

# THE WOLVES' DEN

MARCH EDITION



Home of the 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division  
Task Force Arctic Wolves

VOLUME 1

ISSUE 7



# The Wolves' Den

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Commander's Corner	1
Wolf 7	2
Black History Month	3
All Along the Watchtower	4
BSB Critical to Mission Success	5
Running with the Pack	7
Reintegration	9
Air Assault	10
Bushmasters	11
Kandahar Air Wing	14

Readers,

It has been our pleasure to provide you with the Wolves' Den newsletter and highlighting the Soldiers of the 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division.

With the completion of the brigade's mission and return to Alaska, this is the last issue of the Wolves' Den from Afghanistan.

We encourage everyone to find us on Facebook for continued coverage of our Soldiers and FLICKR for more photos of the brigade.

Thank you,  
Arctic Wolf PAO Staff

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/#!/1SBCT25ID>

FLICKR: [http://www.flickr.com/photos/1-25\\_sbct/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/1-25_sbct/)

Twitter: [http://twitter.com/#!/1SBCT\\_25ID](http://twitter.com/#!/1SBCT_25ID)

VOLUME 1  
ISSUE 7



# COMMANDER'S CORNER

## **1/25 SBCT Commander Colonel Todd R. Wood**

Arctic Wolves,

The brigade has started the redeployment process. The Torch Party and Advanced Party have returned to Alaska. Soldiers and families are preparing for our return home; however, I caution everyone that the fight is not yet over. We have a responsibility to conduct a thorough and professional transfer of authority with our ISAF replacements as well as prepare our Afghan partners to take on more of the fight as U.S. forces decrease their footprint in southern Kandahar. Our Soldiers continue to work hard every day and they show no signs of slowing. I ask that every Soldier fight complacency and continue to show our professionalism in whatever task we do, whether it be equipment layouts, packing containers, or conducting partnered patrols into Kandahar or Zabul.

Not only are Soldiers preparing for redeployment, but the families back home are also preparing. There are many things for spouses to consider before the Soldiers return. ACS and the unit ministry teams are offering excellent reunion courses and I encourage every spouse to attend one or more of these sessions. Even the most veteran spouses can benefit from these classes. If you have not been tied into your Family Readiness Group throughout the deployment, take a moment and get connected. This is a very exciting and fluid time. The Rear Detachments and Family Readiness Groups constantly disseminate information regarding the redeployment process. It is imperative that you be informed of what your Soldiers and the brigade are doing. Redeployment, though a very joyous time, can be very challenging. Experienced and new spouses can find information and support in their Family Readiness Group.

As we put the finishing touches on this deployment and operations in southern Kandahar, I want to take this opportunity to thank all the families and friends who have followed the brigade throughout the deployment and supported us the whole way. My staff, the battalion leaders, and the Soldiers appreciate all you have done for this brigade.

This brigade's rapport and overwhelming success will leave a lasting impression on this area and has set conditions for troop reductions. The brigade's hard work has also enabled an increased Afghan independence. Every Soldier should be proud of their accomplishments during this deployment. I could not be more proud of you and I thank you for all your sacrifices.

Strike First!  
Strike Hard!  
**W6**





## **1/25 SBCT Command Sergeant Major CSM Bernie Knight**

Soldiers, Families and friends of the Arctic Wolves,

This Brigade continues to impress the commander and me with their phenomenal work here in Afghanistan. Everyday our Soldiers are finding weapons caches, capturing enemy forces, and improving the Afghanistan security forces by enabling their ability to conduct independent operations. Our Soldiers are making it possible for the people of Afghanistan to have an education, employment and the freedom to live a life without oppression. Most importantly we are denying the enemy the ability to harm Americans on U.S. soil. What our Soldiers have done is admirable and respectable. We have proven that the Arctic Wolves can be counted on to complete all missions with a high degree of enthusiasm and professionalism.

