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up for extraction

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FREEDOM WATCH

STAFF: 17TH PUBLIC AFFAIRS DETACHMENT
VOL. 7, NO. 8

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Freedom Watch is a monthly RC-East publication of the 17th PAD and Combined Joint Task Force-1.

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Freedom Watch, a U.S. Department of Defense publication, is published the first Monday of every month by the 17th PAD, located at building 15804A in Dragon Village at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. Printed circulation is 20,000 copies per month. In accordance with DoD Instruction 5120.4, this DoD magazine is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military overseas.

Contents of the *Freedom Watch* are not necessarily the official view of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government or the Department of Defense.

All submissions are subject to editing by CJTF-1 Public Affairs Office.

Freedom Watch can be reached at DSN 318-481-6367 or by email: freedomwatch@afghan.swa.army.mil.

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(Cover photo) This giant Buddha statue is barely visible in the cliffs of Bamyán Province due to the Taliban's efforts to destroy them in 2001. (Photo by U.S. Army Capt. Kenneth Stewart, 17th Public Affairs Detachment)



French Army Maj. Sébastien Pignolet, Battle Group Raptor, head of operational environment cell, speaks with elders during a shura in Alahsay Valley during a combined operation with Afghan National Army. (Photo by French Army Master Cpl. Sebastien Vermeille, Task Force La Fayette Public Affairs)

French operation demonstrates ANA abilities

Story by French Army 1st Lt. Arthur Volkoff,
Task Force La Fayette Public Affairs

An Afghan National Army company demonstrated its ability to fight independently during French Army Operation Eagle 4 Takeoff in the Alahsay Valley.

Nearly 150 ANA soldiers joined matching numbers of the French Army from Battle Group Raptor, Black Company, to conduct operations northeast of Kabul as part of a larger mission to prepare the Afghan National Security Forces to operate as a fully autonomous force. During the first phases of this cooperation, the French troops served as operational mentors and liaisons.

French Army Maj. Sébastien Chenebeau, Battle Group Raptor chief of operations, said, the point wasn't to lead the Afghan soldiers, but to fight together as equals, sharing responsibilities, the battlefield and working in perfect coordination.

"This brand new concept of operations has been very productive as it has given way to the discovery of six (improvised explosive devices), four weapon hideouts and numerous arrests. The local population also played an important role as it gave valuable intel to the Afghan forces during the operation," said Chenebeau.

The ANSF and the coalition forces began by defining a precise perimeter at the entry of the Alahsay Valley. The area is known for the ongoing harrying of the local population by the insurgency. Coalition forces secured the perimeter and held the area to prevent any enemy outflow.

The Afghan and French companies simultaneously raked their respective corridors within the secured perimeter from the north toward the south, said ANA Master Sgt. Ali.

"This allowed us to set free the compounds taken over by the



French Army Master Cpl. Baptiste Gomis, a gunner with the Battle Group Raptor, Black Company, secures the perimeter around Alahsay Valley, during a combined operation with Afghan National Army. (Photo by French Army Master Cpl. Sebastien Vermeille, Task Force La Fayette Public Affairs)

insurgent terrorists and investigate them carefully so as to find any hidden evidence of bomb construction or weapon hideouts," said Ali.

The Afghan Local Police also deployed in order to lead the compound searches.

Chenebeau said the operation not only allowed forces to push back the insurgents from what they considered a safe haven, but it has also given birth to mutual operational trust between the paratroopers of Battle Group Raptor and members of the Afghan security forces. ☺

New Leadership



Soldiers of the Afghan National Army parade with the Afghan flag as part of the transition ceremony in Lashkar Gah. Coalition forces officially transferred responsibility for security operations in Lashkar Gah, Helmand province, Afghanistan to Afghan National Security Forces during a ceremony at the provincial governor's compound July 20. (Photo by British Navy Petty Officer Hamish Burke, Regional Command Southwest)

Coalition gives responsibility for Helmand's capitol to Afghans

Story by U.S. Marine Cpl. Adam Leyendecker,
Regional Command Southwest

Coalition forces officially transferred responsibility for security operations in Lashkar Gah, Helmand Province, to Afghan National Security Forces during a ceremony at Gov. Gulab Mangal's compound July 20.

The transfer capped a yearlong process marked by an increasing number of operations in the area being planned and conducted by Afghans.

The handover at Lashkar Gah, the capital of Helmand and the province's largest city, signified the start of Afghans taking responsibility for providing peace and stability to the region's citizens, said Afghan National Army Brig. Gen. Sheren Shah, commanding officer of the 3rd Brigade, 215th Corps.

"Our men have picked up good skills from coalition forces, and we are now ready to take over security," said Sheren Shah.

Coalition forces will remain in the area to help guide a smooth transition and provide advice to the Afghan Forces, said Lt. Col. Alistair Aitken, the commanding officer of Combined Forces Lashkar Gah.

Mangal released a statement following the ceremony in which he thanked the coalition forces and their families for the sacrifices they have made to help make the transition a reality.

"The sacrifices made by the coalition forces [over the last five] years—first led bravely by the British, then the strong Americans and alongside great warriors from Denmark, and Estonia and other nations—will never be forgotten by our people," said Mangal. ☺

BAMYAN OFFERS HOPE FOR AFGHAN FUTURE

*Story and photos by U.S. Army Capt. Kenneth A. Stewart,
17th Public Affairs Detachment*

Bamyan Province is what officials said they hope the rest of Afghanistan can become. Local businesses are open, men and women stroll around town and children play in the streets. It is as if someone forgot to tell the residents of Bamyan that Afghanistan is statistically one of the most dangerous places in the world.

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Operational Coordination Center-East senior adviser, U.S. Marine Corps Lt. Col Chris Frey of Washington D.C., recently led a delegation to Bamyán Province to assess operations at the Bamyán Operational Coordination Center-Provincial.

The Bamyán OCC-P coordinates the activities of Afghan National Security Forces in response to emergencies and natural crisis' throughout the province.

Currently, members of the OCC-P are working with ANSF units to ensure security for newly developed mining operations and the budding Bamyán tourism industry.

"Economic development is key to the region's success," said Frey.

OCC-E commander, Afghan Army Brig. Gen Daud Andurabi said he was happy to visit Bamyán.

"We would like to see how the security transition (to Afghan authority) is progressing," said Andurabi.

One sign of Bamyán's success is the presence of Afghan Uniformed Police officers rather than Afghan soldiers patrolling the streets, he said.

Despite Bamyán's beautiful natural setting and current state of security, the area has been no stranger to brutality in the past.

Bamyán City sits in the stately shadows of the once magnificent Bamyán Buddhas. The Taliban regime destroyed both Buddhas, but the enormous niches from which they loomed over Bamyán City still remain. Efforts are on-going to restore one of the Buddhas to its former glory.

The smaller of the two is covered in scaffolding and being rebuilt through a grant from the government of Japan and the Afghan Ministry of Culture.

There are also hundreds of caves in the cliffs that run parallel to the city. The caves were once used by Buddhist monks. Today, many of the caves are used by local residents as additions to their homes or stables for their animals.

Genghis Khan was also an unwelcome

visitor to the province. The ruins of the city he destroyed, known by locals as the "screaming city," are still here and open to visitors.

"The city got its name when Genghis Khan killed every living thing within its walls," said Afghan National Police officer Col. Ahmed Hussien Ibrahim.

But despite the violence of its past, residents claim Bamyán is now the most secure province in Afghanistan.

"Bamyán is the beginning of security in Afghanistan" said OCC-P Bamyán Commander Afghan Army Brig. Gen. Muhammad Hashim Yaseen. "If we can secure the center, the rest of Afghanistan will follow."

Senior military adviser New Zealand Army Lt. Col. Hugh McAslan attributes much of the region's success to the efforts of Gov. Habiba Sarabi, Afghanistan's first and only female governor.

"(Sarabi) is very effective and forward-thinking," said McAslan. "A lot of our success can be attributed to her leadership and drive."

Afghan President Hamid Karzai appointed Sarabi as governor in 2005.

"(Sarabi) has done a lot to encourage tourism, infrastructure and security," said USAID Private Sector, gender awareness and women's empowerment adviser Mary Jae Sushka of Scottsville, Va. "She is also an advocate on gender relations and women's equality."

Sarabi is also internationally recognized for her work in women's education. She beat the odds as a college graduate in an area with woeful female literacy rates and then became a hematologist and a powerful advocate for the education of women.

In an interview offered at the Afghan Embassy in Japan, Sarabi described what led her to become politically active.

"I couldn't just sit home and do nothing," said Sarabi. "I changed my profession and became involved in social activities; it was because of the Taliban that I chose this path."

Her path included political activism, the establishment of underground schools for

women during the Taliban regime and her current position as governor.

A tour of Bamyán seems to vindicate Sarabi's decision to enter the male dominated world of Afghan politics.

The director of the Provincial Reconstruction Team, Richard Prendergrast of New Zealand, views the transition from military to civilian control of the PRT as another sign of progress in the region.

"The New Zealand Foreign Ministry took the lead at the PRT about a year ago," said Prendergrast. "I have an excellent working relationship with Gov. Sarabi. My main focus is on governance and development due to the excellent security situation."

Prendergrast and Sarabi both see tourism as a potential boon to the nation. They hosted a major tourism conference last month and investors have shown great interest in the area's natural beauty. Afghan-based Kamair already agreed to offer several flights per week to Bamyán City after the air strip is enlarged. ☺

(Previous page) This giant Buddha statue is barely visible in the cliffs of Bamyán Province due to the Taliban's efforts to destroy them in 2001. According to research done by Erwin Emmerling and his team, the Buddhas were created between 544 and 644 A.D., as reported in *The Washington Post*. Designated a World Heritage Site in Danger, the Buddhas are considered by the Heritage foundation to be "an outstanding representation of the Gandharan school in Buddhist art in the Central Asian region."

(Top left) A sign of a more troubled past, Russian tanks dot a field of flowers as remains of their occupation of Afghanistan. The Soviet Union sent troops into Afghanistan in 1979 to protect their national interests and left in 1989 after fighting the Afghan resistance.

(Top right) Scaffolding hugs the facade of the smaller of two ancient Buddhas destroyed by the Taliban as part of an order issued by Mullah Mohammed Omar in 2001 against idolatry. Before the Taliban leveled them, the statues stood 55 meters and 38 meters high, according to *The Guardian*. The Taliban's efforts weakened the cliff face and created instability issues, according to a *CBC News* article in 2007. Recent research on the remains of the statues found that the statues were originally colorful and repainted at various times, according to an article in *The Washington Post*. The Afghan and Japanese governments are working to restore the smaller of the two Buddhas.



