

From the Sandbox...

The Oscar Observer



[CAPT Rink takes command of NAVELSG FWD](#)

October/November 2012
Volume 2

Group Commander's Corner
CAPT Chuck Rink



It has been very busy here in Kuwait and Afghanistan. We have received our first wave of replacement customs inspectors in early November and we are waiting for the second wave in early December. The combination of these two waves and the many Sailors that agreed to extend make up the OSCAR custom companies. My Command Master Chief, CMDCM Scott Quamme, and I have visited nine sites in Kuwait and Afghanistan in the last two months. I can tell you first hand that the OSCAR Sailors here are doing great. They are motivated, have a positive attitude and are working hard as our workload increases. They continue to perform a vital role in the support of Operation Enduring Freedom and for the drawdown of Afghanistan. The customs inspectors, the Air

Cargo Company, the MRAP managers and the Headquarters Company are spread out in more than 5 countries and greater than 20 sites. We are doing a lot of shifting of personnel to support the surges and the many locations we must be located to perform our missions. The Navy has a stellar reputation out here for enforcing the customs regulations, moving air cargo, managing the MRAP programs and working side by side with our Army counterparts. You can be proud of the outstanding work performed by your Sailor. Even though we work hard, all of the sites enjoyed the Thanksgiving meals provided by the dining facilities. Every dining facility decorated for the Thanksgiving occasion with streamers, banners, paper turkeys, Pilgrims and some even had ice sculptures! Most of the bases had a 5K Turkey run/walk, that many of my Sailors participated in the early morning. Even though it was a four day holiday for many in the U.S., your Sailors had the Watch. The war against terrorism does not stop for holidays and neither did my Sailors. They continued to meet the many mission requirements through the holiday period. I give thanks everyday for the privilege to lead these Sailors. I am also thankful for the many Navy families, affected by these mobilizations, that carry on the home front, while their Sailor is proudly serving his/her country. I hope all of you had an enjoyable Thanksgiving and will have a Merry Christmas.

In Hahm's Way
CDR Jimmy Hahm



It's been just over two months since our arrival and taking the helm of NAVELSG FWD. I'd like to thank all of you for your dedication and sacrifice being here. Everyone has done a FANTASTIC job of learning your jobs with professionalism. We, as a team, have made some tremendous progress to our mission. We've closed down our berthing presence at KNB for the first time in 15 rotations of customs missions. We are also in Afghanistan on a permanent basis supporting 9 different bases and FOBs. OSCAR is in more sites (21) spread among 6 countries. This is the most complex operation to date and all of you are part of that continued success. As we approach the holiday season, I'd like to once again thank all of you for your dedication and sacrifice away from your loved ones. We, together, celebrated Thanksgiving just recently as a family and I look forward to celebrating this upcoming holiday season as a family.... OSCAR Family. Thank you!

CMC Corner
CMDCM Scott Quamme



Sailors all working together to accomplish the Customs Mission. We have been Onboard for two months as the OSCAR rotation, we have seen NOVEMBER ESS, ACD 4 depart along with NOVEMBER Wave I Custom Sailors. NOVEMBER Wave II Sailors will be departing shortly. It has been my pleasure working with everyone associated with the NOVEMBER deployment. I want to Thank all the NOVEMBER Sailors that extended to assist in continuing our mission. Our OSCAR Wave I Customs Sailors are embedded in the various Companies that we have working Customs in more than five different countries and more than 20 different locations throughout the CENTCOM AOR. OSCAR Wave II Sailors are finishing their training state side and we look forward to them joining us real soon. Our Air Cargo Detachment is embedded with the Marine Corps Air Wing at Camp Bastion doing our Air Cargo mission. It has been my pleasure to be able to work alongside all of our Sailors and to get out and visit them at the many various sites that we have Sailors working at. I was able to spend Thanksgiving Dinner with some of our HO-TEL Company Sailors at Kandahar. To witness the pride and professionalism displayed by our Sailors is truly a motivating experience. I look forward to continuing our mission and working with you all. To all the families, THANK YOU for your continued support to your loved ones. Continue to keep in touch and send the needed care packages with a taste of home. Your continued support goes along way. I wish everyone a HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON and a HAPPY NEW YEAR. Thanks for what you all do serving our great NAVY.