Right now in addition to our tactical missions outside the wire, our Soldiers are preparing to return home. Families back home are also preparing for our return and the reunion with their Soldiers. This is the time that families can really look to the senior and more experienced spouses of the Brigade and FRG for support and information about what can be expected when your Soldier returns. I encourage all Spouses and Soldiers to take advantage of reunion classes offered by ACS, Fort Wainwright Garrison Chaplain, and the unit Chaplain. We want all expectations upon our return to be modest but exhilarating. Go with the flow and minimize any high demands or exuberant plans. High demands and hefty expectations that are not executed precisely can make for a bad reunion. Plan on flights being late or delayed, plan to have a jet lagged Soldier. Plans interrupted can and will damage the best of intentions for a reunion. We want our expectations upon return to be full of joy and excitement simply because of being reunited with family and friends.

As the Arctic Wolves close out operations in Southern Afghanistan, our Soldiers and this Brigade will leave a lasting impression on the region. The Brigade Commander and I respect each and every member of this Brigade and could not be more pleased with their performance here in Afghanistan. We are professionals and we expect all Soldiers to leave an impression that exemplifies professionalism and hard work. Our leaders and Soldiers must continue to maintain and enforce high standards in all that we do and most importantly get the Brigade home safe. Taking risks are ok while conducting combat operations and prepping for redeployment as long as we mitigate our moderate to high risks with good safety practices and leader oversight. Stay focused, Stay positive, Stay with the Pack.

**Strike First!**

**Strike Hard!**

**W07**



## Black History Month Spotlight: Staff Sgt. Breedlove

Story By: Sgt. Thomas Duval, 1/25 SBCT PAO

Throughout history, African Americans like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Parks have helped change the way people perceive American heroes.

By sharing a dream and standing up for what they believed in, civil rights leaders paved the way for everyone to be treated equal, regardless of color. During the month of February these men and women are celebrated as part of the nation's Black History month.

Helping carry the dream of the African American community, Staff Sgt. Cathy Breedlove, non-commissioned officer in charge of the Brigade Support Medical Company, 25th Brigade Support Battalion, is among the many inspirational African American figures that are celebrated for their contributions on the frontlines of today's military.

Born in Houston, Texas, Cathy Breedlove was raised by her mother, Ester Breedlove, not to 'see black and white' and instead was pushed to be her best even if that meant attending a math and science academy where she was 'only one of six black students in the entire school.'

"My mother always tried to help me 'flower what I was trying to



grow',” said Breedlove.

Despite being the minority in school, Breedlove said she never saw racism growing up, an example of success she attributes to the famous civil rights leaders that came before her.

As the daughter of a single parent, Breedlove said she often found strength from her mother and grew up wanting to emulate her.

“My mom was always my inspiration,” she said. “I would have to say she’s right up there with Martin Luther King... she’s not famous but she was always there.”

After watching her mom care for the sick and injured as a nurse and hearing her uncle talk about life in the Army, Cathy said she

decided to join the Military as a medical professional.

As a combat medic with the 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, deployed in Kandahar Province, Afghanistan, Cathy Breedlove spends many of her days training and mentoring fellow medics.

“She’s an NCO that upholds the standard bar none,” said Pfc. Mayra Torres, a combat medic with the 25th BSB. “Sergeant Breedlove pushes us to be the best and never accepts mediocre work. She doesn’t care what color you are she always treats everyone with respect and demands the best from them.”

In addition to training medics, the 17-year military veteran also spends her time overseeing and



upholding the standard of operations for the support battal-

was recognized for setting a sterling example of leadership

ion's aid station located on Kandahar Airfield.

Through hard work and dedication as a combat medic, Breedlove has displayed the characteristics and lived the values that inspire the Soldiers around her to do better Torres said.

In January, she

by being named the 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division NCO of the Month.

As a humble and soft-spoken NCO, she attributes her success in the military to her hard working mother who 'was always there' and to the dream of one man, spoken at the Lincoln Memorial in 1963.

Just a few years from retirement, Breedlove hopes she can serve as an example of success and continue to inspire the people around her.

## All Along the Watchtower

By: Sgt. Michael Blalack, 1/25 SBCT PAO

The air is damp from the recent thunderstorm and rain leaks into the guard tower where Pfc. Drew Johnson looks out across the plain surrounding Combat Outpost Mushan through his night vision goggles. He rubs his hands together against the chill.

"At least it's not as cold as it's been the last few days," Johnson says. "Although, I'd rather be out on patrol. The time goes by faster."

