Top: The court house back in NOV 05 ("it's a fixer upper")
Bottom: The Court house after only 3 short months ("Looks Super")

It is difficult to make assumptions of what life was like here in Husaybah before operations. What I can tell you though with great pride is what is happening here now. Upon arrival, our team was excited and motivated to be given the chance to establish a CMOC for the Al Qa'im region. The city was deserted and Operation Steel Curtain was coming to an end. As time was of the essence, we immediately began making the rounds and taking assessments of key infrastructure. Battle damages were extensive and the task of rebuilding places facilities such as the court house, fire station, hospital, and other priority locations seemed like a daunting task.

As we sit here today, 3 months later, it is amazing to see the progress that has developed in such a short time. Buildings such as the courthouse were badly damaged but are now looking good with fresh paint, windows, walls and doors.

This is not the only building with such dramatic changes. As we continue to monitor the other projects taking place in the city, the results continue to be just as impressive.

The Iraqis have shown a resiliency and determination to rebuild and continue with life as they have done for thousands of years. Thru the hard work and dedication of the Marines here at the AQCMOC, and with the cooperation of the Iraqis who are determined to progress, good things have happened and will continue to happen for the city of Husaybah.

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regular basis with the high ups of 3/6 and CAG. That is only a starting point. The people here in Husaybah seemed frightened at first, believing that if seen with Americans they would be killed by insurgents. After about a month's time, and the locals realizing that we are here to help, they became more appreciative.

This town looked like a nightmare to me when we first entered. The children covered in dirt, the streets filled with sewage, piles of rock every two feet, barely a house standing without some sort of damage, and animal carcasses rotting anywhere. The kids and adults were digging through the trash for some scrap of food that might just fill their hunger. The first thought that popped into my head as we stepped foot in this small town was that it reminded me of the old Sally Sturthers commercials about helping kids for a penny a day. Who would think that in a lifetime of growing up in the greatest country we know as the United States of America, I would ever have to see stuff like this. People fought in line as we handed out MRE's, bottled water, blankets and heaters at the Displaced Persons camp.

As we go through the town now we get waves from the kids as they chase our convoys asking us for 'futbols', or soccer balls. The kids and the rest of the people now walk around with some what of a smile on their faces. They look healthier and are more active and can't wait for the next patrol of coalition forces to come and stop by. Some locals are really happy that we are here and helping them out. They show appreciation by bringing us home cooked food, candy, and even the occasional cigar or other treats. The children even let us know when something is wrong; this shows that we can start with the youngest generation to help rebuild their future lives they will have in this area.

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IP from page 4

insurgency...impotent and timid. They tried everything to slow or stop construction by intimidating the contractors. The defenders made up of a combination of Marines, John Steele's crew of former British military who led a Filipino security force, and the Iraqi Police. The defenders easily fought off any attempts by the insurgents. The attacks did manage to cause some confusion, though, when the former British military officer would communicate on the radio in a thick Scottish accent — something for which the Marines weren't trained. However, the Marines overcame and adapted; they taught him how to speak 'real' English!

The construction of the IP station is a model for future projects. It was built for the Iraqis, by the Iraqis. This is a big step in the right direction.

Detachment 2



Det 2 HQ, Teams 5 and 6 pose for one last picture before running the gauntlet down MSR Michigan to the Government Center.

Headquarters

As we prepare for our homecoming, Headquarters is busy getting everything ready for the turn over with 3rd CAG. Members of 3rd CAG have arrived at Camp Ramadi and are anxious to take charge and continue the demanding mission of improving Iraq's infrastructure and democratic process. LtCol. McDonald is continuing to work with the local government to provide city services while at the same time trying to keep the Marines focused on the mission. He reminds us not be distracted by the number of days remaining. Meanwhile Gunnery Sgt. Pride attempts to find ways to get back and forth from the government center prior to sun rise. Gunnery Sgt. Jones continues to move up the ladder of the ping pong tournament. He's hoping that while Johnny John is on vacation he may be able to spring board to the top of the ladder. Sgt. Gurry stays busy tracking the daily events to ensure everyone knows what is going on around the city. He occasionally takes a break to go to the computer

center to catch up with his friends and family back home by email before his afternoon nap. Cpl. Pendergraph has been passing the time by keeping track of our inventories. He also provides up to date ammo counts and spends his free time trying to reintroduce the "hi five" as a means of communication. HM2 (DOC) Morrison continues to assist at Charlie Medical where he has become a vital link in the medical success performed there. He has been instrumental in taking care of the injured service members serving in Iraq. As the Headquarters Det, Team 5, and Team 6 wrap up their training with 3rd CAG they prepare to hand over the Convoy Escort business with hopes that 3rd CAG has continued success manipulating the roads of Ramadi. All of us Marines from Det 2 look forward to our return home. To our loved ones, families, and friends, we would like to express our gratitude and sincere thanks for all of the overwhelming support that you've all provided to us while deployed to Iraq.

CAT 6-2-1

We hope this newsletter finds everyone in good times and happy spirits, for it won't be too long until we are all reunited with our friends and families at home. Life at "Ag College" is proceeding in an almost mechanical fashion. When everyone rises in the morning, we step into our daily routine without as much as a sound. Although not at the gallop that we are used to, the daily pace of events still clip along at a vigorous trot.

Elia, our team interpreter, continues to be a source of endless antics and amusement to the team. When he returned from his recent vacation, he surprised us with many gifts including traditional Arabic attire for each



of us. Everyone in the team was given a headdress, dish-dasha or 'man dress' (as we like to say), and a pair sandals. Whether he is playing 'dodge ball' with SSgt Pool, 'wrestling' with Maj. Johnstone, chatting in the hallways, or in the common room watching a movie, Elia is our team mate, interpreter, and brother one in the same.

When we leave here we will miss his him, his unique humor, and his friendship. We wish him and his family health, safety and the best of

luck in the future.

With the recent addition of a new HMMWV and a new radio within it, Lance Cpl. Nieto got a chance to do what he does best. Although the radio was a newer version than the ones he is used to working with, it did not deter him from installing and learning it's functions and capabilities then following up to ensure his team was trained too. Making use of his connections with his fellow Army communicators, parts were obtained and the new HMMWV was outfitted with a field ready radio system to make our jobs easier.

Cpl. Vaughn has been doing the check ups and maintenance on our trucks. He has established a working relationship with the mechanics of the Army motor pool. They share a cross service spirit of camaraderie due to their technical background and even hail from the same state of Pennsylvania. The upkeep of the vehicles has been vital and more challenging because of the changes in the weather. The winter rains have turned the desert sands into a monster rally mud bowl. By cleaning off the mud packed in to



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Headquarters

From the Det Commander.

The time for Detachment 3 to say farewell to western Iraq has arrived. Each and every one of our Marines performed beyond all expectations, met every challenge, conquered every crisis and in the final analysis, accomplished their mission. The Marines of Det Three have fought through two major combat engagements and numerous smaller skirmishes. In the pursuit of our mission, we have driven thousands of miles on often dangerous and unforgiving roads and flown countless hours across the harsh and unremitting western Al Anbar desert. We have delivered timely relief supplies to ease the suffering of thou-



sands of Iraqis along with hundreds of Sudanese refugees. We have been constantly dedi-

cated to improving the quality of life to those in our part of Iraq. The teams

have worked tirelessly to teach the principles and practical know-how of democratic governance to fledgling city councils.

