

THE LION'S ROAR

2ND QUARTER

02 APRIL 2012

A SEASON OF CHANGE

Icy, frigid, short days gave way to sunny, cheery fresh smelling days. Spring is blooming with new life everywhere. Ah the fresh, crystal clean, blue air next to the roaring waves of a sandy beach. Fat bumblebees bounce from one poppy button to the next and happy chirping sparrows flit from budding tree to tree. Dancing daffodils wave delightfully as you experience new life teaming all around. Yes, it's finally spring! The best season of the year!

Well, maybe your air quality isn't "fresh" smelling like the sheets on a Bounce commercial, it's more like a dusty moldy old wash rag forgotten at a shower at Camp Warrior.

Possibly there is no warm beach breeze but you have a disgusting waft of sandy brown air from the Poo-Pond in Kandahar. Maybe you don't have bumble bees visiting flowers but you caught some dust of a reclusive lizard at Masum Ghar. Or maybe you've failed to experience the cheerful sparrows but managed an evil raven scavenging breakfast out of a dumpster at Salerno.

Reality does not meet fantasy with a kiss in Afghanistan; it's more like a kick in the pants. It seems all too often that even the most hopeful and delightful times of the year are overshadowed by the ugliness of combat or affliction of a strained distant relationship.

Ah and that's why we have spring. God created all this fresh new bounding energy emerging from a bleak winter reminding us that out of destruction and bleakness He creates bounding life. If your relationships soured, your occupations spoiled, and emotions embittered you can soon discover your very own life as new and vibrant as spring. Spring also reminds us of that creative power in Easter. The same invigorating miraculous gift of God burst opened the cold tomb of Jesus Christ on Easter Sunday. We experience the same new life of Christ on Easter, in place of death and hopelessness a promise of eternal life in heaven including only holiness and happiness. His new life, like spring, will change your old life into new.

Try some of this springtime attire on for size, new brilliant affection. We need to replace worn out negative destructive thoughts with positive uplifting attention. Find something agreeable about your life and try that on for an hour or so. How does that fit you? Makes you want to keep it on. Now see if you can try on a few compliments for those chilled relationships- makes you feel warm as a spring sunny day and when you wear some new found admiration for somebody who is forgiven, you find a sunshine smile on your dazzling face.

Spring reminds us of a lustrous reality- no matter how hard your life may seem, angry dark clouds of discontent will break, sunshine of harmony will beam, rain of pleasure will sprinkle, and flowers of gladness will once again pop out with life overflowing. Hey you look like spring!

-Chaplain (Cpt.) Kevin Daul

25th Signal Battalion Chaplain

Nine times out of ten, if you ask a Soldier why they serve, they'll say "to protect my country" without a hint of hesitation or a second guess. From birth, Americans are instilled with a sense of patriotism, a feeling that can only come from love of country. Patriotism is the flustered feeling you get when you hear someone belt out The Star-Spangled Banner, the strength with which you clutch your heart when you say the Pledge of Allegiance, the light that shines in your eyes when you watch the fireworks on the Fourth of July, and the urge to say "Hell yeah!" when you listen to Toby Keith's "Courtesy of the Red, White, and Blue." American patriotism has always come naturally for most Soldiers serving in the military, but for some, it is a feeling that had to be adopted.

Spc. Paul Velchez, 25th Signal Battalion supply specialist from the 230th Signal adopted that patriotism when he emigrated from his native country, the Philippines in 1999. Immediately, he fell in love with the country. Velchez recalls "I remember sitting in the backseat impressed by all the tall buildings, clean streets, and opportunities America had to offer." Velchez's transition to American life was easy, considering Western culture has a lot of influence in the Philippines.

Similar to a lot of Soldiers that currently serve, the events of 9/11 influenced Velchez to join the National Guard in 2006 after he graduated high school. "I wanted to protect the country I came to love" he says. When asked how it felt to serve a country that he is not native to, he replied "I am proud to serve in the most powerful and diverse army. I consider myself lucky."

After a long naturalization process, Spc. Velchez was naturalized as an American citizen on February 14th of this year along with 18 other Soldiers in a naturalization ceremony on Bagram Airfield. "I can finally proudly say that I am an American. It's like having another birthday."