When he's not shivering in a guard tower, Johnson, an M240 gunner in 3rd Platoon, A Company, 1st Battalion, 5th Infantry Regiment, is out with his platoon watching the roads recently built by Afghan security forces and the 1st Stryker



Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division as they pushed further into the horn of Panjwa'i.

3rd Platoon also patrols the surrounding villages with their Afghan National Army part-

ners who are either finding and disposing of IEDs planted by Taliban insurgents who have a long and established presence in the area, or engaging the locals, building on the



relationship of trust and mutual respect that ISAF has established.

"We go out on 48 hour rotations and guard the roads," says Johnson as he moves into a sheltered corner of the tower, out of the wind. "It gives the farmers a feeling of security, knowing we're there making sure nobody puts new IEDs on the roads."

Building roads has been an important part of the mission in Panjwa'i. Roads serve the dual purpose of giving security forces better access to the peo-

ple, whose trust and cooperation are vital to successfully repressing insurgent activity. Roads also give the local population secure and reliable means of travel, allowing more opportunity for commerce and better access to schools and hospitals.

"Even though I really miss my family, I'm glad I came to Afghanistan," says Johnson. "Just being in the Army has been a great experience. It makes you put your life in perspective. And my platoon, the guys that I deployed with, are some of the greatest people I've

ever met. We've been through a lot together and I've made some great friends."

As the morning call to prayer for ANA Soldiers at COP Mushan fades away, the jagged outlines of Afghanistan's famous mountains begin to appear along the horizon.

"This is an experience I'll never regret," Johnson continues. "There is a sense of accomplishment that we've done what we came here to do and that everything we did was successful."

## BSB Critical to Mission Success

By: Sgt. Thomas Duval, 1/25 SBCT PAO



On an isolated Forward Operating Base in the middle of Kandahar Province, Afghanistan, a Soldier is printing important documents, running down the hall of the plywood tactical operations center and briefing his command group on an intelligence breakthrough.

A few miles away, patrolling for 12 straight hours, a combat medic is pushing through sleep deprivation to reach a battle buddy in need.

These two scenarios, although highlighting different aspects of war, may seem in many ways disconnected. But they're not.

Behind each seemingly unimportant stack of paper and every medical Soldier throughout the 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division lays the 25th Brigade Support Battalion.

Tirelessly, working around the clock, the 25th BSB provides everything ranging from weekly supply convoys—dropping off mail and supplies to fill the local post exchanges—to the very medics treating, evacuating and saving the lives of their fel-

low Soldiers.

Altogether, the BSB is home to 49 different occupational specialties, which are spread out over four companies; Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Distribution Company, Forward Maintenance Company and the Brigade Support Medical Company.



“The Brigade Support Battalion (BSB) is very unique, to say the least. We have 49 enlisted military occupational specialties along with over 60 officer and warrant positions,” said Lt. Col. John McMurray, commander of 25th BSB. “If everything is going well and all the battalions are able to receive the support they need, no one hears much about them.”

To provide the support necessary for more than 4,000 Soldier, each company has specific tasks in which they have been extensively trained to execute.

For example, HHC Soldiers specialize in food service, transportation and maintenance while the distribution company specializes in delivering important supplies like fuel and potable water.

One of the most important assets to any brigade combat team, the Brigade Support Medical Company is tasked with providing continuous medical support to every unit operating in ‘Task Force Arctic

Wolves’ area of operations.

With a team of slightly more than 70 Soldiers, the BSMC provides extensive care in a number of categories to include mental health, advanced trauma, X-ray and basic treatment.

Similar to fixing a patients’ wound, the Forward Maintenance Company is responsible for servicing and repairing almost every piece of equipment fielded throughout the entire brigade, whether, it’s fixing a set of night vision goggles or replacing the engine in a Stryker vehicle.

Whether, it’s providing some of life’s basic necessities like potable water or providing the technical expertise to fix a multi-million dollar piece of equipment, the ‘Opahey’ Soldiers of the 25th BSB have proven themselves time and again.



When combined, the BSMC, FMC, DC and HHC provide an important lifeline to each Soldier throughout the brigade.