In an effort to reconstruct the crumbling infrastructure and to jump-start local economies, our teams created 142 public works projects valued at nearly \$14 million. Most importantly, we have continued the efforts of Coalition Forces begun in March 2003 to free the nation of Iraq from tyranny and oppression. Day in and day out, they have overcome each obstacle and done so without complaining. Each one of our Marines is a hero, plain and simple.

To each of you back home who have hung in there and fought the daily battles of life, we thank you for your unrelenting support. Without your commitment, our ability to accomplish our mission here would have greatly diminished.

In closing, it has been an honor to lead and serve with your Marines. You should also be aware of the fact that while they had a positive impact on the lives of thousands of Iraqis, they always made it a priority to take care of their



fellow Marines. I couldn't be prouder of this group of men who have superbly carried on and upheld the traditions and the fighting spirit of the United States Marine Corps. Look forward to seeing you in the States in a couple of weeks.

Semper Fi, LtCol. Gene Sole



Master Sgt. Alcott speaks to young Iraqis.

CAT 6-3-1

The last few months have been quite the ride for Team One in the City of Hit. We quickly learned there is more to Civil Affairs than meets the eye and the insurgency presented many challenges for accomplishing our mission of governance, rebuilding infrastructure, and revitalizing the economy – not to forget “winning the hearts and minds of the people!” Our duties have had us performing a variety of complex tasks, and have taught us how to overcome the challenges we faced in order to perform our duties. We have worked together as a tight knit team performing project management and oversight, paying compensation claims, meeting with and grooming local political leaders, and meeting with various key religious leaders. We have seen forward progress here in the City of Hit and the accomplishment of many good things. Our team changed and molded together, whether it was cooling off in the Euphrates, waiting for Jundi Space Ships in the desert, patrolling in the heat or standing watch on our rooftop. Farewell to Hit, Iraq where “*there are no bad people*”.

(Editors Note: The Non-Commissioned Officers of Team One provided their team's newsletter input for this month)

CAT 6-3-2

Team Two has continued its strong presence in the small town of Ubaydi. The team has focused particularly on providing medical care to the area. Medical supplies and equipment worth more than 5 thousand dollars were delivered to the Ubaydi hospital, During the official presentation, an ecstatic Dr. Yasser Abul Latif praised the Iraq Army (IA) and Coalition Forces for its efforts in helping to reestablish security in the region and assisting the hospital in procuring much needed items. The Team's relentless and tireless efforts assisted in increasing the legitimacy and bolstering the power of the Iraqi Government and the IA. Team Two is definitely ready to head home soon and we leave with our heads high knowing the we persevered and accomplished our mission.

(L to R): Staff Sgt. Singh, Capt. Baca, Cpl. Peters, Lt.Col. Sole, Sgt. Brooks-Kenney, Cpl Zimmer, Master Sgt. Alcott





Detachment 4



Top: Lt.Col. Sammel and his new friend.



Left: Gunnery Sgt. Randazzo reviews paperwork at the FLT Entrance Control Point.

Headquarters

We are now preparing for what many of us consider to be our most important mission: Demobilization. The Marines of Detachment 4 will soon be heading home. We have attended "Warrior Transition" classes here in Iraq, and even look forward to returning to foul, fetid Camp Lejeune, North Carolina for the completion of the demobilization process. After sharing many experiences together in Iraq; however, we now go back to our families, our lives, and we go alone. We realize that we are returning home to people that have changed as a result of living their lives for the past 10 months without us. As we prepare to re-integrate back into our families' lives, no fooling, we acknowledge this "mission" requires much more preparation than any we executed here in Iraq.

There is other good news. On the promotion front, Master Sgt. Gratton has been selected to be promoted to master gunnery sergeant. Other significant promotions are the selections of Sgt. Hermandance of Team 4 and Sgt. Litto of Team 3 to staff sergeant. They are to be congratulated for the recognition of their superior performance. Also, for their outstanding effort while serving with Detachment 4, fourteen Marines have been awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal. The headquarters representatives of this prestigious group are Sgt. Mulligan and Cpl. Melyas. Sgt. Mulligan was the project manager for civil affairs projects in the entire area

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CAT 6-4-2 Team Devastator by Cpl Casey

Can you believe it? It's March already, and not a moment to soon. Team 2, Det 4 will be going home in less than a month. It's been a long road since June 1, 2005. Over the past two months, we've been hearing over and over from other units, "I've only got 10 days to go." To which we would always reply, "Oh man, you are so lucky!" Now it's our turn, and I'll tell ya something, it feels very, very good. But our work won't be over till the new team arrives, and that cannot happen soon enough.

Recently, Team 2 got the chance to go back to the village of Sheha. We rolled in on foot with one Humvee filled with various items brought for the people and the headmaster of the local school. I soon began to empty out



Sgt. Flanagan takes his job as a food critic seriously. Although, he said the chicken could use more salt, he said he'd dine here again — but not too soon.

the 30 lb. bag of candy that had been sent to us over the past few months. Thank you, by the way, to everyone who sent the treats. Our visit mirrored our first trip to Sheha when we received a very warm welcome from the entire village. Then out came the food. And it was even better than the last time! After the meal we all sat around and talked with the people about their village. There was an old woman, with tattoos on her face and arms, Whaha Treia Hamadi. If I had to guess how old she was, I would say she is about 113 years old!

I first had to ask permission to speak with her. I was brought a chair and small table and a glass of chai tea. I sat down with her and asked her questions about her life. It was difficult, despite her age, as she spoke some Arabic words I couldn't understand. I asked her about the tattoos. She told me that she had to get the tattoos in order to be married, kind of like getting her wedding ring. She was married in 1912, but in the 1920's her husband was killed, murdered by a crazy guy with a bat. She



The national treasure of Sheha.

never re-married. Sgt. Roper offered her a cigarette, but she said she couldn't possibly take one of his cigarettes. After I told her she would be doing him a favor by taking one, she then told me she smokes at least one pack a day! She

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Headquarters Detachment (Continued)



CO from page 1

lion resulting in the Government of Iraq allocating \$75 million for critical projects.

- Managed a reconstruction program of awarded projects totaling \$365 million that is 65% complete.
- Supported the Governor and the PRDC in developing and awarding 34 reconstruction projects of \$7 million, further enhancing the local and provincial governments' processes and legitimacy.

As our families reflect on the year past, worrying about us while dealing with the often difficult and always time consuming daily challenges at home -- work, bills, raising children, school -- please know that people of Iraqi will have a brighter future and we will all live with a greater sense of security because of the sacrifices you made. The packages our families, friends, and supporters sent brightened our days. The supplies and toys you provided brought smiles to many children. Your unwavering support of us and our mission made a difference.

As the Marines and Sailors of 3d CAG step forward to assume our duties, we salute and wish them the best of luck and success as they continue the mission, as the 5th CAG did before us. They will remain in our thoughts and prayers until they too follow us home.

As we prepare to leave Iraq, I think of the journey we are about to complete. It has been a grueling, hard trip for all -- a tour that we will never forget and, I am sure, has changed us all. An experience of a lifetime, a culminating event of military service; these thoughts come to mind. But fundamentally, it is more basic. It was an opportunity to do what we joined the Corps to do: serve with Marines, the world's finest, in a place most fear to go, daring to do what most wouldn't dream to tackle, doing what our nation relies on her Marines to get done. Being a Marine and serving with Marines is a privilege and experience only Marines will fully understand. When we return home, rest with the satisfaction of knowing that each of us has served our country, performing our duty with courage and honor, a commitment we fulfilled that carries on the legacy from generations of warriors past. Marine and Sailors making a difference in the world.