CHANGE OF COMMAND



By QM1 Kenton Durham

It seemed like only yesterday that most of our family members and friends dropped us off at the airport and this adventure began. We hugged you each and said our good-byes and headed to Norfolk.

Now a month and a half later, we find ourselves sitting in the auditorium here at Camp Arifjan officially relieving NAVELSG Forward NOVEMBER rotation. On this day, October the 2nd 2012, this mission became ours and the second part of our adventure is starting.

The Ceremony began with the arrival of the official party that included Captain Daniel Pionk, Major General Kurt Stein, Captain Daniel Colman, and Captain Charles Rink. Guest Speaker Army Major General (MG) Stein, Commanding General, 1ST Theatre Sustainment Command welcomed us and spoke of his appreciation in

the role that NAVELSG plays in support of the Army's mission here in Kuwait.

CAPT Pionk, the Group Commander of NAVELSG Forward spoke next, sharing with us NOVEMBER rotation's accomplishments and wishing OSCAR success as we take the reins. CAPT Rink, the Group Commander of NAVELSG Forward OSCAR then came to the podium and read his orders assuming responsibility for NAVELSG Forward and reiterated his goals and expectations for all of us. The Change of Command was presented by CAPT Colman, Commodore of Navy Expeditionary Combat Forces Central/Task Force 56.

The Ceremony concluded with a reception as we all gather for refreshments and small talk about NOVEMBER's departure and OSCAR's eagerness to assume the mission. Our adventure continues!



From The Sandbox...

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NAVELSG FWD CELEBRATES THE US NAVY'S 237TH BIRTHDAY



RDML David F. Baucom (center) cuts the Navy birthday cake assisted by Group Deputy CDR Jimmy Hahm (far left), Group Commander CAPT Chuck I. Rink, the youngest Sailor in NAVELSG FWD OSCAR FC2 (SW) John G. Hembree and CMDCM Scott G. Quamme (far right).

Navy Expeditionary Logistics Support Group (NAVELSG) Forward celebrated the Navy's 237th birthday on October 13th 2012 at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. RDML David F. Baucom, the Director of U.S. Central Command Deployment and Distribution Operations Center was the guest speaker and started the celebration by offering a Navy birthday historical message that detailed the Navy's rich history of defending

freedom around the world since its inception in 1775. He then led the singing of Happy Birthday to our great Navy and cutting the birthday cake with the assistance of CAPT Chuck Rink, NAVELSG Forward Group Commander, as the Sailors from the NAVELSG OSCAR rotation looked on.

The 300 sailors in NAVELSG Forward OSCAR rotation are currently deployed to locations



RDML David F. Baucom (center) stands with the NAVELSG OSCAR rotation Chiefs' Mess during the Navy birthday celebration. CMDCM Scott G. Quamme (far left), QMC Beth Renier, HMC John Sbraccia holding their deployment mascot "Oscar", ETCS Dale McBane (back row), MAC Gina Bennett, and GSEC Eli Bar-dowell.

RDML David F. Baucom and the OSCAR rotation mascot "Oscar" pose for a photo.



throughout 18 different sites in the Middle East. They perform US customs inspections on DOD equipment and personnel redeploying back to the United States from the Central Command theater of operations.

Bravo Company personnel commemorated and gave thanks for the sacrifice and service of the men and women in uniform by celebrating in a separate ceremony at Ali Al Salem.

The event was laid out in grand style, coordinated by YN1 LaRhonda Fusilier. The color scheme included the traditional Navy Blue and Gold with a splash of red/white/blue. LCDR Anthonsen, the Bravo Company Commander, began the event by welcoming our guests. NAVELSG Forward November Rotation Group

Commander, CAPT Daniel Pionk, and NAVELSG Forward Oscar Rotation Group Commander, CAPT Chuck Rink, were guest speakers for the event. The menu included Cornish hen, prime rib, mash potatoes, macaroni & cheese, Mexican corn, tossed green salad, rolls, corn bread, beverages and cake.