Although the concept of the BSB’s numerous capabilities may not be fully understood, even to many of the very Soldiers they support within 1/25 SBCT, the blood and sweat of their efforts touch each Stryker Soldier every day.





# ***RUNNING WITH THE PACK***







## 1/25<sup>th</sup> SBCT Safety Message



*Army Safe  
Is Army Strong*

**AVOID COMPLACENCY-**

### What causes Complacency:

- Lack of Supervision
- Failure to follow the procedures
- Failure to adhere to the Standards
- Overconfidence
- Not using available Safety Equipment
- Taking Short cuts



# **“STRIVE TO BE ACCIDENT FREE”**

### **Setting the Stage for Success**

- Engaged Leadership at all levels
- Training and Experience
- Maintain Situational Awareness
- PCIs, PCCs and Mission Briefs
- Consistent enforcement of the Standards -- Key to accident prevention
- Be a leader, act as a TEAM, Stay engaged
- Risk Management, Enhanced Readiness -- Saves Lives
- No one stands alone
- Constantly reevaluation the hazards and mitigating risks
- Establish and maintain positive command climate

***Will you- be involved in the next accident? It's up to you!***



# Reintegration

Courtesy of Maj. Herb Franklin, 1/25 SBCT Brigade Chaplain

## Rekindling Relationships

This issue addresses reconnecting with family and friends after a lengthy absence. Somebody once said, “Just because you have stepped out of the stream does not mean the stream stopped flowing.”

And it is true. Spouses and children must cope, struggle, adjust, adapt, and grow while you are deployed. You have also dealt with these issues.

There needs to be a strategy for re-entry back into family life. Recognize that things HAVE changed.

In order to begin the rebuilding, reconnecting, and rekindling process it is important to: **First**, identify the tools and resources that you have available.

**Second**, plan the process intention-ally. Don’t shoot from the hip and hope it all works out.

**Third**, be will-ing to seek guidance and help. For many, the stresses and strains of reunion can be eased by calling on outside supports.

## Reconnecting Strategies

First of all, it is important to believe that marriage is WORTH fighting for. For some reason, many believe that marriage should be easy, or at least not require much effort. In her book entitled, *How to Stay Married Without Going Crazy*, Rebecca Fuller says, “Water is wet, heat is hot, and marriage is hard. Think about it. Why wouldn’t it be? Sharing a life together is an awesome assumption to begin with. I mean, we get tired of people in an elevator and here we are expecting to share all of our most precious re-sources with another person for 50 or 60 years, preferably in peace and harmony, and absolutely be happy while we’re doing it”

Secondly, change is inevitable. It happens every day all around us. When things change in our lives, it can upset us, needlessly. If we expect change, we are less surprised by it. Marriages and families change over time. They are very dynamic. Woody Guthrie

once said, “Life has got a habit of not standing hitched. You got to ride it like you find it. You got to change with it. If a day goes by that you don’t change some of your old notions for new ones, that is just about like trying to milk a dead cow.”

## Have Faith and a Positive Attitude

As you prepare to return to your family, it is important that you trust that things will work out well. A positive attitude is crucial. One thing that many folks do not realize is that there are, in every relationship, issues that are perpetual. What I mean by that is: there are issues that never seem to go away, such as financial issues, child-raising issues and work issues. As mentioned in a previous news-letter, these issues are not SOLVED, only managed

Dr. John Gottman, of the *Gottman Institute*, tells of couples that become discouraged because they seemingly are not able to SOLVE problems. They feel like failures. In marriage, it takes faith and trust in order for couples to manage issues together. The joy of marriage is in the journey, not some magical, mystical destination. It takes a certain amount of faith to believe that the relationship will withstand hardships and struggles and not crumble.







# Air Assault





# 'Bushmasters' Blow off steam at COP Folad

1st Lt. Wes Lyle, 1st Battalion, 5th Infantry Regiment

In a remote combat outpost (COP) in southern Afghanistan, soldiers take a much-needed break to do what might seem like a counterintuitive way of blowing off steam to people back in the

Officer from Bandera, Texas, who used to be an athletic trainer and teacher admits he doesn't get into the gym as often as he should because of the busy schedule he's obliged to keep.

you if you don't find a way to release the stress," said Sgt. Coleman. Sgt. Enoc Ocasio, 23, from Mayaguez, Puerto Rico stands by as a spotter for the incline rack.