Semper Fidelis, Col. Paul W. Brier



Maj. Gen. Richard A. Huck, 2nd Marine Division Commanding General, presents Col. Brier a plaque and thanked 6th CAG for a job well done. The plaque read, "To the 6th CAG. You are a maneuver element."

SgtMaj from page 2

Ralph Alcott, and Master Sgt. Raymond Gratton.

To master sergeant is Gunnery Sgt. John Daldalian.

To gunnery sergeant are Staff Sgt. Kevin Evans, Staff Sgt. Ronald James, Staff Sgt. Scott Kimmel and Staff Sgt. Daniel Walther.

To staff sergeant are Sgt. Wayne Hermance and Sgt. Richard Litto.

We also had two Marines receive combat meritorious promotion to staff sergeant; they are Staff Sgt. Howard Denny, and Staff Sgt. Jason Seaman.

We also recently held our Non-Commissioned Officer and Marine of the Quarter board. The Marines selected to receive this honor are: Cpl. Guillaume Plante, Non-Commissioned Officer of the Quarter, and Lance Cpl. Neil Nieto, Marine of the Quarter. Two excellent choices and well-deserved.

This is our last newsletter (doesn't that sound good) and we will be reunited with our loved ones soon. Like Ronnie Mil-sap's song, "Keep the home fires burning," or Tom Bodett's commercial, "We'll leave the light on for you," we will be watching to see that fire or light when we return home, so keep them on. I would also like to thank all the Key Volunteers for being so dedicated and working so hard to hold everything back home together in our absence. Without your efforts and support we could not have completed this deployment with the knowledge that our families are being taken care of in their times of need.

We have a great team here and at home and I am proud to say that I have had the chance to work with them and to get to know everyone. See you all soon.

Semper Fi,
Sgt.Maj. Ron McClung
mcclungrl@gcemnf-wiraq.usmc.mil





GST from page 3

work around a Marine or army checkpoint. And then, slowly, engagement (GTLs coordinating and meeting with their respective department heads and Col. Burdine working with the Governor) started to work, and life returned to the government center despite daily gun battles, mortar attacks, and explosions from improvised explosive devices.

The GST's mission is governance, and just like in any war-torn country, it is defined by how extensive the damage is to the structures of society. In Al Anbar, that implies a fairly large swath of responsibility and means starting at square one. Like I mentioned, this includes engaging the provincial leaders and persuading them to do their job. Over the course of the last seven months, it has also included restoration of all basic city services (like water and electricity), economic development and civil administration support to all levels of government. All of this is accomplished through persistent, daily engagement by Col. Burdine and the GTL's with the governor and his department heads.

To meet this task, the GST is divided into functional areas, assigned to a GTL, and matched with the respective Iraqi department head. For most of the GTLs, engineering experience is a big help but not required. As the governance GTL, my job is distinctively different from the other GTL's. I focused mostly on areas involving the executive, legislative and judicial branches of the provincial government and some civil administration. My active-duty job as a Marine Judge Advocate is a perfect fit.

Background: The Al Anbar provincial seat of power lies in downtown Ramadi, a city of approximately 450,000 people. The province is one of 18 Iraq provinces and is located in western Iraq bordering Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Syria. Al Anbar contains 22 major cities and has a population of approximately 1.4 million. The political structure of the province centers around an elected provincial council, a governor appointed by the provincial council and a judicial system somewhat similar to what you would find in any one of our states. Beneath the provincial layer are eight Qada and 14 Nahiya councils akin to our political subdivisions at the state level. (I am still not sure exactly what



1st Lt. Legge assigns a walkie talkie to the DG of Electricity. The radios have allowed government officials to communicate despite the destruction of telephone switches by insurgents.

Qada or Nahiya mean, although I've finally learned to pronounce them so that the locals can understand me. I do know that the bigger cities have Qada councils (mejeles), and the smaller cities have Nahiya mejeles.) Each one of these councils are elected, and in turn appoint a mayor, who function very similar to our city mayors. Finally, the province is located west of the Iraqi capital city of Baghdad and is approximately the

This Bud's for You

By Chief Warrant Officer 2
Duane Fish

Detachment 1 bid farewell to 1stLt Brian "Bud" Colby, at the end of February. Each of us in Det 1 have made many contacts here in Ramadi, but there is a voice of unity when asked who seems to always be there to help when things need to get done. Bud's our man.

Lt. Colby has served as the Aide de Camp for Brig.Gen. James L. Williams, Assistant Division Commander, 2nd Marine Division from July 2005 to February 2006. He was the man in the know. If you wanted to get a sense of where things may be going, he would help facilitate your thought process with appropriate input. When things went wrong in the PCMOC, and assistance seemed short in the offering from other units, Bud would use his frequent sojourns to the government center to ferry goods and materiel to us.

Lt. Colby grew up in Madison, Wisconsin. He graduated from Edgewood High School in 1998, and accepted his appointment to the Naval Academy that same year. He graduated in 2002 with a Bachelor of Arts in Economics. After completing The Basic School at Quantico in May 2003 he was assigned as a platoon commander to 2nd Tracks, 2nd Amphibious Assault Bn., C Co. In April 2004 he was assigned as the H&S Company executive officer until his assignment as the gen-

See Bud on page 13



Lt. Col. Pressley and 1st Lt. Bud Colby.



The governor addresses members of the PRDC.

See GST on page 12



GST from page 11

size of North Carolina.

Tuesday afternoon, March 7. I am asking the governor question after question through an interpreter. I am trying to clarify whether the governor is aware of the attempted creation of three regional government structures in Fallujah, Al Qa'im and Hadithah. These are some of the biggest cities in Al Anbar Province and each one is the home of a Qada council. I've already posed this question to the provincial council (the legislative body of the province) chairman, but after several months in Iraq I've learned to double and triple check my key governance points.

We are in the government center later than usual today because of a heavy firefight ongoing outside that doesn't seem to end. As we (Col. Burdine, Charles the interpreter, the governor, and I) wait for the firing to die down, I can't help but feel like the Det's governance mission has a way to go.

"We've tried communism, nationalism and the Baath party," the governor says. "They all failed. With democracy, at least the people feel like they are part of the process. And if there are faults, you can at least cor-



Left: Col. Burdine waits in the governor's office to begin his daily "engagement."

Below: A town hall meeting was held Nov. 28 in Ramadi opening the doors for increased dialogue with Iraqi leaders.



rect them. With the Baath party, there was no consensus and there was no opinion by the opposition. That was life under Saddam Hussein – thank you for getting rid of him".

Over the last months, the Governor and I have had a friendly feud on how we sum up the political situation of Al Anbar, and to a lesser degree, the national scene. After his response, I say "Yes. One slow, painful step at a time." The governor quickly answers in an aggravated tone, "No, no, it is one heavy step at a time." Finally, the shooting stops and an armed Marine convoy arrives to escort the governor home.