An Afghan construction worker lays bricks for the outer wall of the Showat basic health clinic July 12. The project was submitted through the Paktya Provincial Development Plan and is scheduled to open this August. (Photo by U.S. Air Force 1st Lt. Cale Reeves, Paktya Provincial Reconstruction Team)

Paktya PRT checks on medically under-served area

Story by U.S. Air Force 1st Lt. Cammie Quinn,
Paktya Provincial Reconstruction Team Public Affairs

Paktya Provincial Reconstruction Team civil engineers met with Afghan site supervisors to conduct a quality assurance check on the Showat Village basic health clinic July 12.

The meeting was a part of the PRT's ongoing partnership with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to assess development projects sponsored by GIRoA.

The village of Showat is a medically under-served area, as it lies in the mountainous region of Paktya Province, said U.S. Air Force Capt. Tyler Johnson, Paktya PRT civil engineer from San Antonio.

Access to health care is a large problem in the region; the closest health facility to Showat Village is more than two hours walking distance, he added.

"We hope to solve the health problems by having a clinic at our area," Haji Lajar, Showat Village elder, said.

The standard health clinic will see 30 to 50 patients daily and deliver 20 to 30 babies monthly.

With a dedicated location for health care, maternal and child mortality will decrease, and overall village health will increase, said Johnson.

An Afghan construction company first broke ground on the project in March, and is ahead of schedule with 75 percent of construction complete.

Before GIRoA awards a project, it must be nominated as part of the overall Provincial Development Plan, then approved through the Provincial Development Council. This process ensures projects are prioritized by GIRoA officials according to community needs.

"Typically, projects are nominated by

a local villager who identifies a need," Johnson said. "The project is nominated in a Shura (village meeting), and is then nominated to the district sub-governor to be placed on the PDP."

Paktya Gov. Juma Hamdard, places a special emphasis on project quality, said Johnson.

"In the past, some projects were built sub-standard," he said. "Our joint goal is to maintain sustainable value for all current and future projects built within Paktya."

The PRT is currently partnering with GIRoA on 14 projects, worth nearly \$28 million, to include road reconstruction and refurbishment of district community centers. Such partnering efforts help reinforce provincial and local expertise and are an integral to assisting GIRoA in the transition to a sustainable and secure Afghanistan. ☺

U.S., Germans conduct hoist training



Story and photo by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Joe Armas,
1st ACB, 1st Cav. Div., PAO

Since arriving in theater in late May, the 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division has established its place in the NATO footprint and has forged partnerships with NATO allies.

The 1st ACB and the German armed forces have been conducting joint training exercises in an effort to solidify and complement each other's operational capabilities.

As part of this joint effort, Soldiers from the 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division conducted rescue hoist training with a German extrication team July 16.

The training provided an opportunity for the extrication team to gain familiarization with the aircraft hoist as an alternative method for insertion into an area where a vehicle rollover occurred.

The ultimate goal is for the extrication teams to partner with Task Force Lobos' flight medics by using specialized tools to assist patients who are stuck inside of a vehicle with no other means of extraction during medevac missions.

"A vehicle rollover can happen anywhere, especially when you consider the

environment we are in," said U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Travis Brown, flight medic, Company C, TF Lobos, 1st ACB, originally from Bakersfield, Calif.

Furthermore, U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Chad Farris, of Salisbury, N.C., a UH-60L Black Hawk helicopter crew chief, assigned to Company C, TF Lobos, 1st ACB, talked about the importance of aircraft hoist familiarization for the Germans.

In the mountainous and rugged terrain found throughout austere areas of Afghanistan, he said insertion via aircraft hoist can be the only option for medical evacuation personnel or extrication teams.

Brown added, "Having the extrication team members work with us gives an extra capability we wouldn't have otherwise."

Doused in sunlight, the extrication team members began the day with crew briefs, loaded up their equipment and took off in a Black Hawk medevac helicopter to the training site.

There, the training consisted of multiple iterations and a plethora of opportunities for the teams to practice rising and lowering with the aircraft hoist.

The extrication teams also garnered experience dealing with the dusty conditions caused by the powerful rotor wash from the sweeping blades of the Black Hawk helicopter.

Moreover, Brown, who coordinated the training, said that positive communication between his crew and the extrication team was a key aspect in enhancing the training experience for both sides.

Brown touched on the enthusiastic attitude of the Germans.

"They were very eager to start this training.

"They were very hands on and anxious to familiarize themselves with our equipment," Brown said.

One of the members of the extrication team, a master sergeant, said his crew gained a valuable learning experience from the day's training events.

Furthermore, he noted that the training was very realistic and helpful since his team did not have prior experience working with helicopters.

"This was a great first step for us," he added. ☺

(Above) Staff Sgt. Travis Brown, a flight medic assigned to Company C, Task Force Lobos, 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, and a German soldier who is part of an extrication team lower to the ground with an aircraft hoist while latched on to a jungle penetrator during rescue hoist training July 16. The purpose of the training was to familiarize the German extrication team with usage of the aircraft hoist since insertion via the hoist can often times be the only option in certain austere locations within the mountainous terrain of Afghanistan. "A vehicle rollover can happen anywhere, especially when you consider the environment we are in," said U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Travis Brown, flight medic, Company C, TF Lobos, 1st ACB, originally from Bakersfield, Calif.

“Somebody Watching Over Us”

More than 200 insurgents tried to stop 34th ID Soldiers—they failed

Story by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Ryan C. Matson,
Task Force Red Bulls Public Affairs Office

It was the largest battle fought by Soldiers of the 34th Infantry Division since World War II.

It involved only about 40 American Soldiers—the Reconnaissance Platoon from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, and six Soldiers assigned to Company C, both of 1st Battalion, 133rd Infantry Regiment, as well as about 20 of their Afghan counterparts.

Yet this small group of Soldiers from Task Force Ironman was able to thwart an ambush from an enemy force numbering in the hundreds, killing more than 200 insurgent fighters in an intense battle lasting about seven hours. The most amazing part of the whole conflict, the Soldiers involved said, was that there was not one coalition forces' casualty.

“Everybody there in uniform stepped up and did exactly what they're supposed to do,” said U.S. Army Capt. Garrett Gingrich, the commander of Co. C, 1st Bn., 133rd Inf. Regt., from Dysart, Iowa, and one of six C Co. Soldiers who participated in the battle. “Everybody did their job and it was just an amazing, miraculous thing that nobody (from the coalition) got hurt.”

“All I can figure is there was somebody watching over us,” added U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Luke Chatfield, C Co.'s joint fires observer from Floyd, Iowa.

U.S. Army Maj. Aaron Baugher, the battalion operations officer and the battle's senior ground forces commander, explained how his Soldiers wound up in Do Ab.

“There is a district center in Do AB, which would compare to a county courthouse back in the United States,” Baugher explained. “There is also a police headquarters building and a small clinic.”

“The reports we received were that the Do Ab Afghan Uniform Police were attacked by 400 insurgents and the district center and police observation posts were overrun. There wasn't a lot of information. Initially our job was to seize back the district center; however, the mission eventually changed to securing the landing zone and some high ground and getting into a position where we could cover a team of Afghan commandos and U.S. forces so that they could go ahead and clear Do Ab.”

What Baugher did know was that it was 8 a.m., and higher headquarters had given him until 10 a.m. to get some troops to Do Ab to determine what the situation really was.

Baugher summoned the Reconnaissance Platoon, as well as Gingrich and his team from C Co, who immediately flew down to Forward Operating Base Mehtar Lam from Kalagush to meet up with the Recon Platoon.

The timeline ended up getting stretched a little bit, and Baugher, Foote and his men and Gingrich's team, all boarded two CH-47 Chinook helicopters around 1 p.m. to fly to Do Ab.



Soldiers of the Reconnaissance Platoon, 1st Battalion, 133rd Infantry Regiment board two Chinooks for transportation to Do Ab, where the unit would be ambushed and defend against hundreds of enemies. (Photo by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Ryan Matson, Task Force Red Bulls Public Affairs Office)



-From previous page

The two helicopters landed about 300 meters apart. The platoon said they were tactically in one of the worst possible spots to be ambushed from upon landing, but it was the only suitable landing zone in the area.

"We saw the terrain we were headed into out the window and it was really, really steep," Buhr recalled. "Physically the slopes were straight up. It was maybe 150 meters wide east to west in a riverbed—the worst terrain I had ever seen. We could literally only move north toward the district center or south. I remember thinking this is the worst place in the world to land a helicopter, but it was the only place in the area to land."

The Recon Platoon Soldiers have climbed hundreds of mountains throughout their year in Afghanistan and said this was the worst terrain they had faced, "hands down." They also said it was the ultimate place for an enemy ambush, which is exactly what happened. Once in the valley, they faced immediate contact.

"As soon as we got off the bird, we took indirect fire from mortars, small arms fire and RPGs," recalled U.S. Army Spc. Nathan Cunningham, an infantry scout with Recon Platoon.

"The first explosion I heard was an airburst RPG that was aimed at the Chinook, and it was really close," Buhr said. "Every weapons system that the Taliban uses was probably fired at us that day!"

There was nothing to do but seek cover and return fire, the Soldiers said.

"My chalk exited and the first thing we did was immediately run to whatever cover we could find, which ended up being two rocks separated by maybe 30 meters," U.S. Army Sgt. Edward Kane, an infantry team leader who volunteered for the deployment from Portland, Ore., said. "You could run north and south, but the cover was very sparse."

Another problem the Soldiers said they faced was the fact that the enemy was so high, they were able to use what is known as plunging fire to shoot over their cover. They were in one of the worst positions imaginable.

"So, we laid down suppressive fire on all the enemy locations and tried to establish fire superiority using direct fires, sniper fires, indirect fires with our mortar team," Foote said.

Within ten minutes, Apache helicopters also were in the fight, but the enemy continued to attack.

The Soldiers were able to fend off the enemy attack in the landing zone area for

the better part of an hour, before they knew they needed to move to a better position.

"I made the call that we needed cover and needed to move to a series of khalats, animal pens actually, to the North," Baugher said. "It was the best cover available. Other than that, we were sitting on the (landing zone) with some boulders just trying to find some cover there with bullets bouncing all around."

The close air support forces were able to give the Recon Platoon enough of a break in the action via fire superiority to allow the Soldiers to reach the animal pens without much resistance, Foote said.