"The Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) tent, with the video games and internet is great but the gym is where we can see real progress and results through a healthy and positive activity," said Sgt. Ocasio. "At first we didn't use the gym as much, but Second Lieutenant Lyle was determined to keep us committed to a work out plan."

"Apart from him organizing the weights, purchasing a speaker system for the gym from Amazon and giving us advice on supplements, we found ourselves fully involved in body building," said Sgt. Jesse Cook, 30, from Kansas City, Kan.

Private Gregory Dibona, 19, from Handover, Ma. is the second -oldest child in his family. He's the first in his entire family to serve in the Army and is proud to be a mortar man.

"I really appreciate 1st Lt. Lyle's organizing the gym and putting in the Orion speaker system. Now we're able to turn up the volume loud enough to keep everyone motivated, though I know when it's time to keep my own tunes playing through my Dr. Dre Beats in-ear Headphones," said Pvt. Dibona.

"It's funny, after the first month, 1st Lt. Lyle and his platoon sergeant, Sgt. First Class Phommaly, began spreading their



states; lifting weights. The Bushmasters at COP Folad have taken a passionate interest in body building and fitness over the past ten months, and weight training has become a popular pastime. Sergeant First Class Phommaly, 39, from Stone Mountain, Ga., leads the determined soldiers into gaining muscle mass, as his physique has inspired many of the younger soldiers who look onto his abilities and wonder how he does it. "I've always enjoyed weight training" Phommaly said. "At this point I still feel like I'm in my prime."

1st Lt. Jason Garcia, the 32-year-old Bushmaster Executive

"Although I don't spend as much time in the gym as I should, it is a great way to relieve stress that can occur from being deployed," said Garcia. "I have always enjoyed hitting the weights in the gym, it is just hard to establish a routine with the schedule we keep, but the experience of working out with my fellow Bushmasters makes it almost impossible to avoid."

Sergeant Nicholas Coleman, 26, from Montgomery, Al, throws up his 10<sup>th</sup> rep of 185lbs on a three-set incline bench press exercise.

"12 months deployed to an austere location can really get to

knowledge on ways to get fit, and now it seems like every third package delivered to soldiers is from bodybuilding.com,” Dibona added.

1st Lt. Wes Lyle, 25, from Lexington, S.C., is the youngest in a family of six and has three nieces, aged two to five that adore him as their uncle.

“Working out is important to me and I enjoy it, but my real passion in life is for my family back home and the friends I’ve made along the way” said 1st Lt. Lyle.

As a way to maintain his bond with his nieces, 1st Lt. Lyle posted a video on his Facebook page for them to watch.

“While I was skyping Claire and Lyla on Christmas day, they kept telling me how much they liked the lambs in Afghanistan and the photos I took with them, so the next day I made a video of some sheep I encountered on patrol in the surrounding village. It was kind of a joke but I’m sure they enjoyed the footage.”

The Bushmaster soldiers are extremely grateful for the MWR computers, phones and video game consoles. “I never thought I would be using social networking

sites like Facebook but I find it a great tool to stay in touch with loved ones back home,” says Staff Sgt. Larry Kennedy, 39, from Attica, In.

Staff Sgt. Kennedy is married to Lisa Kennedy and has a son, Jonah, 18.

“I remember on a past deployment, we were writing letters home on the cardboard backs of MRE boxes. This MWR tent is



something I never imagined I’d have access to at a combat outpost and I thank God for it,” said

Staff Sgt. Kennedy.

“Apart from working out, I also enjoy playing video games and watching a movie every now and then,” said Sgt. Michael Edwards, 25, from Charlotte, N.C.

Specialist Justin Joaquin, 21, from Los Angeles, Calif., works the radio guard shift from 8AM to 8PM every day along with operating the unmanned aerial vehicle Raven for Bushmaster Company.

“The recent care package we received with the PSP was a great surprise as I now have an easy and fun way to take a break from my job” Joaquin says.

Joaquin enjoys time away from the job playing video games

but spends most of his free time staying in touch with his newlywed spouse, Sarah.