2005 in Review. By all accounts, 2005 was a watershed year for Iraq. In January, the country elected a Transitional National Assembly – the national lawmaking body. The word "transitional" is used because Iraq still had not transitioned to a permanent government since the fall of Saddam Hussein in April 2003. By June 28, 2004, although Iraq had resumed sovereign nation status, its national government was still an unelected, interim national government. Although the country was not ready for permanent elections and had not drafted or voted on a permanent constitution, the January 30, 2005 elections were a significant step to democratic, self government. By October 15, 2005, the peo-



Sheiks greet Brig. Gen. Williams at the government center after a security council meeting.

ple of Iraq approved by referendum a permanent constitution. Two months later in December, the country completed permanent, four-year national elections for 275 seats to the Council of Representatives – the new, national lawmaking body. Just as important, the country designed its permanent national elections in order to include a broader base of representation. In the January national election, the entire country was one big voting district, but in the December elections the committee on elections broke the country into 18 voting districts – the 18 provinces of Iraq. This guaranteed more inclusive representation by providing smaller parties the opportunity to win seats within their voting district vice facing the sheer weight of numbers of Iraq's nearly 14 million registered voters.

As I was completing the rough draft to this article, Col. Burdine tasked me with drafting a list of issues from the Al Anbar perspective to present to our chain of command and ultimately, to the new national government (once it is formed). This was tasker 1,547. The issues were taken from two perspectives, the provincial level of government and the citizen stories of Al Anbar – mostly Ramadi.

All of the provincial governments of Iraq, and especially the citizens, need a unified Iraq. Al Anbar especially needs a united Iraq. We were all very excited when we learned of the dramatic increase in the Al Anbar registered voter turnout from 2 percent

See GST on page 13



GST from page 12

in the January 2005 elections to the 76 percent in the December 2005 elections. That was a huge step forward and very promising.

As I mentioned earlier, part of my job at the government center involves talking to the Al Anbar citizens about their detained and missing family members, impounded cars and their monetary claims against Coalition Forces for battle damages. As a result, I've heard a lot of stories about what these "average" citizens think about America, Saddam Hussein, their new government, and their future. I am still perplexed at how quickly they can complain

about the Americans, and then in the same breath when the issue involves a family member or their property, they pray that it is the Americans (vice their own army or government) who detained their family member or friend or are safeguarding their property. Once we work through these issues, the conversations often lead into other areas.

When it is a mother with her children, the conversations lead into other areas just about 90 percent of the time. I will always be reminded of this one, desperate mother who came in with beautiful twin daughters. Her claim for her dead husband was denied at the PCMOC, and so she came to the government center to ask if we could look at her claim one more time. Her twin girls were about 11 years old. When I asked her if they go to school, she said they used to go to a girls school, but "they stopped going because an insurgent visited the school and told them not to come to school anymore." According



The governor in popular demand at the government center.



The coffee man at the provincial government center. Who needs Starbucks?

See GST on page 14



The Al Anbar Provincial Government Center.

Bud from page 11

eral's aide in July 2005.

This is his second tour in Iraq. He first served in the Al Qa'im theatre from September 2004 to April 2005.

Bud's roll as general's aide included all of the logistical support for over 120 convoys to all areas in Al Anbar and beyond. He has traveled from Baghdad to Rutbah, and from Fallujah to Al Qa'im. His job was to provide a smooth transition from site to site by providing for the day-to-day needs for the general. As he put it, "The general doesn't need to be wasting his time looking for a pillow when we get somewhere. I'm not a servant; I'm ensuring that the bigger picture moves without any bumps. I make the general

comfortable in order to ease the constant transition."

When asked about his encounter with reservists, Bud called it, "...an eye opening experience." But he elaborated. "The civil affairs reserve Marines offer a greater breadth and variety of experience relative to their active duty counterparts. They have a deep 'resident knowledge' about things that would not be considered on the active duty side of the house. Reservists with varied backgrounds in law and medicine have become combat multipliers." (Incidentally, Det 1 has an electrician, reefer mech, law enforcement personnel, a produce manager, dairy farmer, prison guard, CEO of a Chamber of Commerce, and business owners, all of which have contributed greatly to this combat multiplication.)

Bud furthered that, "There is no discernable degradation in the performance of the Reservists he has seen in action. Sure, the learning curve was steeper for those that were activated, but there is always a '7 week folly' that occurs for any new unit coming in theatre. Even the active folk experience it."

When asked about his best and worst experiences he stated, "I have thoroughly enjoyed meeting so many different people, and making new friends. It's

See Bud on page 14



Bud from page 13

been great to be like a fly on the wall during some high powered meetings. I'll say hands down that the worst part of this has been the hours I've had to keep. I'll get up anytime between 0400 and 0600, then stay in constant motion until 2200 and 0000. I have no time for myself. My total purpose is to support others."

For any of you with eligible daughters of age, Bud is unattached at this time. He will return to the States and resume his duties as Com XO with Tracks until

May 2007. His plan is to "EAS" out, and will pursue a US Government job or his MBA.

Bud has been a friend to so many of us whether enlisted or officer. Even on his worst days he would eek out a smile and a positive word of encouragement. When the PCMOC was inundated with a sewage blockage and no plumber's snake could be found anywhere in Al Anbar, or Baghdad, he called home and had an industrial strength snake sent to us. He would come through with care packages distributing it amongst the PCMOC. If we needed a ride or equip-

ment from BD or a trip back, he bend over backwards to accommodate us.

Our friend has left, but his impact will be felt in so many memories of our experiences here in Ramadi.

We have no adult beverages here, but if we did, we'd be declaring, "This Bud's for you, Bud."

Postscript: 1stLt Colby has been extended for a short period during his retrograde through Fallujah. His vacation plans to the Keys have been cancelled. We'll be able to catch up with him at Camp Lejeune. His loss is our gain – Looking forward to seeing you Bud.

GST from page 13

to the teacher that relayed the story to the mother, the insurgent stated that "if they live the right way, these girls don't need this schooling," and threatened that if they returned, he would blow up the school.

I think sometimes Baghdad is a long way away for some Iraqis, especially the ones living in the violence of Al Anbar. I know many of them have expressed that opinion to me over the last several months, even while some things are getting better in Iraq. Everyone needs a united Iraq, and it is up to the Government of Iraq with the support of Coalition Forces to get this done sooner rather than later. Then, both the national and provincial governments can give the "average" Iraqi citizens security and stability.

PST from page 13

brought about a higher standard of living but also helped create jobs and stimulate the economy – all positively impacting the people of Al Anbar Province.

Reflecting on the impact and progress of the PST, Lt. Col. Krizan said he found the most satisfaction from watching the PRDC evolve from an unproductive group to an effectively functioning entity as well as developing and mentoring his counterpart, the newly appointed DG of Planning and Continuation, Mr. Hasan.

"The many hours we all poured into our roles were reflected in the level of autonomy, participation and contributions we now see our counterparts making. That, by far, was the most gratifying," Krizan said.

A sincere and heartfelt thanks goes out to our contingent of professional interpreters, comprised of Charles, "K," Nabil, Shaqk, Mary, "J" and Saba for their dedication, hard work and the many sacrifices they made right along side of us. Shookrun-jazzelan Sadekei Alazeez (Thank you very much my good friends). Best of luck and success, 3rd CAG! Semper Fidelis.

Civil from page 6

For example one day out on a mounted patrol we stopped by a school to check on the progress of its reconstruction. While inside the students let us know of an IED rigged up inside a house just behind the school. See, the kids don't want to put up with this stuff anymore than we do. Upon our notification we checked it out and set up a security line to make sure that no one got near it or got hurt. After that we awaited the arrival of the EOD unit.