Today, the Navy continues to be a force for good, advancing and securing interests of this great nation and its allies around the world.

Thank you to event committee members: HMCS Lindsay, YN1 Fusilier, PS1 Garruba, OS1 Rulo, GSE2 Hall, AE2 Papin, YN1 Rowe, and MM3 Mushakian. .

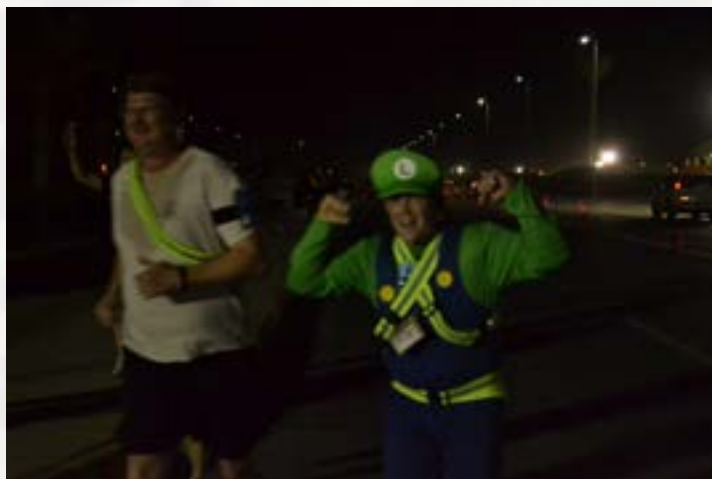
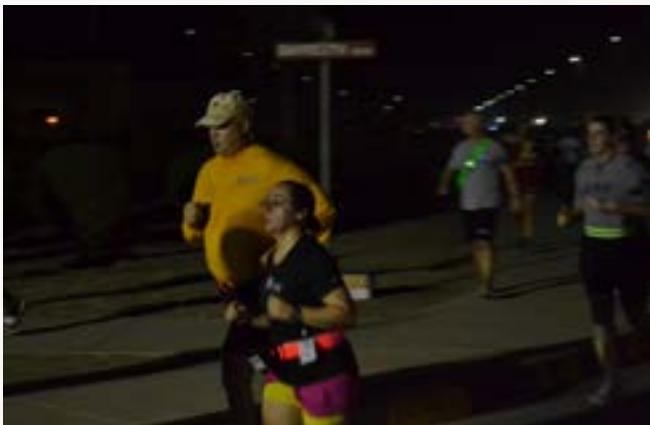
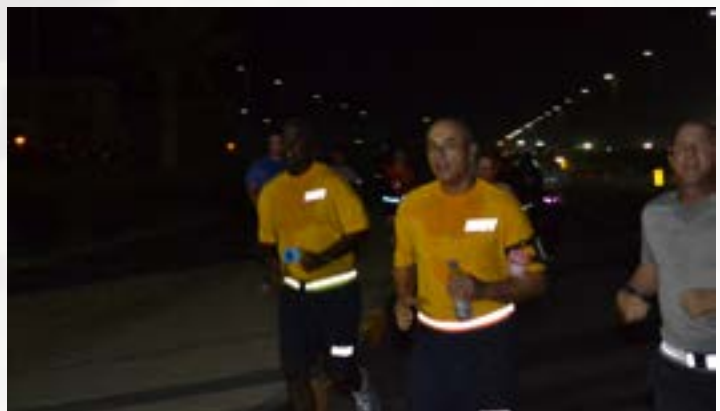
HALLOWEEN 5K RUN/WALK



From The Sandbox...

From The Sandbox...

From The Sandbox...



From The Sandbox...

CAPTAIN & ENSIGN RINK

CAPT Charles I. Rink stepped onto a plane on 17 September, and headed for Kuwait to become the Group Commander for NAVELSG Forward. As fate would have it, his son, ENS Charles D. Rink, who is the Weapons Officer aboard the USS RUSHMORE (LSD-47), boarded his ship just before the tugs pushed her away from the pier on the very same day. They both were going to miss the birth of ENS Rink's first child and CAPT Rink's first grandchild, and they were both going to be 8,000 miles away from their families. Late in November, half a world away from home, CAPT and ENS Rink connected in a very, very happy father and son reunion at the Kuwaiti Naval Base (KNB). Here are pictures of father and son after enjoying a cup of coffee at Dunkin' Donuts, waiting together at the pier, including a picture with CMDCM Quamme and watching the RUSHMORE's gig come in to take ENS Rink back to his ship.