For six hours the Soldiers, along with their ANA counterparts, fought off the enemy. Meanwhile, the enemy continued to swarm around them in the mountains above, slowly drawing nearer to their positions in the animal pens. The Soldiers did not know it at the time, but the enemy had heavily fortified fighting positions—trenches dug into solid rock that were chest-high.

The Soldiers said they continued to fight, but as the enemy drew closer, air assets started to make the difference in the battle. The joint terminal attack controllers—Airmen who communicate with Army and Air Force aircraft from the

ground—ran between the khalats to get information from the Soldiers on where to drop munitions on the enemy.

"Everybody started helping out the JTACs, calling out distance and direction and stuff," Buhr said.

Meanwhile, the Soldiers in the khalats continued to fight and kill the enemy, but the insurgent forces were continuing to draw nearer. Their shots also became more accurate. A sniper fired within inches of some of the members from Recon Platoon in one of the khalats.

"There was a little doorway they were zeroed in on, and we continually took sniper fire throughout the whole night," Spc. Aaron McNew, a machine gunner from Cedar Falls, Iowa, said.

"We were surrounded 360-degrees and each squad was fighting their own separate fight at this point," Buhr said.

Foote said the platoon pushed out a squad to an eastern ridgeline that immediately took enemy fire.

"I wasn't up there more than about ten minutes when I started taking fire from about 25 meters away," Kane said. "I don't think they knew we were there, but they were just trying to shoot in the general direction they thought we were."

"It got to the point where we dropped bombs literally 250 meters from our position because we had the enemy that close," Baugher said.

Dropping massive bombs that close to U.S. forces, just outside the bomb's

maximum effective range, left no room for error by the pilots, and was a very difficult decision to make, said U.S. Air Force Tech Sgt. Tavis Delaney, a JTAC with the 116th Air Support Operations Squadron, Washington Air National Guard, from Copperopolis, Calif. Delaney worked with Chatfield as part of Gingrich's team to hone in on the enemy positions.

The Soldiers of the Recon Platoon said the bombs were necessary, and made the difference in the battle.

"If they hadn't been there dropping bombs, I don't know that we would have gotten out of that valley," Kane said. "They were getting closer and more accurate."

A lot of munitions were dropped, also.

"If you looked at just the munitions we dropped, you can see how this was easily the biggest single engagement the division has been in since World War II," Baugher said. "We dropped 18 500-pound bombs, expended 80 105mm and 40mm cannon rounds from an AC-130 gunship, fired more than 15 hellfire missiles, 40 to 50 rockets from the rocket pods and about 20,000 .50 cal rounds. We also probably fired from the ground at least 6,500 7.62 rounds, 15,000 5.56mm rounds and probably 50 60mm mortar rounds—that's pretty huge."

After Recon Platoon and Gingrich's small group of Soldiers had fended off the enemy through six hours of fighting, the Afghan commandos and additional American forces finally arrived in

two Chinooks around 7 p.m. There were originally supposed to be two separate drops of reinforcing Soldiers; however, due to the intensity of the gunfire, as well as deteriorating weather conditions, the team of Chinooks only made one run.

"There was a burst from an RPG about 10 meters from where the Chinook was going to land, so it was close," Baugher said.

The Recon Platoon provided cover for the Commandos and American forces while they cleared the Do Ab District Center. After a final burst of enemy resistance, the battle was over, almost as suddenly as it had begun.

"They got fire for about another hour and a half, maybe two hours after that, and then there was total silence," Baugher said. "We found out later that it was the fact that the remaining insurgents had broken contact and fled. The Apaches, and AC-130 gunship had dropped a final heavy series of bombs, causing them to finally flee and preventing additional attacks."

"We spent the next two days securing the (district center) and doing some patrols through the villages. Not a single shot was fired during that time."

It has been a long year of fighting the enemy for the Soldiers of Recon Platoon. But there is one thing they could all say definitively about the battle at Do Ab.

"Nothing was comparable to this," Foote said. "Nothing." ☺

(Above) These photos above came from helmet camera footage shot during the mission to Do Ab. U.S. Army Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 133rd Infantry Regiment, as well as Afghan National Army Soldiers from the 201st Infantry Corps seek cover while under fire shortly after their Air Assault into the valley near the village of Do Ab, Nuristan Province. After using boulders for cover, coalition forces retreated to khalats with the assistance of close air support and fought from that position for six hours against the enemy in fortified positions.



U.S. Army Capt. Jim Humphrey, a nurse with the 352nd Combat Support Hospital, 807th Medical Command, Task Force Duke, and a native of Landstuhl, Germany, checks the chart of a local national being treated at Forward Operating Base Salerno July 8. Local nationals make up about 50 percent of the patients being treated at the facility, which treats trauma patients prior to being shipped to a regular hospital

FOB Salerno hospital treats Afghan residents' injuries

Story and photo by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Andrew Guffey,
Task Force Duke Public Affairs

Soldiers assigned to the 352nd Combat Support Hospital, 807th Medical Command at Forward Operating Base Salerno, not only care for wounded Soldiers, but also provide care for the local population wounded due to combat action.

FOB Salerno's hospital can provide care for any type of injury that may be sustained on the battlefield. Most recently, a woman was brought who had sustained an insurgent-caused gunshot wound to the back and the bullet in her abdomen July 6.

"Around 50 percent of wounded personnel that come in are local nationals," said U.S. Army Maj. Michael Schlosser, a physician with 352nd CSH, 807th MEDCOM, and a native of Fargo, N.D.

Local nationals are only treated if they are wounded by coalition forces, Afghan National Security Forces, or by insurgents that engaged coalition forces or ANSF, said Schlosser; although, they sometimes treat a local national if the local hospital cannot handle that type of injury.

Coalition forces treated the woman's wounds and stabilized her. They transported her to Khowst City Hospital to recover fully.

"It's challenging, working on the local people because of the culture differences we have and the language barrier between us," said U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Mary Romo of Santa Clara, Calif., the chief ward master for the 352nd CSH, 807th MEDCOM.

All local national patients currently being treated at the hospital are expected to make a full recovery, said Schlosser. ☺

FW AUGUST 2011

Commandos, doctors provide medical care



Story and photos by
U.S. Air Force 1st Lt. Cammie Quinn,
Paktya Provincial Reconstruction Team
Public Affairs

Afghan National Army commandos and medical personnel, in conjunction with their coalition forces partners, provided medical care to the children at the Gardez City Orphanage compound July 6.

Afghan medical professionals diagnosed and treated more than 180 orphans with dental, optometry and general medical care.

The Gardez Orphanage houses and supports 100-200 children who have lost at least one parent.

"The children are happy to receive the treatment," said an ANA dentist. "By going on outreaches, we are able to give healthcare to children who may not receive it otherwise."

The ANA dentist evaluated children for oral hygiene, dental disorders and disease.

FW AUGUST 2011

"The pain in my tooth is now gone," said one Afghan orphan who received dental care during the medical outreach.

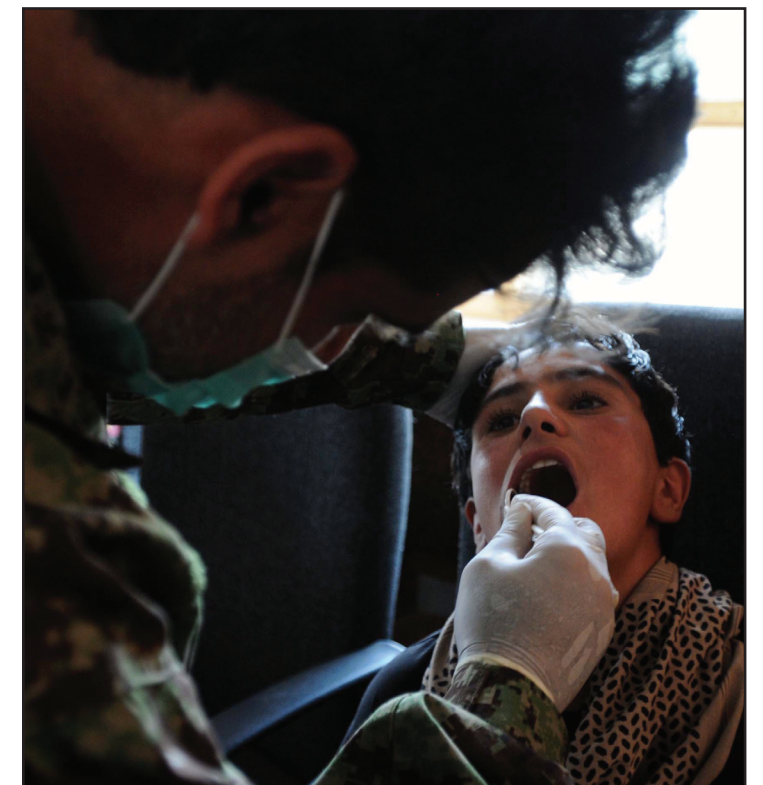
This is the first medical outreach for these medics and the first time the ANA doctors and Afghan Commando Medics have linked to conduct a joint mission.

The event was not possible without the professional security provided by Afghan Commandos, said U.S. Air Force Capt. Benjamin McGarvey, Paktya Provincial Reconstruction Team Physician Assistant from Port Allegany, Penn.

"This demonstrates the ability of Afghan security forces to keep the peace."

The same Afghan Commando medics received mentorship from their ANA counterparts in providing medical care and support to the orphans.

Each commando medic spent time with general medical, dental and optometry providers. ☺



(Top) An Afghan National Army doctor examines a child's eye during a village medical outreach at the Gardez City Orphanage compound July 6. ANA medical personnel and Afghan commandos, in conjunction with their coalition force partners, provided medical care for more than 180 orphans on the compound. (Bottom) An Afghan National Army dentist conducts an oral exam during a medical outreach mission at the Gardez City Orphanage compound July 6.

17

Warrior Watch

U.S. Army Sgt.

Michael Lopez

Story and photo by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. John Zumer,
Task Force Duke Public Affairs

As violent as boxing can be, many participants also tout its therapeutic and physical benefits upon the mind and body. For U.S. Army Sgt. Michael Lopez, a native of Los Angeles and a signal support specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Task Force Duke, both attributes hold true.

Lopez, a six-year Army veteran serving in eastern Afghanistan, dabbled in other sports growing up, especially running. It wasn't until his senior year in high school, however, that he discovered what would prove to be a passion for a life between the ropes.