While in country, I have seen my fair share of attacks of all kinds as I'm sure many in the CAG have. I hope we are all following the advice of the ones who

came before us, "Keep your eyes open and your head down." Unfortunately the tactics that the insurgents, or "mukarabeen", use is not always obvious and troops get hurt.

Someday these people will have peace in this country again. As I witness them work with us, I think that we will see it sooner than we all think. The process of weeding out the insurgents is a hard one but it will be done one day.

For the most part we have had good luck with our deployment, while others have had not such good times. We as a unit lost a few good men; luckily none of them died. That is when the hard part of

our job comes into play. To help people out that might just be the ones placing the bombs or shooting at us. While I have reason to believe there are more Iraqi locals out there who want and need our help, there are the few who just want us to leave.

To all of our families, who have been putting up with the things we do while being out here, we all owe thanks to you. It is hard being out here but with you behind us it makes it just a little bit easier with each letter and package you send us. Thank you to all of the CAG families.

Detachment 2 (Continued)



CAT 6-2-2

The time has come for Team Two's tour here in Habbaniyah to come to an end. The past month has been fast paced with a rewarding finish to our work here in civil affairs. The team continued their efforts of working closely with the Iraqi Police within the Khalidiyah / Habbaniyah District. Weekly meetings between the team and the commander's of the two operational police stations in our district have brought many issues to the forefront. We have begun to make progress in resolving some of these issues and hope that our replacements will continue the ground work that has been laid.

Of note, Team Two accomplished an initial issue of weapons to the Civil Camp and Coolie Camp Police Stations in order to increase the protection capabilities of each station. Also of note, after months of hard work and coordination, a screening of police for the training academy in Baghdad will be held at our location, with 100 qualified IP's scheduled to depart for that training in late March.

The team also continued to visit and assess schools within our area of operation. CWO4 Bahr was at the forefront of instituting a new CA Mentorship Program by working with an Iraqi Army Civil Affairs Officer. Team Two conducted a joint Civil Affairs mission with the 3rd BDE Civil Affairs Officer to three schools, a clinic, and the District Library. Teaching the IA to conduct their own Civil Military Operations adds to the goal of transitioning reconstruction efforts from Coalition Forces to the Iraqis themselves. The mission was an overwhelmingly success and will serve as another enduring footprint that Team Two will pass on to our replacements from the 3rd Civil Affairs Group.

We also have continued to address and process compensation claims from Iraqi civilians. By assisting the civilians to receive compensation we are able to help legitimize the government and show the Iraqi people that they are not faceless victims caught in the conflict.

Many projects have also been approved in the past month in our area.

Eleven trash and debris clean up project grants were approved along with sixteen project grants for clearing and reconstructing drainage canals, with a number of these projects already being worked. The positive results will be that these projects are being completed with minimal visibility of Coalition Forces, but rather by Iraqis themselves working to improve the living conditions in their communities.

Before signing off we would be remiss if we did not take this opportunity to extend our sincere gratitude to the Soldiers of Task Force Panther. The support provided to Team Two, and receptiveness of our mission from the 1-110th PAARNG, has greatly exceeded any expectations we may have had prior to our deployment. All the soldiers who risked their lives to assist us in accomplishing our tasks and missions will be greatly missed and never forgotten. We will pray for their safe return to the states this summer.

Finally, Team two again would like to say Thank You to ALL of our family and friends who never wavered with their support of us and our mission here in Iraq. Your packages, emails and letters made our time here pass quickly. We are looking forward to reuniting with you all in the coming weeks. Until then, keep us in your prayers, and get the steaks and foamy beverages ready!



Right: Cpl. Plante prepares to go on mission to Abu Flies.
Middle Right: Lance Cpl. Hyatt lets us know the patrol is ready to continue
Below: Staff Sgt. Kimmel takes a break outside a school in Abu Fleis.



Above: Cpl. Schuster Provides security for the team during a recent mission
Right: Staff Sgt. Kimmel and CWO4 Bahr with Iraqi Police after issuing new weapons.



Detachment 2 (Continued)



CAT 6-2-2

Team 4 is anxiously awaiting our return home. The Team Leader from 3rd Civil Affairs Group has arrived and his team is enroute. During the last month or so, we have continued staying busy. The team has been involved in several missions throughout Ramadi. We have also been supervising projects designed to keep Coalition Forces and the local populace safe from insurgent activities.

Cpl. Meli has overseen the completion of two school rehabilitation projects and the start of several more to be finished by 3rd CAG.

Cpl. Shuman continues to provide insight into medical issues. The team escorted several medical representatives

from 6th CAG HQ to Ramadi General Hospital and Ramadi Women's and Children's Hospital to conduct assessments for new equipment. Cpl. Coward has assisted LtCol. Reilly in engaging the government regarding an economic development plan. We are continually making slow but steady progress and have been able to get other agencies on board to revitalize the cities businesses.

Sgt. Forbes took the lead in overseeing the rehabilitation of the Provincial Government Building in downtown Ramadi. This project consisted of repairing battle damage; cleaning the exterior of weeds, trash, and debris; and, painting the building and retiling the exterior sidewalk.

When not conducting missions, every member of the team has been preparing our equipment and computer files for turnover with our replacements. We also provided insight for the 6th CAG historical team by conducting oral interviews which will be placed in the new Marine Corps Museum opening later this year in Quantico, Va.

We are all happy with our work here and we are glad we were able to meet some good citizens of Iraq. While we will surely miss some of them and will always remember our time spent here, we are ready to come home and be with our families again.



CAT 6-2-5

The end of February brings us one month closer to friends and family back home. Many of us have begun a count down of the days leading to our departure from Iraq. We are all still focused on the mission at hand, and not allowing any amount of complacency to set in. Recent events have steeled our vigilance in security as we conduct our daily operations. Sgt. Ackerson, our team chief, was wounded this month while we were conducting operations in Ta' Amim. We are very thankful to say that he is alive and well, recovering back home with his family and friends. Sgt. Ackerson wanted to stay with the team, but medical personnel advised that he return to the states. We applaud his dedication and will surely miss him this last month in country as he was an outstanding team chief and extremely important member of the team. His team mates send their very best wishes and prayers to him for a quick and full recovery. A replacement for Sgt. Ackerson, SSgt. Seaman from team one, was brought over to fill the team chief billet. The team has continued to move forward and is currently, among other things, working vigilantly to rectify a deficiency of potable water in the Ta' Amim and 5 Kilo areas. We are also pushing forward with business and school assessments so that the following Civil Affairs team can quickly grasp the basic infrastructure and then expeditiously initiate additional projects to further develop and improve the area. The team continues to support the detachment headquarters during their weekly CMOG and other runs. February and March have seen a surge in Iraqi Police recruiting and transportation from our area to police academies. Team 5 continues to support the movement process by visiting with them as they await transport and by providing basic quality of life items to them prior to departure. The first group of trained Iraqi Police Officers is expected back in the area by the end of the month which is seen by local residents as a positive indicator of progress. February has been both a fruitful and sad month from a team prospective. We have continued with our mission and accomplished a number of things, but we have also had to deal with seeing a great Marine and outstanding fellow team member wounded in action. With that said we all look forward in anticipation to completing our mission later this month and returning safely to our friends and family back home. However, before we close this final newsletter, each team member would like to express their heartfelt thanks to each and every family member and friend for their outstanding help and support while we were members of the 6th CAG and especially during the time we were conducting operations in Ramadi, Iraq. Thank you one and all we couldn't have done it without you. See you soon.

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Team 5 with interpreter and new team chief.