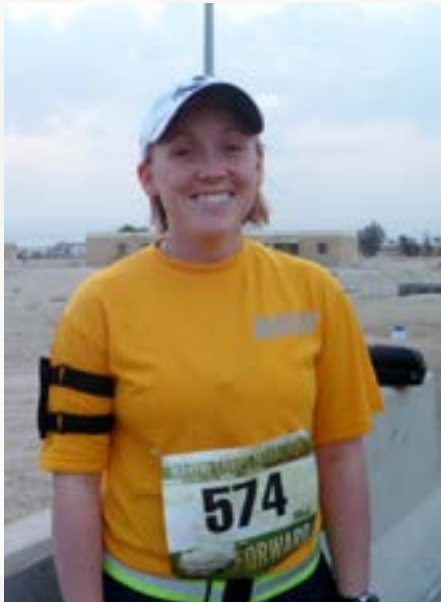


From The Sandbox...

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MARINE CORPS MARATHON (MCM) FORWARD

On October 28, 2012 the first Marine Corps Marathon (MCM) Forward ever held in the state of Kuwait began at 6:15 am. On a cool and overcast day, 57 participants and over 150 volunteers from across the country gathered for the event. NAVELSG FWD Sailors, LT Lindsey Frasier and GM1 Michael Irving participated in their first marathon. GM1 accomplished his goal of completing a half-marathon and LT Frasier completed the entire marathon in 4:41:20.



From The Sandbox...



From The Sandbox...

SAILOR IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Sailor in the Spotlight: BM3 Carrie Harden

For her consistent dedication to Alpha Company's Wash Rack, BM3 Carrie Harden was selected for "Sailor in the Spotlight". During a critical manning turnover period, she has spent numerous hours of her personal time, training and testing new CBCA's. In the absence of an ALPO, she assisted Admin by insuring zero discrepancies took place within the work center. Her relentless devotion to duty has proven to be a great asset to our mission here at NAVELSG and the United States Navy.

Hometown: Grants Pass, Oregon
NOSC: Springfield, Oregon
Date joined the Navy: 26 August 1993

Brief description of your Navy job: A Customs Border Clearance Agent at the Wash Rack. Inspect vehicles and equipment for foreign plant, pests, diseases and contraband before being shipped to the United States.

Description of civilian job: Veterinary technician and groomer.

Who is your biggest influence since joining the Navy? IC1 Bruno, LPO active duty. Great

mentor and teacher.

What do you enjoy most about the Navy? Going new places and meeting new people.

What is the most interesting place you've visited since joining the Navy? Hobart, Tasmania

What do you think has been your most significant contribution to the Navy, NAVELSG, your unit, your department, etc....? Being part of Quality Control division on board USS John C. Stennis during turnover from shipyard to the Navy. I was part of the QA team responsible that all spaces met specifications.

Current hobbies: Hanging out with friends, BBQ and taking my dog Codi out to the park.



Sailor in the Spotlight: CM3 Josiah Baker

CM3 Baker was chosen for Sailor in the Spotlight recognition for Head Quarters Company due to his hard charged "CAN DO" attitude!! He always gets the job done!

Hometown: Prescott, Arizona
NOSC: Fort Carson, Colorado
Unit: NMCB-17

Date Joined the Navy: April 10, 2008

Brief description of your Navy job: Construction Mechanic Petty Officer 3rd Class, responsible for maintaining all CESE gear, heavy and light equipment, gas and diesel mechanic, Asst. licensing examiner and Fire warden.

Brief description of your civilian job: Car collection curator and automotive restoration apprentice.

Who has been your biggest influence since joining the Navy? CM1 Dustin SargentDavis.