“When surfing the net, it’s always tempting to buy her a gift and have it shipped to her doorstep. This deployment has been hard with being separated, but our love for each other remains strong. I can’t wait to see her again when I get home.”

Joaquin was recently recognized by the Task Force 1-5 commander, Lieutenant Colonel Brian A. Payne, for having the most flight hours out of Task Force 1-5 IN flying the Raven this past month. He received an Army Achievement Medal for flying 100hrs in support of combat operations; the second highest flight time out of the other five operators was only 38 hours. Spc. Joaquin looks forward to surpassing his mark next month.

The Bushmasters continue to press on with the fight to bring security to eastern Panjwa’i.

Throughout the holidays, the Soldiers have made it a point to spend time with loved ones over the phone and on the internet.

The remaining time in Afghanistan will be busy for the Bushmasters. A demanding schedule coupled with the litany of tasks that need to be accomplished before redeployment will make the remaining time fly by and bring our much-anticipated reunion with family members here before we know it. Meanwhile, there’s still the gym.



# ARMY LEADERSHIP TALKS REENLISTMENT



Leaders,

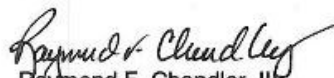
Over the next few years, our Army will reduce its end strength and shape the force for future requirements. As we begin this deliberate process, it is imperative we retain those Soldiers with the greatest potential for future service – ones truly deserving to remain a part of our Army Team.


To help us get to our desired end strength, we will fundamentally change the Active Component retention program. This will provide our brigade-level Commanders the flexibility and agility needed to retain those who best meet the needs of our Army.

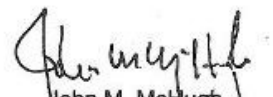
In March 2012, the reenlistment window opens for Soldiers who ETS in fiscal year 2013. Army Commands, Army Service Component Commands, and Direct Reporting Units will establish brigade-level reenlistment objectives, and, just like the past, Commanders will be directed to retain a percentage of the eligible population. However, unlike the past, Commanders will not exceed this objective. This is not intended to be a race to meet the target...it is about retaining quality and keeping the right Soldiers in the Army.

Commanders will receive specific implementation guidance from the Army G1, addressing Soldiers in overstrength, balanced, and shortage Military Occupational Specialties (MOS). In addition, when determining which Soldiers are best for retention, Commanders should use the "Whole Soldier" concept, including attributes, competencies, leadership potential, adherence to standards, duty performance and evaluations that demonstrate ability to serve in any MOS. Under this concept, some Soldiers will be required to reclassify from overstrength career fields to understrength or balanced ones to meet Army requirements. It is imperative that Commanders and Command Sergeants Major ensure Soldiers receive performance counseling, as this will be one of the key tools of determining retention.

Tough decisions are ahead. Some fully qualified Soldiers will be denied reenlistment. To be successful, leaders at all levels must be personally involved in the retention program. Commanders must carefully assess their Soldiers and ensure only our best Soldiers are retained to meet the needs of our Army.

  
Raymond F. Chandler, III  
Sergeant Major of the Army

  
Raymond T. Odierno  
General, United States Army  
Chief of Staff

  
John M. McHugh  
Secretary of the Army

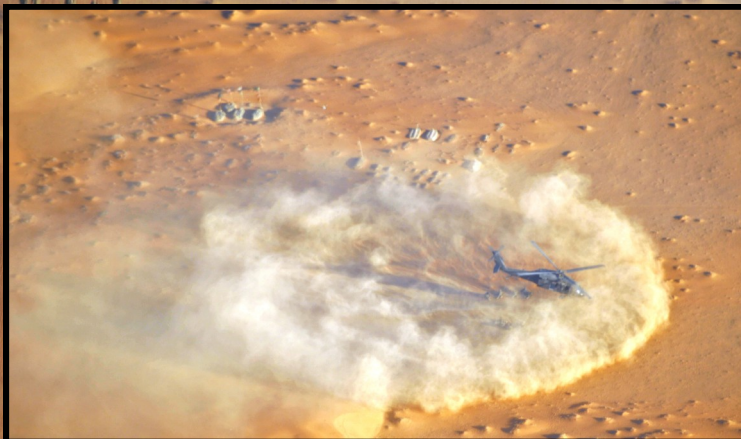


# KANDAHAR AIR WING

by Sgt. Daniel Schroeder, TF Wings PAO

**KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan** – As the sun broke the horizon line in the early morning hours, soldiers from 1st Brigade, 205th Corps, Afghan National Army anxiously awaited as Mi-17 helicopters from the Kandahar Air Wing were heading their way.

When crews from the air wing arrived at the landing zone, soldiers loaded onto the helicopters and headed out to conduct an air assault operation in the Kandahar province, Afghanistan, March 1, in order to disrupt Taliban efforts.



Although this type of operation was new to many Afghan troops, it's becoming a more common occurrence in southern Afghanistan, and improving security for the local population.

"I feel really good about the mission we performed and how we are helping the people," said a pilot with the Kandahar Air Wing. "Our mentors aided us in becoming more proficient in our operations so we can succeed in helping our people."

With the success of the second independently led air assault in two weeks by the air wing and Afghan soldiers, the confidence level in planning, training and executing the mission has improved.

According to Brig. Gen. Habibi, commander of the 1-205th Corps, ANA, this air assault was a defining moment in the unit's pursuit of conducting independent operations. By partnering with the Afghan Air Wing, the combat effectiveness of the 1-205th Corps has increased and will help facilitate their ability to conduct independent operations.

Along with the Afghan soldiers and Kandahar Air Wing, air crews from the 25th Combat Aviation Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, and soldiers from the 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, accompanied the Afghan forces as mentors.





**“The Afghan forces have shown strides in improvement towards conducting independent operations,” said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Kenley Kirkland, a pilot with 2nd Battalion, 25th Aviation Regiment, 25th Combat Aviation Brigade. “Completing these missions helps build confidence allowing them to be successful in the future.”**



**Much like the air assault completed a week prior, air wing and Afghan soldiers conducted a rehearsal training session building their confidence and making them more familiar with the Mi-17 helicopters.**

**According to Maj. Justin Michel, 1-205th Operations Mentor, 1-25th SBCT, the level of coordination and planning between two Afghan organizations is clearly a win-win situation for Regional Command-South, 1-205th, and Kandahar Air Wing. The execution of this air assault mission and future operations clearly demonstrates International Security Assistance Forces’ commitment to the development of 1-205th and KAW’s capabilities.**

**“The mentors helped us become more proficient with the experience they have,” said a pilot from the air wing. “They are helpful in allowing us to succeed in our missions. The coalition forces will help us to obtain a strong Afghan army to conduct operations to keep the peace and prosperity in our country.”**





**Have a Story Idea or photos?**

**Email us!**

david.a.mattox@us.army.mil

farrukh.a.daniel@afghan.swa.army.mil

michael.d.blalack@us.army.mil

thomas.duval@us.army.mil

andrew.geisler@us.army.mil

## Unit Public Affairs Representatives

- 2-8 FA Capt. Angela Chipman
- 1-24Inf. 1st Lt. Mathew Rogers
- 3-21 Inf. Capt. Chad Wriglesworth
- 1-5 Inf. 1st Lt. Anthony Formica
- 5-1 CAV Michael Newman
- BTB 2nd Lt. John Conway
- BSB 1st Lt. Stephen Leader



## STRYKER CREED

"Strike First - Strike Hard!"

Strike Fear in the enemy's hearts and minds; I am a lethal and skilled war fighter with un-matched intestinal fortitude.

Being a disciplined, professional soldier, I live the army values.

Committed to my fellow soldiers, unit, and country, I am ready to answer my nation's call -  
NOW!

Tough, both physically and mentally, and instilled with the Warrior Spirit, I can accomplish any mission - anytime, anywhere!

"ARCTIC WOLVES"

## 1/25 SBCT PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

MAJ David Mattox

PAO OIC

MC1 Farrukh Daniel

PAO NCOIC

SGT Michael Blalack

PRINT JOURNALIST

SGT Thomas Duval

PRINT JOURNALIST

PFC Andrew Geisler

BROADCAST JOURNALIST

Newsletter Cover & Design

Sgt. Thomas Duval