Team 5 with interpreter and new team chief.



Sgt. Ackerson with children on February 14



Maj. Johnstone.

6-2-1 from page 7

the wheel wells and tires, the HMMWVs are well maintained and are functionally sound in the current weather conditions.

There are mountains and mountains of paperwork that accumulate in our office, it is Cpl. John who climbs these mountains and is responsible for taming them. On a daily basis he files and organizes the paperwork in to some semblance of understanding as well as

scans, prints, and submits various reports and worksheets that are required for our job. He can be seen behind the machine gun of the turret one moment and behind the keyboard of a computer the next. He also is the NCO responsible for our morale and newest addiction -- '24'. Most every night we make it a mission to watch an episode (or a disc) of '24'.



Much of what SSgt. Pool does is unseen by most of the team. He attends the meetings and briefs and makes necessary coordination for our many missions and projects. Although it is, often times, a thankless job, without SSgt. Pool we would not get as much done here in Iraq and we probably would have withered away on the base. SSgt. Pool has also been the team alarm clock for the last seven months. The team can rely on him to rouse us for those early morning missions and convoys as well as let us sleep in from the occasional 24 hour operation or late night mission. The amazing part is that he doesn't need a clock. He just wakes when it's time. Sometimes we wish he would oversleep.

Maj. Johnstone continues to drive our focus here in Ramadi.



Left: Elia assists with providing security. Below: Staff Sgt. Seaman is promoted.

During each mission, his interaction with Elia and the Iraqi citizens bring us one step closer to a better and more secure Iraq. Although the process is slow, even unnoticeable to the rest of the world, we are helping sow the seeds that will enable democracy to spread in Iraq. Maj. Johnstone is also our OIC of morale and the cause of our second addiction. When the next season of '24' can not be acquired,



CAT 6-2-6



"Berserker"

Well, here we are coming to the conclusion of our deployment. Good days, bad days, and just plain hectic days have all been tossed out the window. Team 6 has reached the mountains peak, flag sternly planted with triumph and spirit. The discipline, patience, and resilience that stood firm within Team 6 have paid off.

We took the best of what we were given, returning to Iraq a better and renewed community, a stronger bond within the people which is only fortified by hard earned labor and sacrifices.

Ramadi has been through its downs. Since Team 6's arrival, it has only gone up. Being here in person to support the Iraqi citizens brings it home to the people. The mothers and fathers are relieved to see their kids playing in

the streets, where was once filled with violence and gunfire. It is even more rewarding to witness their sincere gratitude after fixing the local water pump station so they can have running water, an essential resource we take for granted everyday. We will certainly leave a part of us here that no other person will understand except for those who were with us.

The insurgency and tribulations of the past have robbed and torn this nation's legacy. We have come to restore that honor, that pride, that feeling we bear in our own country that holds dear to our chest, and we leave, entrusting the next team to continue to make this nation what the people want it to be, their own pride and joy. This is 6th CAG DET II Team 6 signing out for good. We're coming home America. See you very soon.



Maj. Hendrix and 1st Lt. Secrest complete the mission with the headmaster of the school.



Top left: Cowboy Kim. Above: CPL James and his two babies. Left: Face off between the services! Weighing in at 170lbs, the abominable Pennsylvanian, Sgt. Samanns ready to crush the opponent.

See 6-2-1 on page 19



CAT 6-3-3

Mar-haba from Team Three,

We've been hard at work with the help of local contractors, volunteer organizations and other Marines and Sailors to make the Al-Qa'im region a better place this month. The team traveled to al Tami to bring medical and school supplies. This was an important step for us, as we have not had a presence in this particular area. In Husaybah, work continues cleaning the city of garbage and rubble in preparation for new construction. Work should start soon to upgrade the water treatment plant in Husaybah as well. This water treatment plant will provide clean water for 55,000 Iraqi citizens.

Team Three wishes to thank Mrs. Kelly Hurley, and American Legion Post 1776 located in Apple Valley, MN. Mrs. Hurley organized a clothing drive in Apple Valley and shipped winter clothing for the Al Qaim children. American Legion Post 1776 covered the shipping costs. A highpoint this month was the Meritorious Combat Promotion of Sgt. Denney to the rank of Staff Sergeant. As time winds down for us in Iraq, with great expectations of returning home, we would like to thank our family and friends for their prayers

and support. See you all very soon.

Maj. Sean M. Hurley and SSgt. Howard W. Denney. Feb. 2



CAT 6-3-5

Greetings from the Marines of Team Five. The team has been out and about of late in all manner, providing school supplies and soccer balls to the local school children. They are always very grateful for what they receive. Lance Corporal McIsaac and Corporal Jepsen have assisted the Kilo Company QRF (Quick Reaction Force) by serving as drivers. The team recently helped to coordinate and deliver about 7 billion dinar (\$4.8 million) to the Haditha bank. That's a lot of paper! Having the money delivered is good news for the local retirees and public servants. In closing, Team Five thanks you all for the great support you have provided while we have served here in Haditha.

CAT 6-3-4

Team Four has been quite busy with operations in the Rutbah area. The unit that Team Four supports built an earthen berm around the city in an effort to stem the flow of insurgent traffic and activity in the area. The plan worked and as a result, the team has been able to go into Rutbah and engage the local city council. This is the first time any CA team has been able to engage the Rutbah local leadership and is a great way for Team Four to wrap up a very successful deployment.



Maj. Caporale entertains Iraqi children.

CAT 6-3-6

As Team Six winds down here in Barwanah, the team is busily putting finishing touches on all the projects we have been working on. The team hasn't relaxed at all and in fact, is working hard to set the next CA Team up for success. So from Sgt Phasavath, Cpl. Wolcott, Lance Cpl. Garcia and CWO Simpson we would like to thank all our family and friends for the support you have shown us and we will be home soon.



Above: Cpl Wolcott takes a moment to relax.

Right: CWO2 Simpson enjoys a meal with an Iraqi company commander.





Detachment 3 (Continued)



CAT 6-3-7

From the village of Haqlaniyah, Team Seven sends everyone a big hello! We have had an exciting and very busy couple of months here in Haqlaniya. Despite constant insurgent threats, the Marines have remained focused on the mission at hand. SSgt. Vandiver participated in an operation with the supported unit and helped to deliver school supplies and heaters to the local schools. He spoke with school headmasters in the communities conversing on ways to improve the local schools and to create an environment conducive for learning. Team Seven will stay the course for the next few weeks and looks forward to seeing you all soon.



Chief Warrant Officer 4 Anderson and Lt. Col. Sole in Ramana.

CAT 6-3-8, 6-3-9

Team Eight in Karabilah and Team Nine in Ramana send their greetings as well. Between being very busy with reconstruction projects and internet "challenges", their days are very full. The Marines do report they are ready to come home soon and look forward to seeing friends and family again!



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we have abandoned Jack Bauer and turned to Sydney Bristow from 'Alias' in our common room. These coupled with the occasional movie help fill the down time and our evenings with some stress relieving fun and entertainment. Congratulations go out to SSgt. Seaman's combat meritorious promotion. He was one of two Sergeants chosen from the 6th Civil Affairs Group to be selected in theater for the Combat Meritorious Promotion to Staff Sergeant. He was promoted with a date of rank of 2 Jan 06 in a promotion ceremony at the Government Center late in the month of January. We also had to let SSgt. Seaman leave Team 1 at the end February to fill a gap as Team Chief for Team 6, in Camp Ramadi after Sgt. Ackerson was recently hurt. We miss him but wish him the best of luck with the new team. We're also grateful for Sgt. Ackerson's health.