"I found a level of comfort in boxing that wasn't there in track and cross country," said Lopez.

An amateur fighting record of 12-0 fueled his boxing interests further, and after joining the Army in 2005, those desires continued to grow. With an eye to his future, a duty assignment at the often-frigid Fort Wainwright, Alaska, allowed him to take care of a couple goals simultaneously.

"Going to school and boxing was pretty much all I did in Alaska," he said.

Deciding to test himself further, he entered the All-Army Boxing Competition in December 2005 and made the team. Before being able to compete as a member of the team, however, professional duties intervened with an unexpected and most unfortunate twist.

While deployed to Iraq in 2006, Lopez suffered a leg injury caused by an improvised explosive device that struck the vehicle he was travelling in just outside Taji. The injuries were severe enough for him to take a forced layoff from boxing-related activities for more than a year.

Now that he's fully recovered, Lopez tailored his diet and fitness regimens toward his boxing goals. That includes a 5,000-calories-a-day diet.

"I eat about five or six small meals spread throughout the day," he said, with red meat eaten sparingly every couple weeks.

His main dietary staples are almonds, mixed nuts, whey protein, chicken and fish. Sodas and fried foods are avoided completely, all part of a diet that properly fuels an extensive training regimen.

"I have a routine that I go through with about three to four others," said Lopez.

One of those exercise partners is U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Larissa Kirkland, the property book noncommissioned officer-in-charge for the 3rd BCT, 1st Inf. Div., and a native of Fort Worth, Texas. She asked Lopez to help devise a fitness routine that she could follow based on his boxing workouts.

"The conditioning standard for boxing is what appealed to me," said Kirkland, who had never done any type of boxing fitness regimen previously.

"I needed something new. I had hit a plateau and I needed to change," she said.

Now that she has been doing it for more than three weeks and loves it, she plans on incorporating it into her permanent workout routine. She especially likes the emphasis Lopez places on abdominal work and plyometrics.

"I have incorporated it into my whole routine," said Kirkland.

Lopez said taking the time from his 14-hour work days to help train others still leaves him with ample motivation to push through his own workouts.

His boxing-specific exercises consist of pushing and flipping heavy tires, beating on tires with a sledge hammer, and working on the speed bag and heavy bag at Forward Operating Base Salerno's specialized gym, aptly referred to as "The Dojo" by its numerous patrons. Actual sparring will only come after Lopez feels his body is fully prepared for the rigors of the ring.

"I'm still in my conditioning phase," said Lopez of his present two-week cycle largely consisting of cardio, plyometrics and abdominal work.

On top of his busy work and exercise schedules, he still finds the necessary time to carry four online college courses through the University of Louisville, with the goal of earning a degree in anthropology.

Lopez's Army enlistment will expire in April 2012, when he'll look forward to becoming a full-time student at the U of L campus. 📧





U.S. Army Maj. George McCommon (right) from Macon, Ga., and U.S. Army Sgt. Maj. Lynward Hall (left) of Statesboro, Ga., administer worm medication to a donkey on Combat Outpost Baraki Barak. McCommon and Hall, respectively the veterinarian and non-commissioned officer in charge of the Georgia Agribusiness Development Team, travelled to the COP to provide U.S. Army donkeys with routine preventive care. (Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Christopher Ellis, Georgia ADT)

Georgia ADT maintains traditional form of transportation—donkeys

Story by U.S. Army Spc. Christopher J. Hall,
Georgia Agribusiness Development Team Public Affairs

The United States military is the most technologically advanced military in the world. In the unforgiving terrain of Afghanistan, even a Caterpillar engine and four-wheel drive capabilities won't cut it sometimes; however, the U.S. Army is never too proud to employ a more traditional means of cargo transport—donkeys. The Army wasn't kidding when they told their Soldiers to adapt and overcome.

In a recent mission to Combat Outpost Baraki Barak, Soldiers from the Georgia Agribusiness Development Team provided care for the rugged, four-legged Soldiers of the 10th Mountain Division.

"If the donkeys aren't in great shape, they're unable to accomplish the mission the Army has tasked them with," said U.S. Army Maj. George McCommon, the Georgia ADT's veterinarian and a horse vet by trade from Macon, Ga. "Their hooves must be in good condition in order to handle the rocky, mountainous terrain."

While the team was in Baraki Barak, they provided the Army donkeys with routine preventive care, including specialized hoof care.

For these unsung quadruped heroes of the 10th Mountain Division, moving through the mountains is just another day in the life of a donkey in the Army. Donkeys serve a critical role for

coalition forces in the mountainous terrain. They are used to carry mission-essential equipment and supplies for Soldiers.

"Not only do Army donkeys provide a logistical function, they are an example to the Afghan people of appropriate and humane animal care," said McCommon.

The Georgia ADT veterinary team shared their special knowledge with local officials in an effort to improve animal care in the area.

U.S. Army Sgt. Maj. Lynward Hall, the Georgia ADT non-commissioned officer in charge, was a part of the donkey mission.

"Working on large animals in the middle of a combat zone was a unique experience; it was an unexpected mission for me," said Hall, a native of Statesboro, Ga. "Back home, (we) have many cows and goats, so caring for large animals is nothing new to me."

While the team was in Baraki Barak, they surveyed a demonstration farm with the Afghan district sub-governor. The South Carolina ADT initiated the demonstration farm project while deployed here two years ago, said Hall.

"The Donkey Mission" was very successful for the Georgia ADT, not to mention for the donkeys. McCommon and Hall said they were able to elevate the donkeys to a superior health status and further promote the Georgia ADT's mission.

"The many friends we made, both Afghan and American, will prove invaluable as we initiate agricultural projects in the Logar Province," said McCommon. 🍌



Nangarhar University receives textbooks

Story and photo by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Amber Robinson,
Task Force Bronco Public Affairs

Nangarhar University received more than 4,500 textbooks, delivered by the Army Corps of Engineers Afghanistan Engineering District-North Jalalabad Area Office.

The U.S. Agency for International Development and the Government of Afghanistan Ministry of Higher Education coordinated the project to bring the books to the university. The Capacity Development branch of USACE, Afghanistan Engineering Program-North funded the project through the Commander's Emergency Response Program.

"We noticed late in 2010 that many universities were using paper copies of textbooks," said U.S. Army Maj. Erica Iverson of Vermillion, S.D., chief of the Synchronization and Initiatives Group, Capacity Building Team, USACE, Afghanistan Engineering Program-North.

Established in 1963, Nangarhar University managed to prosper and expanded its education program, but it has not been immune to the country's strife.

Prior to the engineers' hefty book delivery, the library was completely bare. Now, 357 boxes of various engineering textbooks and reference books are stacked inside the spacious, sunny room.

"It is very difficult to get textbooks," said Professor Arifullah Mandozai, dean of the university. "If we had to buy these books on our own, we would not be able to buy this many good, quality books in 10 years time."

The project supports the emphasis on education of the Afghanistan National Developmental Strategy, presented at the Kabul Conference on July 20, 2010. The curricula of Afghanistan's universities are being revised to meet the developmental needs of the country, private sector growth and accreditation, said Iverson.

"No proper education is why our country is in its current state," said Dr. Mohammed Sabar, chancellor of the university.

"It is important to get an education; all people are improved with education," Sabar said. "If we can improve education, we can improve Afghanistan. We need more good educated people to help the community." 🍌

Coalition, Afghans teach fundamentals of policing



Story and photos by U.S. Army Sgt. Tyler McWilliams, Task Force Redhorse

The first multinational, coalition training team taught Afghan National Police recruits the fundamentals of law enforcement at the new Korean Training Center on Forward Operating Base Tiger.

The training team consisted of the Korean Police Mentor Team, U.S. Military Police with the 1st Squadron, 113th Cavalry Regiment, Task Force Redhorse 2nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division, TF Red Bulls and the Afghan Ministry of the Interior.

The four-week program trains new ANP recruits not yet certified by the

MOI academy. The morning classes conducted by MOI include close-quarter battle drills, police tactics, human rights, military principles, police law, criminal law, constitutional law and check point regulation.

The afternoon classes taught by the Koreans include Tae Kwon Do, arresting, use-of-force and police ethics.

The U.S. MPs helped MOI instructors on computer training, slide-show presentations, improvement on class instruction, and led classes on weapons handling, live-fire range control, improvised explosive device training, survival skills, building entry and patrol procedures.

This was the final course in which U.S. forces will be involved. The MOI training

(Top) Afghan Ministry of Interior instructor Sareef Mohameed instructs students in close-quarter combat drills at Forward Operating Base Tiger. The first multinational, coalition training team taught Afghan National Police recruits the fundamentals of law enforcement at the new Korean Training Center. "We would like to see this become a certified officer school, used as a train-the-trainer program," said one Afghan involved with the program.

(Left) Korean Police Mentor Team instructors teach Afghan National Police trainees arresting techniques, including Tae Kwon Do, in the newly built training center on FOB Tiger. The trainees also received instructions on combating improvised explosive devices, weapons handling, survival skills, patrol procedures, entering a building and live-fire range control from U.S. Army Soldiers. This four-week course will be the final course in which U.S. forces will be involved. The MOI training team will take over the course, receiving support from the Korean training team.

team will take over as lead instructors with full support of the Korean team.

"The MOI team has shown full knowledge and aptitude to successfully take over where the American team has left off," said U.S. Army Sgt. Adam Berger of Olathe, Kan., and MP with TF Redhorse.

"MOI is moving towards making this training program at FOB Tiger an eight-week certified academy to take over for the Parwan Province to keep students in the local area, instead of having to send them to the academy in Kabul," said Berger.

Afghan officials said they would also like to make FOB Tiger the home of the officer and noncommissioned officer advanced academy. ☺

Afghans receive vocational training



An Afghan instructor (left), with ITT contracting group, teaches members of the Afghan National Armed Forces how to measure pipes while teaching them plumbing at the Construction and Property Management Department compound in Kabul, July 14.

Story and photo by U.S. Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Jared Walker, NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan

Members of the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police completed a six month vocational skills course at the Construction and Property Management Department compound in Kabul July 14.

This is the first class to graduate from the course, which

trains for vocational trades such as electrical, plumbing, welding and HVAC.

ANA Sgt. Sayed Hameed, welding student and class president, said that each ANSF member that attended the course learned their trade in a professional way and also learned to be united with each other.

"Anything that ANA needs I can make for them and doing so makes life easier for the ANA," Hameed said. "But

will not be a need for contractors to come because they will be able to take care of their issue by themselves."