What do you enjoy most about the Navy? The opportunity to honor my country with my Naval service.

What is the most interesting place you've visited since joining the Navy? Range Complex San Clemente Island, CA

What do you think has been your most significant contribution to the Navy, NAVELSG, your unit, your department, etc....? *(Answer from his Leading Petty Officer)* As Lead mechanic and driver for N43, CM3 Baker has not only kept CESE gear at 100% ready status, he has also driven more than 1600KM adding to over 75 hours of mishap free drive time on hazardous Kuwaiti roads, making sure that no mission was ever missed. His efforts gained command recognition for NAVELSG by MAG-40(USMC) for taking the initiative and appropriate action to plan, prepare and execute the cleaning, transportation and customs inspection of over 30 pieces of equipment valued at over 550,000\$ for shipment back to CONUS. As a result MAG-40 awarded a plaque to NAVELSG in recognition of the United States Navy's service. As Assistant License Examiner he has trained 6 members on HMMWV, 2 members on 6K Forklift and issued over 120 Licenses to ESS Oscar and Customs Wave 1. As Fire warden he has maintained a zero discrepancy on all safety inspections. CM3 has even taken the initiative to be trained and licensed on 25T tractor trailer increasing Command readiness for future missions. CM3 EMBODIES THE CAN DO SPIRIT IN KEEPING WITH THE HIGHEST

HONOR AND TRADITIONS OF THE UNITED STATES NAVY SEABEES!!!!

Do you have an interesting, touching or funny story during your career that you would like to share with us? "It's not really appropriate to talk about"

Current hobbies: Lifting weights, video games, playing golf and Watching sports.



Sailor in the Spotlight: EN3 Ramon J. Morales

EN3 Morales was selected because of his positive attitude toward the Navy, Work and fellow shipmates. He is very into mentoring all sailors and army personnel that need help in getting into shape. He gives daily training in the GYM for beginners as well as advanced. He volunteers for all extra Pax, Wash rack, Fragos and working parties that come up. He also was nominated as Sailor of the Month several times.

Hometown: Orlando Florida
NOSC: NOSC Jacksonville
Unit: NCHB11 Air Cargo Unit
Date Joined the Navy: 01 JAN 1995

Brief description of your Navy job: I am a Customs Border Control Agent (CBCA) at the

Sea Port of Debarkation (SPOD). I am responsible for the inspection of incoming and outgoing convoys for cleanliness and proper paperwork before entering and departing the Reno lot, I also maintain log books of all convoys and important events and assist with any duties as needed by the Command Duty Officer (CDO).

Brief description of your civilian job: I am a Water Engineer Level 1 for a government municipality in Orlando, FL. I am in charge of water quality analysis for over 600,000 customers and I am also part of an engineering team that builds and implements water control measure and methods to provide quality water to all Floridians.

Who is your biggest influence since joining the Navy? My biggest influence has been my uncle, Ryan Alvarez. He is a Command Chief Master Sergeant in the Army based out of Tampa Florida. He has always given me good advice and mentored me when I was on active duty. He always used to tell me a quote from Henry Ward Beecher “Hold yourself responsible for a higher standard than anyone else expects of you. Never excuse yourself.” To this day I set all my goals and professional accomplishments based on this quote.

What do you enjoy most about the Navy? I enjoy the diversity and culture of Sailors from all walks of life, from small town regulars to big city hot shots. We all trust in one another to complete our mission; we work in unison for better or worse. “We are part of the Navy and the Navy will always be part of us”. I also really enjoy helping Sailors who are lacking a little motivation to become physically fit and showing them the proper exercises and resources they need to become a more productive Sailor in the Navy. I enjoy mentoring Sailors who are starting their careers with the knowledge I have gained throughout my years in the Navy.

What is the most interesting place you’ve visited since joining the Navy? The most interesting place I have visited was Mary’s tomb located in the Valley of Jehoshaphat in Jerusalem.

It is said that this was the tomb of the Virgin Mary, Mother of Jesus. According to tradition, Mary ascended into heaven from this tomb.