Now that Velchez is a citizen, he is considering re-classing to become a better asset to the National Guard and going through the ROTC program.

-Sgt. Melisa I. Foster
Public Affairs Officer
25th Signal Battalion



25th Signal Battalion supply specialist of the 230th Signal Company, Tennessee Army National Guard is administered the Naturalization Oath of Allegiance .(U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Melisa Foster)



APRIL IS SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH.

Hurts one. Affects all....

Preventing sexual assault is everyone's duty.

COMMANDER'S CORNER



First, I would like to extend my thanks to the leaders and Soldiers of Charlie Company, 44th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary). As an attached unit through RFF, C/44th came into Afghanistan on a 12 month deployment, quickly assimilated at five Forward Operating Bases throughout RC-East, and professionally executed every mission they were assigned. The hallmark of a good unit is the reputation they leave behind, and C/44th put a stamp of excellence on everything they were involved in. Great work and thanks again for representing the 25th Signal Battalion in such an outstanding fashion!

With C/44th returning to Germany, we are excited to have their replacement force, Charlie Company, 57th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary) on the ground and ready for action. During the relief-in-place, the Command Sergeant Major and I realized that C/57 is a motivated, highly skilled, and well-trained group of warriors. Welcome, and I look forward to meeting each of you as the CSM and I traverse the battlefield.

As the snow melts and the temperatures increase, so will the tempo of our operations. Regardless of what you are involved in, I encourage each of you to enforce the battle-buddy system. Since we are highly de-centralized, it is imperative that we look out for each other and use our collective resources to

ensure everyone is moving in the right direction. I challenge every member of the team to establish personal priorities that will enable you to leave this theater better than when you arrived.

LTC EDWARD F. BOROWIEC, JR.

Battalion Commander

MEET THE NEW COMMANDERS



Cpt. Valerie L. Green assumed command over the 550th Signal Company in a ceremony on Kandahar Airfield in February. Cpt. Green is a native of Marion, Alabama. She joined the United States Army in 1989 as an administrative specialist and later on became an information systems specialist. Cpt. Green commissioned in December 2006. Cpt. Green holds a Master of Information Systems Management from Touro University. She has two daughters, Gabrielle who is currently attending Towson University, and Melyssa who is currently attending Jon Hopkins University.

Cpt. Krystal J. Thompson assumed command over the 580th Signal Company in a ceremony on Bagram Airfield in January. Cpt. Thompson is a native of East Saint Louis, Illinois. She joined the United States Army Reserves in 2002, serving as a finance specialist and a transportation coordinator. In 2006, she earned her commission from Embry Riddle Aeronautical University Officer Training Corps (ROTC) program. Cpt. Thompson holds a Bachelor of Arts in Mass Communication from Bethune-Cookman University.



COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR'S CORNER

Our Nation has scarified our sons and daughters, mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters, and our neighbors and co-workers. Everyday throughout this deployment we must stay focused on our mission, and continue to defeat the enemy. We must not cheat this country, and in doing so cheat all the fine Americans who have made the ultimate sacrifice. For me, it is indeed a privilege to lead the outstanding men and women of best Signal Battalion in the United States Army. The 25th Signal Battalion is Always Ready and Never Unprepared!

With that being said, I would personally like to thank the families and loved ones of our Soldiers for your continued support. Your support and prayers have always been there. Without your support our job would be ten times harder. We are continually reminded why we do what we do every day that we receive support from around the Nation from our family's, loved ones and people we have never met. Your continued support really means a lot to us. Just know that we are doing well, and will continue to press forward and fight the good fight. Your support helps to motivate and remind us where we come from.



CSM EDWARD J. WILLIAMS III
Battalion Command Sergeant Major

MEET THE NEW FIRST SERGEANTS



1st Sgt. Kenneth B. Trigg assumed responsibility of the 580th Signal Company in December. 1st. Sgt. Trigg is no stranger to the 25th Signal Battalion. He was previously the First Sergeant for Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment and the S-3 NCOIC. He enlisted into the United States Army in 1991 as a satellite communications systems repairer/operator. He is currently pursuing an Associates in General Education. 1st Sgt. Trigg's Military Education includes the Total Army Instructors Course, Equal Opportunity Leaders Course, Senior Leaders Course, Advanced Leader's Course and Warrior Leader's Course.