Staff Sergeant. He was promoted with a date of rank of 2 Jan 06 in a promotion ceremony at the Government Center late in the month of January. We also had to let SSgt. Seaman leave Team 1 at the end February to fill a gap as Team Chief for Team 6, in Camp Ramadi after Sgt. Ackerson was recently hurt. We miss him but wish him the best of luck with the new team. We're also grateful for Sgt. Ackerson's health.

Although not with us in person, Maj. Lofgren is still very much a part of the team and remains with us in spirit. The CO of 2-69 once commented on Maj Lofgren similarities to John Wayne, which earned him the nickname 'Big Duke'. Although his presence is missed, we kept the call sign and are reminded that he is still with us every time someone uses our call sign over the radio, 'Big Duke'. Every so often, a soldier comments on how cool sounding that name is. Here's to seeing you back in the states, Sir.

As we prepare things to pass the reigns to our successors, we have not lost our focus on our mission. Our thoughts are foremost on the security and safety of the team. We continue to push to start new projects aimed at returning our portion of Ramadi to a state of normalcy. Although we eagerly await our return to our families, until we step off the plane, we will be mindful that our mission at hand is to help the Iraqi people and finish what we started.





CAT 6-4-3

Who would have thought when we started our journey that the time would pass so quickly? It's almost hard to believe that this will be the final edition of the 6th CAG Newsletter. The Marines of "Double Play" did a fantastic job during this deployment. We can all look back at our time here in Iraq and know that we made a difference in lives of many people here. I thought I would take this final edition to let the Marines of Team 3 tell you a little bit about their time here in their own words.

Cpl Hagwood

The most valuable lesson I was able to

gain from this deployment was how to measure the true value of a Marine. Throughout this war, all Marines, active



Cpl Hagwood standing watch over the Team during a Ferris City Council Meeting

and reserve, have been forced to learn jobs outside of their MOS. We have been put in a position to no longer judge each other by rifle range and PFT scores but by the amount of flexibility and reliability that we exhibit and our dedication to a team and a cause. I'm not saying that we should not continue striving to uphold our standards because without them we would become a meaningless institution. Perhaps, however, our focus has been slightly off-centered. It has been seen that the most valuable assets are those Marines who, through outstanding leadership, have

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6-4-2 from page 9

spoke about the British occupation, and how they would fly over their village and drop bread and rolls of fabric for clothing. I asked her who she preferred, the US or the British, and she told me that we are far more helpful, and protective of the Iraqi children. And of course I had to ask her what she thought of the Saddam Hussein regime. Almost immediately she spat on the ground and started rattling off Arabic furiously. She spoke of how her the young men of her village were forced to join the army. She talked of how poor they were treated and how they would come and take food from their storage to feed their units. Sgt. Roper gave her a piece of candy at one point. He's a real ladies man. She asked "Why would you want to leave a country that has something like candy in it to come here?" After about 40 minutes of

talking to her, I told her that she was truly a

national treasure and she didn't look a day over sixty. I asked her to get all the people together so I could hand out what I brought.

I gave out the rest of the candy, and some 30-odd pair of children's shoes. Last, I handed out bags of soap and shampoo, tooth brushes and tooth paste. We finished up our day by riding bikes with the kids and asking them about their lives here. We waved goodbye and then headed back to camp.

Soon we'll all be going our separate ways. Capt. Neely will head back to "The Carolinas" to finish up all the warm fuzziness he started there. Sgt. Flanagan will be going back home to lead the husbandly life. We are all very happy and proud for him. Congratulations Athena! We'll see you in July! Cpl Morrison will also be heading back to Indiana to see his family, and Mia, of course. Cpl. Snyder will be leaving with the Advance Party in a few days, so "Good luck with that, ya jerk!" Sgt. Roper will gladly go on back to the good ol' state of Oklahoma to return to his highway patrol throne, pulling over any of us that dare to venture into his domain. And me . . . oh me, Casey, Casey, Casey. I will be leavening for Texas the moment they let me and no one will hear or see me again till I go to Sgt. Flanagan's wedding. So feel honored Flan, I will come out of hiding just for you.

As I look back, there have been times of low moral and times of extreme motivation. I remember freezing in the back of our Humvees, trying to get an hour or two of sleep.

I remember going on foot patrols in the farmland that seemed like they would never end. Over the past 7 months, I have loved and hated each one of these guys in Team 2 more times than I can remember. Probably vice versa.

We've gone from being strangers from different areas of the country, to becoming a team whose members are irreplaceable. We argue, we fought; and got over it 5 minutes later. I wouldn't change a thing that has happened with me and these Marines over the past 10 months, aside from moving the war to Jamaica. If you need me, I'll be in Texas. Good luck finding me.



Top left: The national treasure of Sheha and family.

Top right: Cpl. Casey enjoys the hospitality of the villagers of Sheha.

Left: Team 2 relaxes in Sheha.

Detachment 4 (Continued)



CAT 6-4-4

CAT 6-4-4 has been finishing strong through the months of February and March. We have continued to work on the repair, upgrade, and construction of new water treatment plants. We have repaired and upgraded the electrical infrastructure in and around Fallujah and Saqlawiyah. The team has submitted for approval over \$630K worth of projects in the last two months not including the larger electrical and water treatment plants which total over \$2.4M. We have also worked to renovate and expand a key medical clinic which services a large outlying area community outside of Fallujah. We have worked extensively with the various companies (“E - Echo”, “F- Fox”, “G-Golf” and Weapons) of 2nd Battalion 6th Marines supporting their Civil Military Operations by providing them with school supplies, soccer balls, toys and candy for the children. During these operations the team has continued to locate new areas and people that still need assessments, renovations, rebuilding, and help. As time nears for our counterparts from 3rd CAG to arrive, we have worked to prepare ourselves for a seamless turn-over and ensure they are able to pick up right where we finish.



Lance Cpl. Hancock passes out candy to kids on an operation in an area just outside of Fallujah.

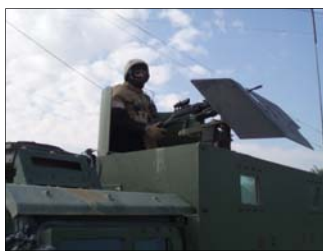
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6-4-3 from page 20

found the will and desire to learn as much as possible so that they can be useful in any situation. Knowledge and attention are the most powerful tools in keeping Marines alive. I am very proud of each Marine that I was able to serve with and the resolve that each of them has shown, despite tough circumstances. It is my sincerest hope that each of them is able to pass along the qualities that they share to the younger Marines who will eventually take our places in leadership positions throughout the Corps.

Cpl Kauffman

This deployment has been, in many ways, a tool for me to use in the ways of life. I have personally dealt with many facts of life I would not have experienced anywhere else. We have seen so much and done even more. The people I have met here I will never forget, especially those I worked with on a daily basis. Together we have proceeded through the good times and the not so good times, shared a lot of laughs, and dealt with some tragedies. These times I will cherish and use for my personal growth in life.



Cpl Kauffman during a cold spell near ECP-5.

Cpl Mundell

This deployment has been an experience that I will always remember. The new friends and acquaintances that I have gained through the deployment are some that will become close and some that will become distant, but we all will remember each other in the end. To those crazy men of the 6-4-3 Double Play team and the rest of the detachment I wish you the best of luck in all that you do. This is Cpl. Mundell saying so long and good luck.