Another instructor at CMPD, Baryalai Osmani, said that he likes to teach because he is teaching the ANSF how to be plumbers, which is important because currently plumbing is done by contractors.

"Maybe in three or four years, ANA members will be doing their own plumbing by themselves," said Osmani. "The operation and maintenance of plumbing systems is very important for them to know because it helps them solve their own problems on the work sites."

Self sufficiency and environmental awareness is also a goal for the program

"My goal is to make Afghanistan green and clean with plumbing systems, so by teaching others to be plumbers, I am reaching that goal and helping Afghanistan," added Osmani.

Another person excited about this program is ANA Col. Amanullah Safi, the General Director at CMPD.

"These students will eventually take over of what contractors currently do," said Safi. "Right now, we face a problem because of the eventual turnover to the ANSF members, and we don't currently have the numbers needed in these jobs, so we need our own people to know these skills so they can fix it themselves."

"This course and the graduation is just the beginning of the work. I know we will face a lot of problems, but in the future we will face them and overcome them. We are not going to solve our problems 100 percent, but with the graduation of this class and others in the future, we will be more capable to take care of our own maintenance. I personally believe that this course is the future of Afghanistan because it will help the transition and stability." ☺

most importantly, I can help not only the ANA, but the people of Afghanistan as well."

Shir Hassan, HVAC instructor at CMPD compound, said that he likes to teach because students can learn the trade and improve their future.

"Learning this trade can help them where they are needed: their homes and jobs and even with other ANA members," said Hassan. "Also, once the ANA and ANP learn this trade there

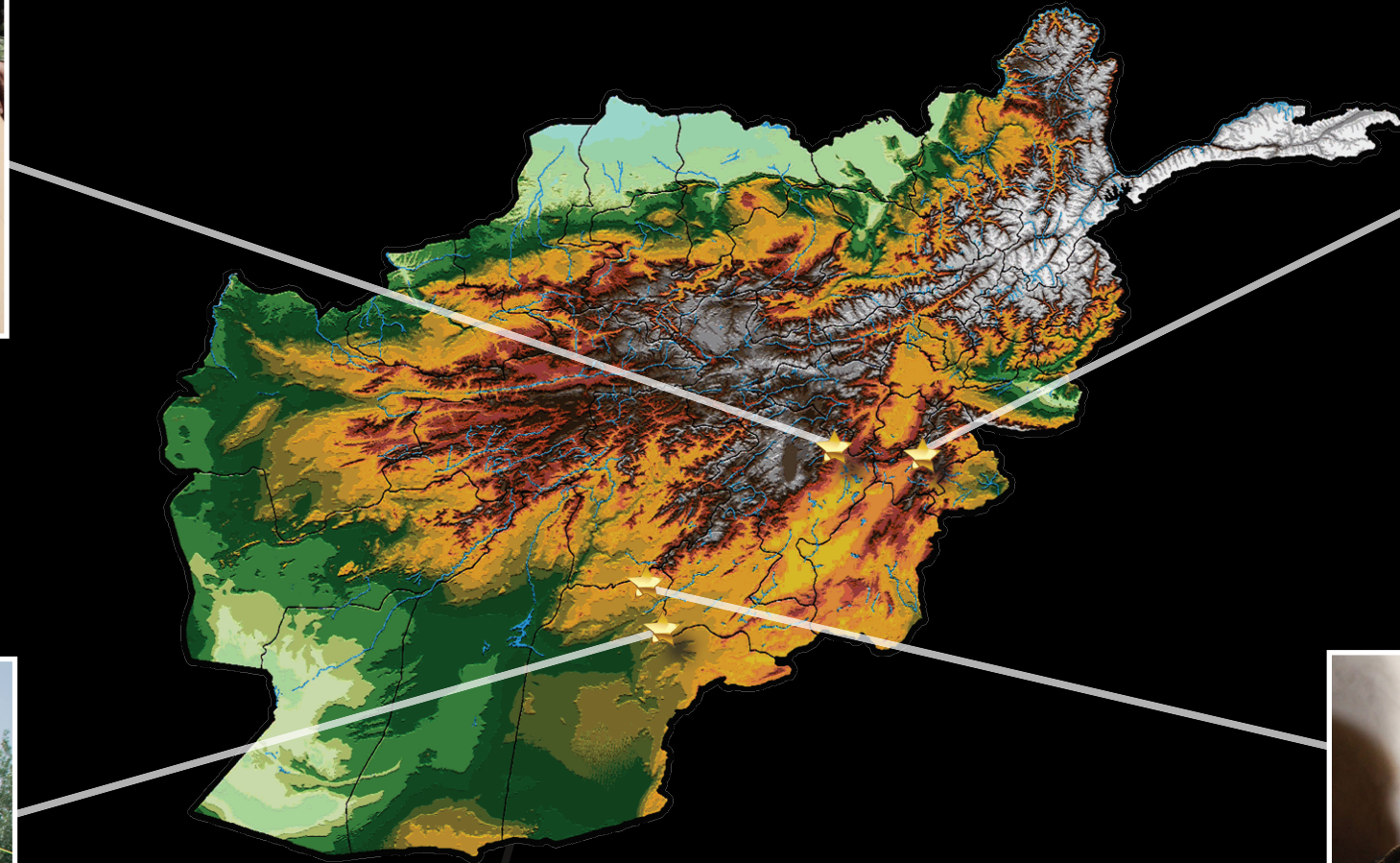
Goodwill across Afghanistan:

ISAF and ANSF Reach Out



Afghan National Army soldiers unpack supplies as part of a Czech Provincial Reconstruction Team renovation of a dining hall and first aid station at Alitmur Base, Pul-e Alam District July 20. (Photo by Filip Moravec Czech Provincial Reconstruction Team)

A student at an all boys school in Alingar District sits at his desk waiting for class to start July 13. Laghman Provincial Reconstruction Team visited the school on the way to meet with the district leader. Children from the United States donated school supplies so the Afghan children can study better. (Photo by U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Ryan Crane, Provincial Reconstruction Team Laghman)



U.S. Army Col. James Edwards, commander, 525th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, and representatives from the U.S. State Department, Canada and the Weesh District government, break ground for the customs depot expansion project in Weesh July 6. (Photo by U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Jessica Lockoski, 525th BfSB Public Affairs)

An Afghan boy receives medicine from a U.S. Army Soldier at Kalach in Uruzgan Province July 14. The boy came to the clinic with his parents after complaining of stomach pain. (Photo by U.S. Army Pfc. Simon Lee, Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force Afghanistan Media Operations Center)



Roughing It

A look at Soldiers who served in one of Afghanistan's remotest outposts, their journey back to civilization

*Story by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Ryan C. Matson,
Task Force Red Bulls Public Affairs*

As U.S. Army Capt. Kevin Hrodey and U.S. Army 1st Lt. Elliott Henderson sat under a cammo net stretched between a Hesco barrier and a connex, they were all smiles, knowing it would be one of their final days in the Bad Pech District Center “lounge” before going home.

The two Soldiers were the last Co. B Soldiers to leave the Bad Pech. The district center had served as home to Hrodey, Henderson and the other Soldiers from Company B, 1st Battalion, 133rd Infantry Regiment, Task Force Ironman, 2nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division, TF Red Bulls, for the last two months. It was one of the most remote assignments in all of northeastern Afghanistan, requiring the Soldiers to sleep in hand-dug fighting position holes for the first three to four weeks after arriving in early May.

U.S. Army Soldiers from Company B, 1st Battalion, 133rd Infantry Battalion, Task Force Ironman, 2nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division, TF Red Bulls, and Afghan National Army and Afghan National Civil Order Police patrol the area outside the Bad Pech District Center in Laghman Province. The center was established after Soldiers swept the valley during Operation Bullwhip. The center has become a convenient point for locals to access the government. (Photo by U.S. Army Capt. Kevin Hrodey, Task Force Ironman)

“We got dropped off here in the middle of nowhere on a plateau,” said Hrodey, the Co. B commander. “When we got here, the Hesco barriers were just being added; the perimeter was pretty much constant wire. Our guys were living in fighting positions on the border.”

Still, Henderson said, the Soldiers loved it.

“Out here is the mission we always wanted,” Henderson said. “We’re getting out into a new environment. The terrain here is a challenge in and of itself, and we’re working with a totally virgin territory and starting something from scratch.”

For the previous six months before arriving at the district center, Hrodey’s Soldiers enjoyed what they called an “easy” and even “boring” assignment at Torkham Gate on the Pakistan Border, providing gate security there. They enjoyed a nice chow hall, working toilets and showers.

All that changed in early May when Co. B left for the Bad Pech.

“Out here is the mission we always wanted.”

-U.S. Army 1st Lt. Elliott Henderson

The district center was born in early April at the end of Operation Bullwhip. Soldiers cleared the valley and established the center, which began as a joint security compound, with members of the Afghan National Army, Afghan National Civil Order Police, Afghan Uniform Police and National Directorate of Security all occupying the small compound.

“I think the biggest reason the Soldiers have enjoyed this mission is it allows them more interaction with their International Security Forces Afghanistan partners and the citizens of the valley,” said Hrodey. “We meet daily with the district subgovernor, the ANP commander, the ANA commander, the ANCOP commander, the NDS and all the local village elders.”

Hrodey said the center has become recognized as a form of government in the valley where villagers can speak with subgovernor Haji Alif Shaw.

Though the 133rd’s Soldiers swept through the valley without contact, seizing large amounts of enemy weapons before establishing the district center during Bullwhip, the enemy maintains a presence in Galuch Valley. Hrodey said the center is often attacked by indirect fire, as many FOBs and combat outposts are throughout eastern Afghanistan, and Co. B Soldiers also fought

off a complex attack. However, occupying the area before the operation was an impossibility.

Hrodey and Henderson said the company enjoyed adopting a more traditional infantry role at the Bad Pech, patrolling the villages and area of operations around the district center with their Afghan counterparts. At Torkham, most of the unit’s patrols were mounted, but here that was not the case. They said a particular highlight was climbing one of the bordering 6,500 foot mountains on a 15 kilometer movement one day.

The conditions at the center have improved since the Soldiers arrived in Bad Pech. No, there are no showers or latrines. However, where there were once only holes in the ground. Soldiers now sleep in air-conditioned tents, have internet access and resources to call home. And Hrodey said they wouldn’t trade their time here for anything in the world.