What do you think has been your most significant contribution to the Navy, NAVELSG, your unit, your department, etc....? My most significant contribution to NAVELSG was when I was appointed Assistant Command Fitness Leader (ACFL) for Charlie Company. It gave me the opportunity to help and mentor sailors in their physical health and to help them be fit for duty. As ACFL, I have trained over 20 personnel from all branches of service at Kuwait Naval Base (KNB) in weight training, and high and low intensity workouts. I, along with another ACFL, have trained personnel in the Fitness Enhancement Program (FEP) which resulted in 100% of the participants passing well within standards.

Current hobbies: motorcycling, bicycling, exercise, volunteer work, running, family time, reading, and socializing.



THANKSGIVING AT ARIFJAN

Dear loved one’s and families,

Holiday Greeting’s coming to you from NAVELSG Forward, Alpha Company from the Middle East. The holiday season is the time of the year when families, friends and loved one’s are gathered together showing respect and love to one another. NAVELSG Forward wants to thank you for all the support that you continue to provide to us in the absence to our families. The dedication that you render while we are away from our homes enables us to continue to go

forward and be successful at completing our mission. During Thanksgiving, NAVELSG Forward had a big Navy family dinner together, we laughed, joked about things in our life that had a lasting impact on us even during our deployment. That helps us stay motivated, positive, and enables us to put the priority of our mission first. NAVELSG Forward would like to thank you again for your continued support.

V/R,
CS3 Doris Swann

From The Sandbox...



From The Sandbox...

BRAVO'S NAVY BALL

From The Sandbox...



From The Sandbox...

From The Sandbox...



From The Sandbox...

AWARDS

From The Sandbox...



CO For A Day YN1 LaRhonda Fusiler

CMC For A Day MM2 Domingo Ramos



CTG 56 Sailor Of The Quarter AS1 Carlos Douglas

From The Sandbox...



Army Commendation Medal AD1 Henry Dudek

HARD CHARGERS

Presented by The NAVELSG FWD First Class Petty Officer's Association

BM2 Tiffany Brown - Alpha Company - Wash Rack Work Center

This award is presented to BM2 Tiffany Brown in recognition of her hard-charging attitude, commitment to excellence, and outstanding work ethic during the month of October 2012, while serving as the Active Alpha Company Assistant Leading Petty Officer. BM2 Brown led her team in the Customs Border Control Agent (CBCA) inspection of over 100 vehicles and 45 pieces of heavy equipment. She assisted in the rewrite of the Wash Rack and Sterile Yard work

center Job Qualification Requirements (JQRs) which streamlined the final process and conducted 120 hours of rolling stock training for 12 CBCAs thus improving the quality of work in those work centers. Your efforts have greatly contributed to the Navy Expeditionary Logistics Support Group Forward (NAVELSG FWD) success while located at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. Your unwavering professionalism has been an inspiration to us all. Well Done! Given on this day, the 16th of November 2012.

BM2 Andre L. Edwards - Alpha Company - Retrograde Yard Work Center

This award is presented to BM2 Andre L. Edwards in recognition of his hard-charging attitude, commitment to excellence, and outstanding work ethic during the month of October 2012, while serving as the Administrative Petty Officer for the Alpha Company Retrograde Yard work center. BM2 Edwards successfully completed over 393 inspections of retrograde equipment totaling over \$5,200,666 while giving outstanding service and support to all customers with zero backlog. He is responsible for Customs support for the Retrograde Yard and Central Receiving and Shipping Point (CRSP). Your efforts have greatly contributed to the Navy Expeditionary Logistics Support Group Forward (NAVELSG FWD) success while located at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. Your unwavering professionalism has been an inspiration to us all. Well Done! Given on this day, the 16th of November 2012.

MR3 Erica C. Jordan - Headquarters Company - Supply Work Center

This award is presented to BM2 Tiffany Brown in recognition of her hard-charging attitude, commitment to excellence, and outstanding work ethic during the month of October 2012, while serving as the Inventory Control Manager and Assistant Property Book Manager. As Inventory Control Manager, she has fulfilled well over 300 supply requests throughout all companies and departments of Navy Expeditionary Logistics Support Group Forward (NAVELSG FWD) worth over \$7,800. As Assistant Property Book Manager, she is responsible for tracking Navy assets totaling \$4.8 million dollars. Your efforts have greatly contributed to the NAVELSG FWD success while located at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. Your unwavering professionalism has been an inspiration to us all. Well Done! Given on this day, the 16th of November 2012.