Sgt Smith

As our deployment draws to a close we all think back and try to remember the events that have transpired and wonder have we made a difference? For me there is no single memory that stands out above the rest. Years from now when I think back on this deployment I will remember the smiles of the many Iraqi children to whom I honestly believe we have made a difference. The future of Iraq does not lie with the insurgency or the radical extremist. It belongs to the younger



Cpl Mundell prepared, as always, in his favorite spot....The Gun Turret

HQ from page 9

covered by Regimental Combat Team 8. He was responsible for over \$2 million worth of projects which improved the lives of over 400,000 citizens.

Cpl. Melyas was recognized for his outstanding service as Communications Chief for Detachment 4. Cpl. Melyas displayed his “can do” attitude and worked diligently to ensure that the communications needs of Detachment 4 would be met.

The job here in Iraq, and particularly in this part of Al Anbar Province is not finished. There is still a lot of work to be done, but the efforts of the Marines of Detachment 4 have made great strides towards giving the good citizens of this region a sense of how a safe and secure Iraq can improve their future.



Sarah and Salah, interpreters for HQ and Team 5, respectively.

Cpl Melyas following General Order #11 at the FLT.



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Detachment 4 (Continued)



6-4-3 from page 21

generation, the children who's schools were rebuilt and new school supplies were provided to. It is the children who were given new toys and clothes that will remember what we have done here. As a member of Team Three I was able to participate in many reconstruction projects and see the development of a brand new city government. Something as small as a city council may seem ordinary at home, is a huge ordeal to the Iraqi people and a huge step in the democratic process. So when I return home and people ask me "what did you do?" I will be able to answer with confidence that we made a difference to the people of



Sgt Smith directing the security team into position during one of the Team's many stops

Al Anbar Province, and to the future of the Iraq.

Sgt Litto

Who would have imagined at age 48 and the rank of sergeant I would be serving with Marines half my age venturing out on over 100 missions throughout the city of Fallujah, Amiriya, and Ferris. Throughout my 48 yrs I have had many experiences but none quite as rewarding as serving with the Marine Corps as a Civil Affairs Chief with Team 6-4-3. Something that I will never forget is the day we traveled through a small run down village. At first there were only a few children playing until we stopped and unveiled what we had in the back of our HMMWV. It was loaded with toys and clothing. The kids just surrounded us and continuously shouted "mister, mister please give me." As we handed out the many items I looked over at a woman who was holding a small child in her arms. She refrained from coming over to us. I knew through cultural training that it was prohibited to engage in any contact with her. I filled a large green bag with clothes and toys and walked over and gave the young child the bag. Immediately I observed an older man running toward me smiling and saying "Shukran" which means thank you. I asked him if I could take a picture of his family and at that point the woman placed her child in my arms, that's trust. Since that experience the team has been responsible for the successful completion of many projects that include the refurbishment of



Sgt Litto made a new friend during his time in Fallujah

more than 10 secondary and elementary schools, providing safe drinking water, restoring electrical power to a local hospital, and forming an 11 member functioning city council. We also established a municipal building where police, fire, local government and community leaders can meet to plan their future. When I return home to my family I will have many positive stories about my experiences in Iraq and how we are truly making a difference, contrary to what is reported through our media. It has been an honor and privilege to serve with professional members of team 6-4-3.

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We have set them up for success so they can continue to help the Iraqi people so they can one day help themselves. We are all proud of our accomplishments here since our deployment those six long months ago and



CWO-4 Melotte, with the help of our interpreter Mustafa, talks with citizens just outside of Fallujah while the 2/6 Battalion Commander LtCol Aiken looks on.

we are all eager to see this time come to an end and return home to our families.

Back at the hooch, we celebrated our last two birthdays of the deployment in February. Corporal Johnson had his on the sixth, and Sergeant Anspach, our only member whose birthday falls outside of these seven months, had his celebrated a little early at the

end of the month. CWO-4 Melotte celebrated his 48th and his second Birthday in Iraq, #45 in 2003 and he is hoping it his last one here!



Top Right: Sgt Anspach's Birthday surprise!

Middle right: Corporal Johnson poses after getting his hands dirty for the 1st time in his life working on one of the vehicles



Bottom right: Sgt Herman poses with Cameron, a friend he made at an electrical substation just outside Fallujah.

Below: Gunnery Sgt. Tuite works with Larson, our interpreter and most recent addition to the team, to assess the need of a school outside of Saqlawiyah



Detachment 4 (Continued)



March Birthdays

Capt. Arthur, Mar. 3
Maj. Caporale, Mar. 29
Maj. Coffman, Mar. 19
Cpl. Coward, Mar. 28
Staff Sgt. Hemphill, Mar. 11
Maj. Hendrix, Mar. 17
CWO-3 Kierce, Mar. 9
LCpl Kim, Mar. 13
Sgt. Litto, Mar. 19
Cpl. McMullen, Mar. 12
Cpl. Meli, Mar. 22
CWO-4 Melotte, Mar. 7
Cpl Melyas, Mar 29
GySgt Pride, Mar. 18
GySgt Sarmiento, Mar. 28
CWO-5 Supplee, Mar. 7
Lt.Col. Trentalange, Mar. 26
Cpl. Wolcott, Mar 9

The following Marines were recognized in February and March for superior performance in their duties:

Certificate of Commendation

Cpl. Bohlen
Cpl. Duckett

Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal

CWO-4 Anderson	CWO-4 Melotte
Cpl Ashby	Cpl Melyas
Cpl Buck	Sgt Mulligan
HM3 Butt	Cpl Mundell
Gunnery Sgt Chathan-Riggins	GySgt Sarmiento
GySgt Daldalian	Capt Singleton
Maj. Doherty	Sgt Smith
Cpl Dunbar	CWO-2 Stabenaw
Maj Graydon	GySgt Tuite
Cpl Hagwood	Staff Sgt. Walther
Sgt Hermance	Capt Walton
Sgt Jones	Cpl Weaver
Sgt Litto	Cpl Wimer
CWO-4 Mathew	

April Birthdays

Lt. Col. Barnum, Apr. 1
Cpl. Brock, Apr. 10
GySgt Chatham-Riggins, Apr. 28
Lance Cpl. Flynn, Apr. 3
Lt. Col. Graves-Buckingham, Apr. 21
Maj. Johnstone, Apr. 12
Cpl Jones, Apr. 25
Cpl. Plante, Apr. 5
Maj. Robbins, Apr. 7
Staff Sgt. Vandiver, Apr. 23
Lance Cpl. Ward, Apr. 26

Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal

Capt Arthur	Staff Sgt. Hemphill
Maj. Bacon	Lt. Col Krizan
Lt. Col. Barnum	Lt.Col. Millerd
Maj. Coffman	Lt.Col. Perkins
Lt. Col. Graves-Buckingham	Capt. Risser
Maj. Griffin	Maj. Sizemore

6th CAG Command Group

Commanding Officer
Col. Paul Brier

Executive Officer
Lt.Col. Helen Pratt

Sergeant Major
Sgt.Maj. Ron McClung

Operations Officer
Lt.Col. Todd Ryder

For questions on content or for more information, contact the 6th CAG Family Readiness Officer, Sgt.Maj. McClung. Stories and photos in this newsletter were compiled by the 6th CAG Public Affairs Officer, Maj. Juliet Chelkowski.