“It’s gonna sound funny, but turning this place over to Company A, 1st Battalion, 61st Cavalry Squadron (the replacing unit) is going to be bitter-sweet,” Hrodey said. “On one hand, I wanna go home and see my wife and family, but I’d like to see the progress here continue. I plan on staying in touch with our counterparts and seeing what happens next.” ☺



Falcon Soldiers participate in mass casualty exercise

Story and photos by U.S. Army Pfc. Michael Syner,
Task Force Falcon Public Affairs

Soldiers of the 10th Mountain Division, Task Force Falcon, held a force protection exercise with a twist at Bagram Airfield. The exercise simulated attacks that resulted in casualties, forcing the Soldiers to react appropriately to casualties while continuing security for the brigade's operating area.

"We wanted to take (the force protection exercise) to the next level," said U.S. Army Capt. Matthew Romanych, the Headquarters and Headquarters Company commander from Piseco Lake, N.Y. and primary organizer of the event. "We wanted to add a little more realism so that Soldiers would be prepared to react if something serious happens."

The training began at night with the company sending a message to HHC Soldiers and neighboring Falcon units, including TF Observe Detect Identify and Neutralize-Afghanistan and TF Mountain Eagle to immediately increase security.

The Soldiers demonstrated their ability to increase security on the task force's area, restrict passage and patrol nearby areas to help protect important assets on the camp, to include the 10th Combat Aviation Brigade headquarters.

Ordinarily, demonstrating their proficiency would have been the extent of the training, but the Soldiers who responded were instructed that, in the exercise scenario, the camp had been hit with indirect fire and had likely suffered casualties.

After being briefed, the Soldiers on the FORCEPRO teams moved out, assuming their positions as stationary and patrolling guards.

While the FORCEPRO Soldiers played a significant role in the exercise, the training also tested the mettle of TF Falcon medics and doctors.

"Our medics are going to set up a casualty collection point and treat patients," said U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Anthony Trick, the medical operations noncommissioned officer in charge, and native of Inverness, Fla. "They'll treat patients there until the casualties can be moved off to a facility, like what we'd do in real life."

About half an hour into the exercise, the casualties started screaming (if conscious) to attract the patrolling Soldiers. After discovering a casualty, the teams reacted quickly to determine how severe the wounds were, provide medical treatment immediately if necessary and move the patient to the casualty collection point.

"We want realism," said Romanych. "I want these Soldiers, who would be responsible for keeping a lot of people safe, to know that they are capable of performing during the real deal."

As Soldiers brought the casualties to the CCP, the medics manning the station reacted quickly, tearing off armor, placing tourniquets, bandages and splints to stabilize patients and moving casualties out of the way so that others may be treated.

"The medics are a huge part of this exercise," said U.S. Army Spc. Jessica Williamson, a medic with the 10th CAB Aviation Consolidated Aid Station and one of the organizers for the training exercise.

"We have to know if our massive casualty reaction plan works," the Long Island, N.Y., native, added.

After roughly two hours, the exercise ended and the Soldiers on the FORCEPRO team rescued all of the casualties.

"The exercise went well," Romanych said. "The whole purpose of these things is to identify deficiencies and correct them. I'm confident in the abilities of the Soldiers assigned to protecting the camp." 📷



(Right) U.S. Army Sgt. Michael Smale (right) of New Bedford, Mass., a medic with the 10th Combat Aviation Brigade's Aviation Consolidated Aid Station, treats U.S. Army Spc. Madison Isaacs, a simulated casualty with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, Task Force Falcon, and a native of Mountain Home, Ark., during a training exercise at Bagram Airfield. Smale, along with other medics in the ACAS, responded to a massive casualty training scenario by treating patients brought to their casualty collection point. **(Opposite page)** Medics treat their patient U.S. Army Pfc. Wendell Brown, a Baltimore native with Headquarters Support Company, Task Force Mountain Eagle, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, for the numerous mock wounds he received from a simulated mortar attack during a training exercise.



An Afghan soldier from the 203rd Thunder Corps prays in a mosque July 22, in preparation for Ramadan. During Ramadan, which last 29 to 30 days, Muslims refrain from eating and drinking from sunrise to sunset which is intended to teach Muslims peace and spirituality. (Photo by U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Chad C. Strohmeyer, MPAAT-2)

Ramadan is time of reflection, spiritual renewal

Editorial by U.S. Army Capt. Kenneth A. Stewart,
17th Public Affairs Detachment

Muslims throughout Afghanistan are preparing to usher in the month of Ramadan. Ramadan is a trying, yet joyous time for Muslims around the world. Families get together, adult children come home and friends share in the special “spirit” of Ramadan.

The fast begins with the sighting of the new moon, known in Arabic as the hilal. Families often gather on rooftops in order to catch a glimpse of the moon for themselves. Fasting becomes obligatory the morning after the sighting of the moon.

The fast is a major undertaking. Most Muslims begin fasting approximately forty five minutes before sunrise. For those fasting in Afghanistan this year, fasting is scheduled to begin around 3 a.m. and will end daily around 7 p.m.

Observant Muslims fast from food, water, sexual activity and even anger. The fast is traditionally broken by eating a date and drinking a small amount of water followed by prayers and a large meal known as the iftar.

Sunni Muslims follow their regular evening prayers with a lengthy communal prayer known as tarweeya. During tarweeya, long sections of the Koran are recited so that by the end of the month the entire Koran will be completed.

Not all Muslims practice tarweeya, but all Muslims agree the

Koran was revealed to Muhammad during Ramadan and it is a blessed act to complete the recitation of the Koran at least one time during the month.

According to Islamic tradition, the angel Gabriel came to Muhammad during the month of Ramadan while he was meditating in a cave outside of Mecca and revealed the first verse of the Koran.

“Read, in the Name of your Lord” (Koran 96:1).

The anniversary of this event is known as the, “Night of Power.” Although Muslims do not know the specific date of the event, they believe that it was an odd numbered evening toward the end of the month. Muslims believe that prayers offered on this night are particularly meritorious and some Muslim groups, especially the Hanafi of Afghanistan, set up small tents in the mosque and stay there to reflect upon God and read the Koran during this time period.

Despite the austerity of the month, Ramadan is a time of happiness. It is also a time of spiritual renewal. Muslims used the month to reconnect to God and recharge their spiritual batteries for the rest of the year.

Muhammad referred to Ramadan as the, “best of months” and it is believed the prayers offered throughout Ramadan are especially beneficial to the faithful. For non-Muslim servicemembers deployed to Muslim countries, Ramadan offers many opportunities to bond with their Muslim counterparts.



(Above) Afghan soldiers from the 203rd Thunder Corps pray in a mosque July 22, in preparation for Ramadan. (Below) U.S. Army Capt. Kenneth A. Stewart, 17th Public Affairs Detachment, holds prayer beads after praying in a mosque July 22 in preparation for Ramadan. (Photos by U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Chad C. Strohmeyer, MPAAT-2)

Often coalition members spend too much time worrying about offending Muslim sensibilities and not enough time seeking to share in this special time.

It is an excellent time to build relationships with their Muslim counterparts.

General Order One prohibits non-Muslim servicemembers from entering Islamic houses of worship, but there is no prohibition against sharing an iftar meal or participating in Eid celebrations.

Eid is the holiday that celebrates the end of fasting. Traditionally, parents give their children money and new clothes to celebrate.

Servicemembers have an opportunity to build tremendous good will by offering Eid gifts to children or by wishing their Muslim counter parts a hearty, “Eid Mubarak!” the Muslim equivalent to, “merry Christmas or happy Chanukah.”

There are a couple of things servicemembers should keep in mind during the fasting season. It is considered rude to eat or drink in front of people who are fasting. There is no religious prohibition against non-Muslim eating or drinking, but it is in poor taste and may make their Muslim counterparts fast more difficult.

It is not uncommon to see non-Muslims join their Muslim counterparts in a day of fasting. Generally, to share in the fast is well received, but non-Muslim servicemembers should be careful.

Servicemembers who are engrossed in strenuous physical activity, who are ill or women who are menstruating should not attempt to fast, Muslims themselves do not fast under these conditions.

Ramadan is a blessed time of year.

Despite the hunger, thirst and irritability that are a byproduct of fasting, Muslims generally look forward to the, “Month of Mercy,” and feel a tinge of sadness as the month passes. ☺



Story Snapshots



Car Shop

A member of the Afghan Uniform Police watches U.S. Army Sgt. Mark R. Sheafer, an all-wheeled vehicle mechanic from Newtown Square, Pa., assigned to Troop C, 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, Task Force Raider, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, TF Bronco, as he gets ready to change the oil in an AUP humvee at Forward Operating Base Shinwar in eastern Afghanistan's Nangarhar Province July 17. The AUP use the training provided to fix their vehicles and train other members of their unit. (Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Mark Burrell, Task Force Bronco Public Affairs)



Progress

Al VanGuilder (left), an engineer attached to Khowst Provincial Reconstruction Team from Duluth, Minn., and Perveen Iqbal (right), Khowst PRT linguist from Fremont, Cali., speak to a local engineer about the progress of a madrassa retaining wall project in the Matun District July 7. The 300-meter wall will help prevent erosion around the school. (Photo by U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Sandra Welch, Khowst Provincial Reconstruction Team Public Affairs)



On the street

U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Steven Armenta, rifleman, patrols Qalat City July 16. Armenta is a member of Provincial Reconstruction Team Zabul's security force and is deployed from Malmstrom Air Force Base, Mont. (Photo by U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Grovert Fuentes-Contreras, Provincial Reconstruction Team Zabul)

Firepower

Afghan National Army recruits fire the .50 cal. Heavy Machine Gun during a night exercise held at the Infantry Branch School, Camp Julien, July 19. The exercise is the last live heavy weapons fire before graduation from bootcamp for the Afghan soldiers. (Photo by U.S. Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Michael James, NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan)



Watching

Two Afghan children watch from behind the wall of a khalat as U.S. Army Soldiers from Company C, 1st Battalion, 133rd Infantry Regiment, Task Force Ironman, 2nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 34th Mountain Division, TF Red Bulls, and Afghan National Army soldiers from 2nd Platoon, 1st Kandak, 201st ANA Infantry Corps, patrol through Khanda Village, Laghman Province. (Photo by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Ryan C. Matson, Task Force Red Bulls Public Affairs)



JRADS at work

The joint recovery and distribution system is proving successful in vehicle recovery in Afghanistan. Here, soldiers with the 584th Maintenance Company, 142nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 101st Sustainment Brigade, use the JRADS to recover a downed Apache helicopter. (Courtesy photo)



Maintenance

U.S. Marine Cpl. Pedro Guzman, a Marine Attack Squadron 513 avionics technician and El Paso, Texas, native, performs maintenance on one of the squadron's AV-8B Harrier's 30 KVA generators in the squadron hangar at Kandahar Airfield. (Photo by U.S. Marine Pfc. Sean Dennison, 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward))



Under the hood

Olathe, Kan., native Lance Cpl. Daniel Korb works on a Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle. The Motor Transport mechanic with 3rd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, works tirelessly alongside his fellow Marine mechanics to keep the more than 240 MRAPs and other combat vehicles ready to roll and safe to operate. (Photo by U.S. Marine Cpl. Marco Mancha, 2nd Marine Division)

Power on

An overhead view of the Kajaki hydroelectric plant: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Afghanistan Engineer District-South and Afghan engineers recently completed installation of a primary switch center at the Kajaki dam to resolve electrical problems. The power plant services a number of key areas of southern Afghanistan including Sangin, Lashkar Gah, Kandahar city and Tangi. At Tangi, the line voltage is increased to 20kV to provide service to Musa Qal'ah. (Photo by U.S. Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Jonathan Chandler, Regional Command Southwest.)