SECURITY MANAGER COURSE

Because of unforeseen circumstances (cancelled flights, etc.), some of our NAVELSG FWD Sailors had the opportunity to attend the Security Managers course and earn an Navy Enlisted Classification (NEC) in the process. Way to make the most of an opportunity!



From The Sandbox...

From The Sandbox...

MWR VETERAN DAY DINNER



From The Sandbox...

From The Sandbox...



MWR trip

By: HMC Sbraccia

The NAVELSG Forward team has been able to go out on some trips with the MWR. We have had the opportunity to visit places like the Grand Mosque, different museums, 3 different malls, and a few different restaurants. Fun and learning were had by all.

The Grand Mosque was an eye opening experience. Most of us don't understand the Muslim religion. We had the opportunity to learn about the origins and beliefs of the people. We learned that this religion stems from Ishmael, one of the sons of Abraham. Simply put it is a following from a different branch of the family tree.

We were able to go into the Mosque and see what it is they do. The carpet is very

soft and has a useful design to it. We were able to see and sit in the place of the leader of the prayer groups. The art work inside was beautiful. It was all hand carved and took several years to complete. The main prayer hall was under renovation so we could not go inside to see the massive space.

The people were very friendly and welcome us back anytime we want.

The different museums that we have been able to visit have been the National History Museum, the Art Gallery, the Aquarium, and the Maritime Museum. We were able to learn much about the history of the region and the people. One interesting fact was the reason for the streets to be so narrow was to help shade people from the heat of the sun during the summer. The Art Gallery gave us a glimpse into the artistic abilities of the people.



They use a number of things from the most recent past as part of the art work. The Aquarium has one of the largest salt water tanks. We were able to see several different species of fish including some great white sharks. The Maritime Museum allows us to see how much this region depends on the sea. There are several different ships that span the life of the region. Some are very small fishing boats to very large cargo type ships. We were able to walk onto these ships and almost feel what it was like to sail on these ships. There is no better place than onboard ship for Navy personnel. There are several different malls that we have been able to go to while here. Yes, some are larger than others, and some are pricier than others. Most of us have found we like one mall over the others. We find ourselves more at home since it

has all of the amenities that we are used to. The people are very friendly and are very helpful when we have questions. The biggest item is remembering that the currency exchange is so different. 1 Kuwaiti dollar is worth 4 US dollars. We have to remember that things are not cheap, but they work out to be about the same price as in the States. Most of the NAVELSG Forward team takes advantage of the trips that are offered. We are currently looking at a way to do our own trips to different locations that we know are here, but are not offered at this time. There are several trips planned. There are trips planned for each week to different locations. Each trip offers us a new adventure.



The Revised OSCAR Logo



The logo for the Oscar rotation is finally out. *(Yes we know we had a fish in the last edition; no we didn't like it either and that's why we're introducing this one.)*

On the rim of the logo, we have the operational areas that make up NAVELSG FWD, the countries in which we operate, and the years Oscar

rotation will be in command. In the center, we have the flags of the countries where we operate; the American, Navy, and Don't Tread On Me flags: a picture of an Osprey swooping down for a kill; and the letters OEF indicated that we're operating under Operation Enduring Freedom. Finally, the background of the logo is an "Oscar" signal flag.

The Adventures of Chief Oscar

Since you last saw him, OSC Oscar (OSC stands for Operations Specialist Chief) has been traveling extensively with his battle buddy CMDCM Scott Quamme (CMDCM stands for Command Master Chief). On their latest trip, they met the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy, MCPON Mike Stevens in Bahrain and visited NAVELSG FWD Sailors at several sites in Afghanistan including Kandahar, Sharana, Salerno, and Bagram. As you can imagine, everyone wanted their picture taken with Oscar. Here are a few...



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