1st. Sgt. Andrew M Estes assumed responsibility of the 550th Signal Company in February. 1st. Sgt. Estes enlisted unto the United States Army in 1997 as a multichannel transmissions systems operator/maintainer. He later re-classed as a satellite communications operator/maintainer. He is working towards a Bachelors in History through American Military University. His military education includes the Primary Leadership Development Course, the Basic and Advance Non Commissioned Officers courses, First Sergeant Course. Total Army Instructor Training Course, Small Group Instructor Training Course, Equal Opportunity Representative Course, Master Resilience Training Course and Combatives Level 1.



Sgt. 1st Class Aubrey D. Russell assumed responsibility of Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment in January. Sgt. 1st Class Russell is a native of Meridian, Mississippi. He enlisted into the United States Army in 1996. His military education includes Warrior Leader's Development Course, Basic Leaders Course, Senior Leaders Course, and the US Army Recruiting Course.

MISSION ESSENTIAL MOVEMENTS

Her mission was up in the air from the get go. She changed military occupation specialties, changed platoons, and changed roles multiple times, and that was all before leaving Nashville, Tenn., for the upcoming mission in Afghanistan.

When Spc. Kimberley Espey raised her hand and volunteered to deploy with the 230th Signal Company, she had no idea how important she and her military logistics background would become to the overall mission in Afghanistan.

After cross training with various platoons and changing roles as the mission needs of her changed, Espey still had a smile on her face and a work ethic most would look upon with awe. First in the office and last to leave on most days, it wasn't long before she found her niche assisting the officer in charge of the five direct signal support teams, 1st Lt. Jason Capps. A job that we would all come to realize, fit her as perfectly as she fit the needs of the job.

"That's when I realized all the skills I've ever acquired, on both the military and the civilian sides, came into play," Espey said, as she described her new role.

Despite being built years ago, most of the DSST locations where 230th soldiers relocated were still very primitive from being mishandled by inhabitants before them. The teams of seven found themselves thinking about essentials like housing and equipment, in addition to their primary duties of taking over for the previous unit.

"One unit is supposed to set up another, to help another, and so on," said Espey. "It wasn't like that when we arrived here."

Faults cannot always be placed on the unit leaving; handing over operations to a new unit is a complicated process. As one packs up to leave theater, another arrives to pick operations up where the other left off. Equipment and supplies are transferred to the new unit via paperwork, but the unit being replaced by the 230th didn't have much to pass along except a handful of troubles that were handed to them.

"Back door deals happen sometimes, and things don't always go the way they are supposed to," Capps said. "We fell in on the result of that."

Instead of trying to trace back and redo the deals that had been done, the tandem got right to work in getting their teams set up for success. The first two items on the agenda were acquiring vehicles for troop and equipment transport, and giving personal attention to the five FOB's that were in desperate need.

With a forward thinking mentality, Espey went to the USO and started networking, a skill that has proven to be quite valuable to the 230th. Her first order of business: two LMTV's. Large vehicles that could be used to haul lumber and equipment for the DSST's, and with Afghanistan's rainy season just around the corner, may become a necessity for troop transportation and mission movements.

The timing couldn't have been better.

"As soon as we got the LMTV's we started getting requests from the DSST teams," she said. "It started small with nails, then wood for housing."

The need for the materials was present but processes were in place that needed to be followed. It required assembly of large paperwork packets, meetings with military boards, and a justification of needs. It's an extensive process that ends with legal ownership of the equipment acquired by the unit.

"The order process takes months," Espey said. "Everywhere I turned, people said it couldn't be done. The stuff we needed

wasn't available." This wasn't the answer the team of two would accept as their final, and the long timeline was something the 230th Signal Company just didn't have.

"If we don't send [our teams] the materials they need," said Capps, "they aren't going to have a place to live; [or a proper place to work] they are going to be out there roughing it."

So off they went, to leverage those business relationships they both made just a few weeks before. "We got creative and we made it happen," said Espey. "We went out knocking on doors again."

Together they were able to barter with other units here, acquire things those units would be leaving behind, and send the materials out to their DSST teams. "Imagine going back to the Old West, everyone lives and works in close proximity, and everyone has to work together to get things done," Capps said. "It's a barter and trade system, but the one with the most 'stuff' has the most control."

Some of it they needed, some of it they didn't, but all of it can be used to barter - to help create a win/win situation for everyone. It's already begun to build strong friendships between those living together at the FOBs. "Acquire as much stuff as possible and get it out to those guys," Capps said. "You want to

set your people up for that kind of success."

Thanks to this dynamic duo, the 230th Signal Company's five DSST locations are now getting a much needed facelift.

"We've got all this wood out there that we've traded for other stuff we need," said Spc. David Moffet, DSST soldier.

"We've got a subdivision, friendly neighborhood, type thing going on at Camp Stone."

Espey beams with pride and relates the whole experience back to family, a mentality that runs deep in all National Guard soldiers, when she spoke about the DSST's with endearment.

"I'm a mother, so the DSST's are like my kids. They need food, they need shelter, and they need their play toys," she said with a smile.

- Spc. Nicole Newton
Public Affairs Officer
230th Signal Company



Spc. Kimberley Espey and 1st Lt. Jason Capps, 230th Signal Company's dynamic duo, meet with various units here at Kandahar to acquire needed equipment for their five direct signal support teams spread across Afghanistan. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Nicole Newton)

HIGHLIGHTS



USFOR-A Command Sgt. Maj. Ronnie D. Curry paid a visit to Soldiers of the 25th Signal Battalion on Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. Command Sgt. Maj. Curry discussed the future of retention and the drawdown of forces in Afghanistan. Afterwards, he awarded coins to Spc. Alex Ewin and Pfc. Alfonzo Griffin of the 230th Signal Company and Spc. Lisa Fries of Charlie Company, 57th Expeditionary Signal Battalion. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Melisa Foster)



25th Signal Battalion Soldiers from all over Afghanistan flew into Bagram Airfield in March for the DSST Summit, two days full of classes and discussions to help DSST OICs and NCOICs better manage their sites. To kick off each day, the visitors attended a group breakfast. Depicted is Cpt. David Liebmenn, commander of Charlie Company, 57th Expeditionary Signal Battalion. (U.S. Army Photo by Sgt. Melisa Foster)



Soldiers of the 25th Signal Battalion assisted in hosting the Women's History Month event for Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. During the event, attendees learned about women in history that emulate the Seven Army Values, participated in an interactive game, and were entertained by songs and an interpretive dance. The guest speaker for the event was Col. Nancy Mikulin, commander of the 455th Expeditionary Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Richard Lutz)



The 580th Signal Company had the pleasure of promoting seven Soldiers on February 16th. Promotees included Spc. Matt Stender, Spc, James White, Pfc. Eric Heart, Pfc. Jacolby Iglehart, Pfc. Andre Stewart, Pvt. Larry Ward, and Sgt. 1st Class Easton Mullings. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Melisa Foster)



There's a new boss in town. Command Sgt. Maj. Swingler has now assumed responsibility for the 160th Signal Brigade. A change of responsibility ceremony was held on Camp Arifjan, Kuwait in March. Command Sgt. Maj. Gerald Tyce will be assuming responsibility for the 5th Signal Command. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Moses, Sr.)

Promotions

1SG Stanfill

SFC Mullings

SFC Caban

SSG Nation

SGT Dandridge

SGT La Madrid

SGT Guest

SPC Campbell

SPC Cimino

SPC Fry

SPC Furr

SPC Markey

SPC Morse

SPC Sanchez

SPC Turner

SPC Wadle

SPC James White

PFC Brigmon

PFC Butler

SOLDIER OF THE QUARTER



PFC Earnest Jackson

NCO OF THE QUARTER



SGT Horacio Garcia

WELCOME C/57TH



Group photo of Charlie Company, 57th Expeditionary Signal Battalion after their arrival on Bagram Airfield. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Melisa Foster)



Service members from the Charlie Company, 57th Expeditionary Signal Battalion wait to donate.

C/57TH EMULATES SELFLESS SERVICE

With so many things happening daily that need to get done, sometimes taking the time out to accomplish the things you want to can be difficult. Recently, the Charlie Company from the 57th Expeditionary Signal Battalion took the initiative to make sure they all became Armed Services Blood Program blood donors. Despite a heavy training mission to include physical training, motor pool maintenance, mandatory drug screening and a safety class for the range, 50 donors came to the Robertson Blood Center at Fort Hood, Texas, to save lives.

Sgt. Michael Rose, from Fredericksburg, Va., stopped by the blood donor center while driving on Fort Hood and became his unit's blood coordinator. Rose was assisted by Spc. Erica Maguson. This wasn't Rose's first time donating with the Armed Services Blood Program; he previously donated once at the Fort Leonard Wood blood donor center in Missouri, and once at the Kendrick Memorial Blood Center at Fort Gordon,

Ga. With his blood type being O-negative, Rose knows how vital his blood donation is in combat trauma situations.

"I donate because it saves lives," said Rose. "Not everyone can be an 11-Bravo [infantryman], kicking doors in or getting shot at, so this is our way to help. I would like to think that if I needed blood other service members would be lined up to donate."

Capt. Steven McDaniel, deputy director at the Robertson Blood Center, thanked Rose for his initiative, time and donation with a handshake and an Armed Services Blood Program coin. With donors like the 57th Expeditionary Signal Battalion, the Robertson Blood Center cannot say thank you enough for the precious gift of donated blood.

CONGRATULATIONS!!!

To find out more about the Armed Service Blood Program please visit:

www.militaryblood.dod.mil

OR

www.facebook.com/militaryblood

-Catherine Tharpe

Armed Service Blood Program Recruiter

Fort Hood, Texas

To Sgt. Michael Eby and his wife, Jessica Eby on the birth of their son:

Daemon Michael Eby

To Sgt. 1st Class William Walker and his wife, Jenn Walker on the birth of their daughter:

Mikayla Shaye Walker

To Staff Sgt. Gary Whimbush and his wife, Jessica Whimbush on the birth of their son:

Andre Jamal Whimbush

To Sgt. Benjamin Swallow and his wife, Shelby Swallow, on the birth of their daughter:

Braelyn Swallow

Do you have idea for the next edition of The Lion's Roar? E-mail melisa.i.foster@afghan.swa.army.mil

REMAINING RESILIENT: AS EASY AS 1,2,3....4,5

“Even the most resilient Soldiers have unresilient moments” Staff Sgt. Steven Proctor says during his resiliency training with Soldiers of the 580th Signal Company. The Soldiers look around and nod in agreement, taking it all in.

This training is new to most of the Soldiers who came into an Army of the mentality “Suck it up and drive on”, a mentality that can be detrimental to a Soldier’s welfare. Staff Sgt. Proctor, Battalion training NCO, says “If you tell your Soldiers to just suck it up and drive on, they’re less likely to come to you with their problems.”

The Army has gone back to the drawing board when it comes to dealing with Soldier’s issues, developing training such as this resiliency training. Staff Sgt. Proctor gives us five tips from the training to help us all remain resilient.



Staff Sgt. Steven Proctor gives the example of the poem “Invictus” by William Ernest Henley to demonstrate resiliency to Soldiers of the 580th Signal Company. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Melisa Foster)

- 5 Optimism matters.** Optimistic thinkers are happier and have less depression than pessimistic thinkers. They have fewer illnesses, have faster recoveries, and live longer. They are seen as better leaders, have stronger relationships, and perform better under pressure.
- 4 Make your praise praise-worthy.** When someone we care about succeeds or does well, we often say: Good job ! We skip the process, strategy and behavior that led to the good outcome. Therefore, it lacks the information that will enable them to replicate it. When you praise someone, name the specific strategy, effort, or skill that led to the good outcome. It demonstrates authenticity, and that you were really paying attention.
- 3 Use assertive communication during a dilemma with the I.D.E.A.L. model:**
 - I: Internal. Before communicating anything, take time to internalize and accurately understand the problem.
 - D: Describe. Describe the problem objectively and accurately without exaggerating.
 - E: Express. Express your concerns and how you feel.
 - A: Ask the other person for his/her perspective.
 - L: List the positive outcomes that will occur if the person makes the agreed change.
- 2 P.I.I.P: Put it into perspective.** If you find yourself dwelling on a situation that is bringing you down, think of positive extreme opposites and write them down. This process will help you find a middle ground of thinking to what the situation may truly be.
- 1 Hunt the good stuff.** Record at least 3 good things that happen each day for a month. Over time, it will become second nature to continue seeking out the good each day. This will create confidence and optimism for everything going on in your life.

-Sgt Melisa I. Foster
Public Affairs Officer
25th Signal Battalion

FAMILY READINESS GROUP



Sgt. Benjamin Swallow of the 550th Signal Company holds his newborn daughter, Braelyn Swallow.

Greetings 25th family!

These next couple of months the FRG will be renovating the way it operates. Our FRG is unique in that our families are not in a centralized location. This proves it very difficult to engage our families back home. We ask that you keep your families up to date on resources that will help them connect with other families and keep tabs on the happenings of the battalion. Encourage them to "like" the battalion Facebook page. Forward out the battalion newsletter so they can get a glimpse of life with the 25th Signal Battalion. Reach out and keep your family in the loop as much as possible.

April is the Month of the Military child. There are many great events such as free summer camps and festivals out there that can benefit your children. Visit the following links to learn about some of the programs.

<http://www.operationmilitarykids.org/public/states.aspx>

<http://www.myarmyonesource.com/ChildYouthandSchoolServices/MonthoftheMilitaryChild/default.aspx>

For 230th Soldiers:

<https://www.facebook.com/#!/TNNATIONALGUARDJ9>

The FRG is always looking for feedback and suggestions. If you would like to give your input, e-mail the FRG leader, SFC Inez Brown, at Inez.l.brown@afghan.swa.army.mil

*-Sgt. Melisa I. Foster
Family Readiness Group Alternate
25th Signal Battalion*

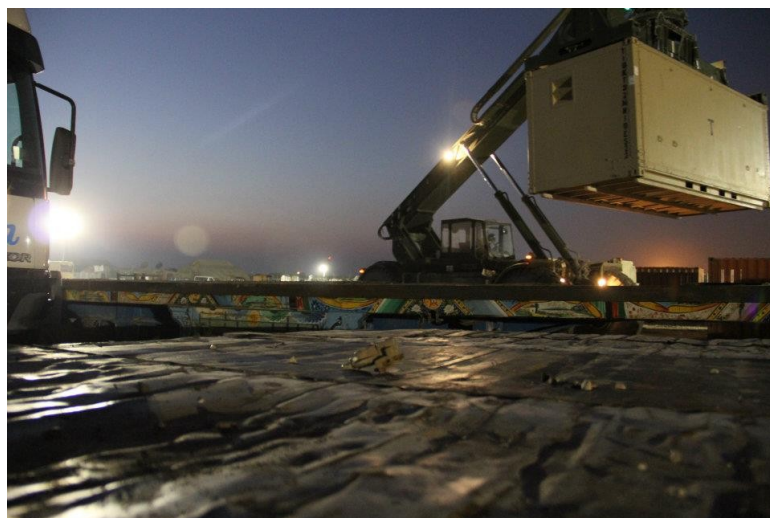
EDITOR'S CORNER



One theme I can't seem to shake going into the new quarter is **change**. This past quarter has been a whirlwind of change: changes of command, changes of responsibility, changing out units and most notably, change of weather. And it won't stop there. Naturally, we're distracted by all the changes going on around us, we hardly notice the changes that have been made in ourselves. As a journalist, I have a natural eagerness to observe Soldiers, their demeanor, and mostly- how they change over time. This past quarter I've seen new NCOs become comfortable in their leadership, Soldiers begin to embrace more responsibility and mostly, everyone unite to see the bigger picture and complete the mission. Everyone has made their own personal transformations that have made the battalion as a whole more effective. Continue to be aware of the changes in your surroundings, but more importantly, keeps tabs on the changes you've made in yourself and continue to change for the better, for yourself, and for the battalion.

*-Sgt. Melisa I. Foster
Public Affairs Officer
25th Signal Battalion*

PHOTO OF THE QUARTER



One of 580th Signal Company's technical control facilities in transient to another base in northern Afghanistan. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Richard Lutz)