Overwatch

U.S. Army Spc. Jesse Sprank, an infantry squad designated marksman from Bellevue, Iowa, with Company A, 1st Battalion, 133rd Infantry Regiment, provides overwatch to members of the Kansas Agricultural Development Team as they talk about a project in the town of Gomerai, Laghman Province. Sprank and his fellow Soldiers from Company A were wrapping up a year of patrol through the rugged mountains surrounding Combat Outpost Najil in northeastern Afghanistan. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Ryan Matson, Task Force Red Bulls Public Affairs Office)



FET on patrol

U.S. Marine Lance Cpl. Jacqueline Veres (right), of Female Engagement Team 13 in Sangin, Helmand province, patrols through a cornfield with Marines with 1st Platoon, Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, and Afghan National Army soldiers July 14. Veres, of Canton, Ga., went on the patrol alongside the Marines of 1/5 and the ANA to talk to locals about how the FET can help improve their way of life. (Photo by U.S. Marine Cpl. Katherine Keleher, Regional Command Southwest)

Transportation unit provides life in desert

Story and photos by
U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Gino
Flores, Regional Command Southwest

The Motor Transport Platoon of Task Force Belleau Wood plays an essential role in security as well as the supply lifeline of the forward operating bases near Camp Leatherneck on a day-to-day basis.

The Motor Transport Platoon, often referred to by Marines as "Motor-T," is tasked with being ready to transport supplies, equipment and personnel as needed throughout the unit's areas of operations in Helmand province.

This Motor-T Platoon is different and must be almost entirely self-sufficient, said Staff U.S. Marine Sgt. Bryan Thrift, the platoon's assistant convoy commander.

"We run our own trucks, security and communications independently, whereas other logistics platoons operate with the combined support and coordination of other units in order to stay on mission," said Thrift, a native of Northumberland, Va. "We [manage] everything internally that is organic to the platoon."

The platoon transports the supplies that sustain TF Belleau Wood's detachments and personnel at FOBs. The convoys move essentials such as food, water, fuel and ammo.

"You can't go anywhere or can't do anything: lots of things can't happen if you don't have motor transport [deliveries]," said Thrift.

The Motor-T platoon uses a combination of cargo and Mine Resistant Ambush Protected tactical vehicles in its convoys. They pre-plan their missions to identify the least hazardous routes and potential hot spots of insurgent activity.

"We gather the latest intel, analyze and plan the routes prior to going outside the wire," said U.S. Marine Staff



Sgt David Yeingst, the platoon's convoy commander.

"We are also involved in escorting VIPs and other operations where we do our own security foot patrols," added Yeingst, a native of Liverpool, Pa.

The unit has also conducted searches in villages in its area of operations and found weapons caches and detained insurgents, he added.

The hazards of the area means the Marines must always practice situational awareness. Their convoys shake, rattle and roll off the beaten path in the desert between villages and fields, always on the lookout for IEDs and suspicious activity. ☺



(Top) Marines with the Motor Transport Platoon, Task Force Belleau Wood, prepare to connect a tow bar to free a Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle from the desert sands of Helmand Province July 11.

(Above) Marines with the Motor Transport Platoon, Task Force Belleau Wood, convoy through the deserts of Helmand Province toward Camp Leatherneck following a supply delivery July 11. The platoon serves as the logistical lifeline to TF Belleau Wood personnel at forward bases around the province.



U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Edward Duran of Downey, Calif., with Operations Company, Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, Task Force Maverick 1st Cavalry Division, directs his security force while providing security for Army officials during a visit to Bala Hesar a fortress in Gardez, Afghanistan. The fortress serves as a base for a new Afghan quick reaction force. The visit was part of an effort by officials to determine what facilities and training the Afghan security members needed.

U.S. seeks to improve Afghan force

Story and photo by U.S. Army Spc. Adam L. Mathis,
17th Public Affairs Detachment

It's called the high fort. Perched in the center of Gardez, an ancient structure known as Bala Hesar, meaning "high fortress," has seen plenty of service in Afghanistan. Part of the fortress is believed to have been built by Alexander the Great in the fourth century B.C.; old artillery pieces and a large spotlight on its keep indicate more recent use.

During the early stages of the U.S. liberation of Afghanistan, according to The Christian Science Monitor, forces loyal to now President Hamid Karzai gathered at its base to take the city for its appointed leader.

And now, it is being used to defend the people of Afghanistan against the insurgency.

Afghan National Security Forces decided to use the ancient structure to house a

quick reaction force comprised of Afghan National Army, Afghan Uniformed Police, Afghan National Civil Order Police and Afghan Border Police servicemembers.

While strategically located near what needs protection, the buildings' ages present a problem, one that drew U.S. Army leaders stationed at nearby Forward Operating Base Lightning to the new military outpost for an inspection.

"Basic necessities such as clean drinking water, latrine and shower facilities, power generation and food preparation facilities were lacking," said U.S. Army Lt. Col. Brian Horine of Phoenix, deputy commander of the Operational Coordination Center Regional-East. "That established the baseline for us to plan for future support."

Though it lacks many necessities, the advantages of stationing a force in the high fort are not easily dismissed. Afghan

National Security Forces recently learned insurgents planned to cause some kind of trouble in the city. In response to the intelligence, ANA 2nd Lt. Asadullah, a squad commander with 3rd Brigade, 3rd Kandak, 203rd Corps, said officials placed the force here to be near any possible problems.

"If something happened, we can show a reaction as soon as possible," said Asadullah through an interpreter.

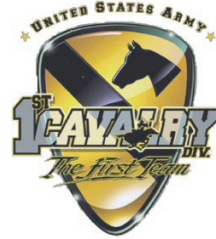
To help them in their mission, Horine said officials plan to hold another inspection with ANSF leaders to show them the problems associated with barracking troops in this location.

Regardless of the changes to come, the presence of the force offers some protection for the residents of Gardez and gives the Afghan security forces a chance to help their neighbors.

"I'm just happy that I'm here, and I'm helping my people," said Asadullah. ☺

SAFETY GRAM

SAFETY GRAM OEF XII.02



SUMMER HEAT

Heat strain and dehydration can accumulate over several days before causing heat illness; therefore, during recovery periods, emphasize rest, shade, hydration, and eating.



SWEATIN' IT:

- Implement work/rest cycles
- Hydrate properly to replace fluids lost through sweating
- Eat well balanced and regular meals
- Avoid using salt tablets unless directed by a doctor
- Wear loose, lightweight clothing to encourage heat release

PROTECTION FROM THE SUN:

- Wear sunglasses with total UV protection
- Wear wide brimmed hats, long sleeved shirts
- Avoid direct exposure as much as possible during peak UV radiation hours
- Apply sunscreen

WATCH YOUR BATTLE BUDDY FOR SIGNS OF HEAT STRESS

SAFETY GRAM

SAFETY GRAM

SAFETY GRAM

W Nutrition Watch

Energy Drinks—What's the hype?

Story by U.S. Army Major Renee E. Cole, PhD, RD, LD.

Sales of energy drinks in the U.S. hit \$9 billion in 2010 with 65 percent of consumers being between the ages of 13 and 35 years old and 65 percent being male. Energy drinks typically contain B vitamins, sugar, caffeine, taurine (a man-made amino acid) and herbal supplements.

B vitamins are required for our body's production of energy; they don't create energy, just assist in the utilization of energy when physically needed. The B vitamins are water soluble and thus not stored in the body if not needed, so the excess will be removed with your urine at the next bathroom break. B vitamins are commonly found in fruits, vegetables, meats and most processed starches, which are fortified. In most cases, we obtain more than ample amounts of B vitamins in our diet and thus vitamin B addition to energy drinks is a crafty marketing tool by the manufacturers.

Caffeine is a compound within the methylxanthine family. It is a stimulant that increases mental alertness, stimulates cardiac muscle and the respiratory system (reducing the feeling of fatigue, allowing you to work out harder), stimulates kidney function (urination), improves mood and sense of well-being and is often helpful in relieving headaches. Caffeine is most commonly found in coffee beans and tea leaves; however, there are 63 plant species worldwide that contain methylxanthine. You may recognize common sources on the energy drink label: guarana, yerba mate and kola nut. They provide an additional caffeine boost, without necessarily being added to the caffeine amount noted on the label.

Research has shown that moderate intakes of caffeine (about 300 milligrams a day or three cups of coffee) do not cause adverse health effects in healthy adults. The Federal Drug Administration limits the amount of caffeine in caffeinated sodas to 71 milligrams per each 12 ounce can. Most of the soda available in Afghanistan range from 32 to 55 milligrams for a 12 ounce can. But the FDA does not regulate the amount of caffeine in energy drinks, coffee or tea.

The traditional 8 ounce cup of coffee contains about 100 milligrams of caffeine. Starbucks coffee ranges from 75-330 milligrams per cup. There was no data available on Green Beans' coffee content.

Energy drinks contain various amounts of caffeine: an 8.4 ounce can of Red Bull has 32 milligrams; an 8 ounce can of Rip It has 100 milligrams; a 2 ounce shot of 5-hour Energy has 138 milligrams; a 16 ounce can of Monster or Rockstar has 160 milligrams; Arizona Green Tea Energy has 200 milligrams and a 16 ounce can of Jolt has 280 milligrams of caffeine.

Interestingly, it takes about **five hours** for our liver to process and eliminate half of the caffeine we consume, possibly why the 5-hour Energy drink appears so effective.

So, what could happen if you drink too much caffeine?

Some of the common side effects are heart palpitations, restlessness, agitation, loss of appetite, nausea, blurred vision, difficulty sleeping, high blood pressure, cardiac arrest and death.

Certain individuals should avoid caffeinated beverages if they have a heart conditions, high blood pressure or a hyperactivity condition. Those with diabetes and those trying to lose weight should consider avoiding the energy drinks due to the empty calories provided as sugar.

Remember, our bodies have difficulty recognizing calories from a beverage and if you consume more calories than your body needs at any given time it will be stored as fat.

Bottom line: Pay attention to how much caffeine you're drinking. Try to limit it to 300 milligrams a day; it's very easy to get excess caffeine from a variety of drinks throughout the day. If you experience the noted side effects, discuss the situation with a healthcare provider. ☺

For more nutrition information, tune into AFN Freedom Radio 94.1 with DJ Chance Smith, Maj. Renee Cole and Capt. Stephanie Vanneman on Monday mornings at 0700.

W Unit Watch

Commerical Imagery Team

When General Petraeus published his guidance for conducting counterinsurgency operations in Afghanistan, one of his main points was the need to act as one team. He encouraged U.S. forces to work closely with our international and Afghan partners, stating the absolute need for acting in cooperation.

Working together in a joint operating environment with coalition and Afghan partners requires the ability to share products such as satellite imagery. Access to satellite imagery is a key component to planning and conducting operations, but many times, U.S. Forces obtain classified imagery from national technical means, severely limiting the ability to share it with our partners. A solution to this problem is the use of commercial imagery.

The U.S. Army Commercial Imagery Team is a specialized team providing high-resolution, unclassified, commercial satellite imagery to U.S. forces, coalition forces and non-government organizations that can be shared with coalition partners and our Afghan and Iraqi counterparts.

The CIT is an operational element of the 1st Space Brigade, a subordinate command of the U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command/U.S. Army Forces Strategic Command. The team falls under Central Command and works in conjunction with the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, the topographic community, the intelligence community and CENTCOM's Commercial Imagery Collection Managers.

The CIT has a unique, direct relationship with the NGA and the Commercial Imagery Providers, Digital Globe and GeoEye. The CIT has an agreement with the NGA that allows the receipt of raw imagery directly from DigitalGlobe and GeoEye over a 45 megabit per second connection into a virtual ground terminal that automatically processes the raw imagery into an orthorectified NITF format. This minimally processed imagery can be provided to units with organic geospatial support (S2/J2, Topo Teams, Geospatial Support Teams, etc.) so they can manipulate the images themselves. Or, the CIT can package imagery into a finished format, such as GeoPDF, GeoTiff, JPEG, Mr.Sid and hard copy maps to units lacking organic geospatial assets.

The CIT has 72 terabytes of archived commercial imagery covering a large portion of the CENTCOM area of responsibility. This allows the CIT to rapidly process and deliver imagery requests, many times within hours of the request. This archive grows each month with updated collections of pan-chromatic (black and white) and multi-spectral (color) images. All of the archived imagery is less than one year old, ensuring the relevancy of the products provided. The CIT also has a direct access relationship with NGA Source for the submission of commercial imagery new collects.

A second key task of the CIT is to provide Mobile Training Teams (MTTs) to Iraq and Afghanistan to teach TalonView to



(Above) A sample photo of an Iraqi Southern Oil Company oil well taken by a Worldview-2 Multispectral system. (Right) An overheard view of the Bando Ghar mountain in eastern Afghanistan.

requesting units. This training focuses on training the users on how to request commercial imagery and how to use TalonView to manipulate the imagery to create their own products.

The CIT has been deployed to CENTCOM since 2004, answering thousands of requests for imagery, providing education to hundreds of coalition partners and supporting hundreds of military units, coalition partners and non-government organizations. The CIT provided 3 terabytes of imagery and 55 products to the Office of the Defense Representative-Pakistan in support of last year's flooding in Pakistan. Although deployed to CENTCOM, the CIT has supported other COCOMs by providing anti-piracy products to AFRICOM and products in support of humanitarian relief efforts for the earthquakes in Haiti and Japan for SOUTHCOM and PACOM.

The Commercial Imagery Team will continue to work with our coalition and host nation counterparts to support Petraeus's guidance of acting as one team. The team's ability to provide relevant and reliable unclassified commercial imagery very quickly, coupled with the imagery training they provide, will prove invaluable as operations and responsibility are transitioned completely to our Afghan and Iraqi counterparts. ☺



The Commercial Imagery Team can be contacted with questions, or to request imagery or training by NIPR email at cit.rfi.centcom@me.navy.mil or SIPR email at cit.rfi.centcom@me.navy.smil.mil.

The CIT can be reached by DSN at (318) 439-6215 or SVOIP at (308) 532-7510.

Or visit the Commercial Imagery Team SIPR website on SIPR at: <http://gil.nga.smil.mil/cit>

Retention Watch



U.S. Sen. John McCain, center, joins (from left) U.S. Army Gen. David Petraeus, International Security Assistance Force and U.S. Forces-Afghanistan commander, U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Daniel Allyn, Regional Command-East and Combined Joint Task Force-1 commander, U.S. Army Command Sgt. Maj. Marvin Hill, ISAF and USFOR-A senior enlisted adviser and U.S. Army Command Sgt. Maj. Isaia Vimoto, RC-E and CJTF-1 command sergeant major, for a July 4th celebration with coalition forces at Bagram Airfield. McCain, Sen. Lindsey Graham, and Sen. Joseph Lieberman visited bases in Afghanistan during a congressional delegation tour. (Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Kimberly Browne, Regional Command-East Public Affairs)



U.S. Army Gen. David Petraeus, International Security Assistance Force and U.S. Forces-Afghanistan commander, re-enlisted 235 servicemembers during a July 4 ceremony at Bagram Airfield. (Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Kimberly Browne, Regional Command-East Public Affairs)



The U.S. Army's 1st Cavalry Division's Color Guard performs a traditional ceremony during an Independence Day celebration at Bagram Airfield July 4. (Photo by U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Oshawn Jefferson, Regional Command-East Public Affairs)



**CJTF-1CD
Command
Retention Officer**
MG Daniel Allyn

**CJTF-1CD
Command
Retention NCO**
CSM Isaia Vimoto

**CJTF-1CD
Command Career
Counselor**
SFC Richard Erickson

**Oath of
Reenlistment**
I do solemnly swear to support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the orders of the President of the United States and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to regulations and the Uniform Code of Military Justice. So help me God.



CJTF-1CD RETENTION

See What's Happening in the Retention Corner!

Milper Message Number 11-096

- Effective date of message is 1 June 2011.

ARMY RETENTION CONTROL POINTS

GRADE	TOTAL ACTIVE SERVICE IN YEARS
PVT-PFC	5
CPL/SPC	8
CPL/SPC(PROMOTABLE)	12
SGT	13
SGT (PROMOTABLE)	15
SSG	20
SSG(PROMOTABLE)	26
SFC	26
SFC(PROMOTABLE)	29
1SG/MSG	29
1SG/MSG(PROMOTABLE)	32
CSM/SGM	32

Effective 29 April 2001, MOSs below are added as over strength at Skill Level 1

11B	12B	12K	12R	12T
12V	13D	13F	13M	13P
13R	13T	14S	14T	15B
15D	15F	15H	15N	15Y
25B	25F	25L	25M	25N
27D	35G	35M	56M	68A
68J	88K	91E	91P	92L
92M	92S	94D	94Y	

Retention Contacts

- SFC Eric Crist - DSN: 318-481-6541, 10th CAB, Bagram
- SFC Nathaniel Fears - DSN: 318-431-2099, HHBn, 1CD Bagram
- MSG James Meyers - DSN: 303-794-9023, 3/25 IN, Fenty
- SGM Jeffrey Sabourin - DSN: 318-421-7131, RC-South/CJTF-10

For additional information see your servicing career counselor or visit www.armyreenlistment.com

Mailing something home?

A few things to keep in mind to make the process quick and painless.

- Have your box ready for inspection.
- Be sure your container, box or footlocker is in good shape with old markings blacked out.
- Items may not be larger than 108 inches in combined size (length+width+depth).
- Items may not weigh more than **70 pounds**.
- Have your address label and customs form already filled out, be sure include a copy of the address label inside the package.
- No checks or credit cards, only cash or the Eagle Cash Card is accepted for payment.

Some items that **cannot** be mailed include:

- Alcohol of any kind
- Plants, plants products, sand or soil
- Live or dead animals
- Live poisonous insects (camel spiders)
- Cigarette lighters
- Weapons (pistols, rifles, replicas, toy guns)
- Weapon parts (magazines, barrels, bolts, receivers, stocks)
- Ammunition (live or spent, including brass)
- Exploded and unexploded ordnance (mines, grenades, fragments there of)
- Switchblades or knives with a blade longer than 6 inches
- Military equipment (TA-50, radios, any chemical defense equipment, compasses)
- **No War trophies**

For more information, please contact your unit mail clerk, a postal customer service representative or call DSN 318-431-3023.

NATIONAL GUARD AND ARMY RESERVE AFFAIRS

Guard:

**army.nationalguard@
afghan.swa.army.mil**

DSN

318-431-4249

Reserve:

**army.reserve@
afghan.swa.army.mil**

DSN

318-431-4255

**Please do not place
regular trash, cardboard
boxes or old mattresses
into the recycling bins**

94.1 Freedom Radio Afghanistan

All new line up and format

- 0530-1030 - Mornings with Chance Smith
- 1030-1530 - MIDDAYS with Jennifer Casanova
- 1530-2030 - Nights with Rockin' Russell Toof

Got a question for a DJ? Wanna hear a song?
That's no problem, with three ways to make requests:

- Call the Freedom line at 431-3339
- Shoot an email to the Freedom inbox at afnbagram@gmail.com
- Post it on our Facebook page, "AFN Freedom Radio"



the final Watch

U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Randal Ferkey, NTM-A/CSTC-A CJ-ENG, Movement Control and Anderson, Calif. native keeps an eye on two Afghan kids that just appeared and stopped to observe the engineering team as they reviewed their maps and GPS coordinates during a recon mission for the layout of a fence line for an Afghan National Army base on the outskirts of Kabul. (Photo by Eric Aubrey, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers)