



March 2012

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Commander's Corner



Soldiers, Department of the Army Civilians, Program Management teams, contract personnel, Family and friends of Army Field Support Battalion-Kandahar, thank you for everything you do each and every day in support of our great mission. This has been a busy month, full of challenges, which were successfully accomplished through your professionalism and dedication.

Moving forward over the next few months, do not expect things to slow down. As we shift focus onto supporting those units leaving over the next few months, we must do all that we can to ensure that we are meeting our requirements. The Army is depending on us to successfully complete this mission. I encourage everyone to place a critical eye on each process and provide your feedback to the battalion leadership to make things better and more efficient.

Summer is here, and there has been a noticeable change in temperature. Please stay aware of the weather and dress accordingly. Please remember your reflective belts and remind your coworkers to do the right thing and wear their belts. It is too easy a task when you consider that the consequences are potentially so severe.

To the Family members back home, we hope that all is well and that each of you understands what a vital role you play in supporting your deployed loved one. You remain important members of our team. Please remember those in harm's way and continue to provide them the best support possible.

Have a great month.

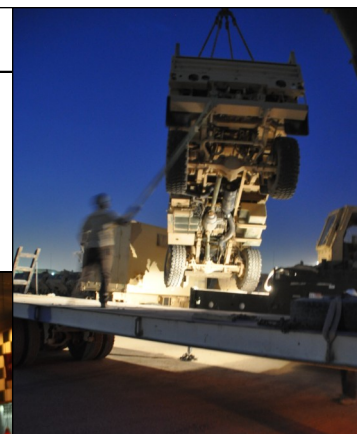
Stay Safe and Stay Focused!

Trust and Loyalty!

On Point!

-Excellence 6

Around the Footprint...



Sergeant Major's Desk



This month I would like to take the opportunity to briefly discuss professional development and how it affects each of us in our careers and workplace. As an individual, one should always strive to improve professionally and this can be accomplished in many ways, such as job rotation, cross training, in some cases, as well as mentoring,

coaching, teaching and management training. Whether you are military, DA Civilian or contractors we all should seek out ways to improve ourselves professionally.

Professional development is an ongoing acquisition or refinement of skills and knowledge that are necessary to successfully perform one's job. Professional skills and knowledge are the skills and knowledge that go beyond the scope of one's job description, although they may indirectly improve job performance. The most important question that you need to ask yourself on a consistent basis is whether you are growing professionally and improving yourself or not?

We all need to work on improving in the areas of leadership, communication and presentation. What steps have you taken to improve yourself professionally?

For those of us that are in leadership positions, we need to continue to develop the necessary core competencies to become excellent leaders. The effect that professional development has within the work place helps us to improve the way we handle situations with co-workers and subordinates.

You can seek out educational opportunities at the KAF education center.

I would like to encourage each of us to focus on improving ourselves professionally, as an individual and as an organization.

I don't fear failure. I only fear the slowing up of the engine inside of me which is saying, "Keep going, someone must be on top, why not you?"

"ON POINT"

-CSM White, Excellence 7

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The Executive Officer's Pen guest writer Joyce Toney



We are in the midstream of one of the greatest and most monumental logistical endeavors that our great nation has orchestrated. We are part of an extraordinary team of Soldiers, Department of the Army Civilians and contractors who are bravely seizing a pivotal moment in.

The mission of sustainment and retrograde that we have all embraced is moving forward awaiting what is termed, "The Waterfall."

To some it may very well be a waterfall, but to those that are the shakers, movers and executors, it may seem like a tsunami. It may seem like a tsunami with a series of waves of equipment flowing from all directions rushing to the gates of the various RPAT yards and MRPAT sites.

To the logisticians at these yards and mobile sites, the waterfall may consist of a series of waves of equipment flowing in and out in periods of hours and days; arriving

and leaving in waves which could be likened to the wave train in a tsunami. It is during these times that we are pressed to ascend to levels markedly higher than usual.

It is during this time that we must do what the famous British writer Daniel Oke said, "You see far better and much further if you are above the forest than within it.

Mount up with wings and soar above your circumstances, the answers usually lie within a higher perspective."

While standing in the forest of endless lines of rolling stock, containers and tri-walls, we must look up. We must soar above these lines and look further to see the higher perspective of the monumental task. We must see that we are an extraordinary team of Soldiers, Department of the Army Civilians and contractors; that we can channel the waves of equipment to its respective destinations. We can see beyond the forest, mount up with wings of eagles and soar!

Editor's note: Joyce Toney is an operation's officer with the AFSBn-KAF SPO.



**"We can do
it!"**



"On Point"



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<http://www.dvidshub.net/publication/413/on-point>

Brig. Gen. French visits Shindand



U.S. Navy Customs supports Army retrograde by J. Elise Van Pool



John Matuza, who is attached to the Army Field Support Battalion-Kandahar. "We basically make sure everything is good to go back to the United States."

The team ensures that vehicles that have been in theater for years are free of contaminants such as biological hazards, ammunition, bird nests, moths and larvae. They also provide training to the workers who clean the vehicles showing them the places most often missed.

The process to clear vehicles for shipment back to the States starts long before it gets custom's cleared. First, the unit who had the vehicle cleans it and ensures that it is free of any biological material and ammunition. After determining there is no longer a use for the vehicle in theater, it is turned

into a redistribution property assistance team yard. At the RPAT yard, it is thoroughly cleaned and processed.

During the final stages, the vehicles are inspected by the Navy customs agents to ensure the vehicles are totally clean before they are shipped back to the States.

"We are the last stop," said Matuza. "When it departs Afghanistan, it's completely clear of anything that might harm the United States."

To meet President Obama's goal of bringing home combat forces from Afghanistan by 2014, the Army has already begun to remove excess equipment from the country.

"The Navy Customs Team has been an invaluable resource and has helped to ensure that the battalion met its retrograde goals during the past

two months," said Lt. Col. Nathan Acree, Support Operations Officer for the AFSBn-Kandahar. "We have learned a lot from them and as a result, we are better prepared to meet the demanding future requirements of retrograde."

Before coming to theater, the sailors went through a five week training course back in the States. Additional training was provided in Kuwait.

For many on the team, this is the first experience doing a joint mission.

"At first it was [challenging], learning their lingo [and] how they do business," said Castro.

"It's nice to interact with another branch of service," said Petty Officer 1st Class Edward Yoshikawa. "A lot of people don't get that opportunity, to interact with another branch of service in their career."

"When the Army called, we answered," said Petty Officer 2nd Class Trini Castro.

Castro, along with approximately 20 members of a U.S. Navy customs team from Kuwait, are now assisting the 401st Army Field Support Brigade in their retrograde mission. The sailors who serve as customs agents help ensure that the vehicles are ready for shipment back to the United States.

"Our mission is to stay here as long as the Army needs us," said Senior Chief Petty Officer

Texas A&M Muster held at Camp Leatherneck by J. Elise Van Pool



dictator General Santa Anna at the Battle of San Jacinto," said Smyth.

The muster has been an A&M tradition since the conclusion of World War I, said Col. Jeffrey

P. Davis, class of 1987.

"Back then A&M was all male, all military school and entire classes of A&M men went off to World War I," said Davis. "After the war was over they wanted to reunite, see their comrades they had not seen in three or four years. So the tradition started to get back together and have a roll call and answer here for the comrades that were no longer with us."

The keynote address was given by Rep. Louie Gohmert (R-Texas) who was in Afghanistan visiting the troops. As is tradition, the congressman, a member of the class of 1975, shared a few memories from his time in the Cadet Corps at A&M, reminiscing about blind dates and meeting new friends.

While remembering a dear friend that went to A&M with Gohmert he said, "I look around the room tonight and I

am with gifts from God. And I hope after you leave muster tonight that you think about it in a prayer tonight to God, saying thank you for all the gifts you put around me; for my life at A&M and at Camp Leatherneck, all the places you go."

He concluded by saying, "Aggies have always had a special place in their heart for their country, for each other... [T]hat's why I am proud to be here with you to tonight and I will always be proud to be a Texas Aggie."

Following the key note address five candles were lit, representing five classes. As each of the candles were lit, the names of those who had passed away from that class during the previous year were read aloud. After each name, a fellow Aggie would answer "here" in their stead.

Following the ceremony, attendees gathered and talked, remembering and catching up with old friends.

"I am honored to be here serving my country in Afghanistan, but to be serving and be here tonight with fellow Aggies you really can't describe how special it is," said Davis. "It does not matter how old or young you are, you are an Aggie. You are an Aggie forever."

He read the names one by one. "Mr. Sherman Allenson, Dr. Daryl Atkins, Maj. James Dennis," intoned Capt. Askie Toure, class of 2006.

The roll call was part of an annual Muster ceremony held by alumni of Texas A&M University stationed at Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan. The ceremony was hosted by Logistics Taskforce - 4, part of the Army Field Support Battalion - Kandahar, 401st Army Field Support Brigade.

"We as Aggies muster to commemorate our fellow Aggies that have died during the year," said event organizer Lt. Col. Robert Smyth, LTF - 4 executive and operations officer and class of 1985. "The driver is Aggie Spirit."

"The day, 21 April was chosen as that is the day the Republic of Texas defeated the Mexican Army in a struggle for independence and liberty over the



Command Vision

An accomplished, agile and adaptive organization comprised of skilled and disciplined Soldiers, DA Civilians and contractors who will succeed in any type of mission for our Nation.

A diversified formation that values discipline, initiative and integrity, and respects each team member as someone who volunteered to serve a cause greater than oneself.

A disciplined, combat-experienced organization which all others aspire.

Man in the K-Span: What is your favorite summer activity?



"Riding my motorcycle."

~Shawn Buchler
PM IED Defeat
Mechanic

"Football."

~Pfc. Todd Thomas
Mobile RPAT Crew
Member

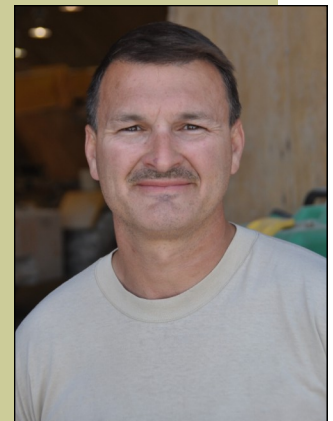


"Fishing, I enjoy fishing."

~Andy Henson
Oil Lab Tech
Army Oil Analysis Lab

"Waterskiing in the
summer time."

~Gregory Niffen
PM IED Defeat
Mechanic



"Jet skiing"

~Don Sharpe
CECOM Inventory
Management Spec.



"Swimming!"

~Kathy Simonson
Admin Assistant
RFI Yard



"Basketball"

~Andre Wright
PM IED Defeat
Mechanic



ON POINT !

We would also like to welcome the following individuals to the battalion:

Saint-Eloi, Mahalia
 Fitzsimons, William
 Phillips, Jeffery
 Baez Tejeda, Nerys
 Barrant, Stephen
 Coello, Otto
 Dipple, Gregory
 Douse, Courdero
 Carcia, Raul
 Gizzi, Cory
 Hanno, Christopher
 Harris, Lawrence
 Kay, Phillip
 Keller, Michael
 Miller, Jamie
 Paglinawan, Kim Karlo
 Persichilli, Joshua
 Santana, Luis
 Schuss, Jennifer
 Simsick, Mark
 Speeckaert, Jennifer
 Steele, Robin
 Thomas, Todd



Thomas, Ronald
 Tommaso, Nicholas
 Waterman, Jacob
 Wood, Timothy
 Sharpe, Donald
 Santiago, Eliu
 Jones, Seamon

Green, Jeffery
 Costello, Michael

Last Words by the Editor by J. Elise Van Pool



You know that feeling you get when you are contemplating your upcoming R&R? That excited little flutter in your stomach at the thought of fresh air and good food? Scientists have found that just the act of planning a vacation has positive effects on a person's mood and health.

Serving in Afghanistan often precludes us from taking many trips. But what it does illustrate is the importance of taking time for yourself. We all

work really hard here. Working seven days a week, for 12 hours, sometimes more, has an effect on your body and mind.

It is important to mitigate that effect and carve out some time where you do something just for you. It may be as simple as going back to your room and reading or going to the gym. Whatever you do, it's important to relax a little and put some balance back into your life.

"Happiness is the consequence of personal effort," said Elizabeth Gilbert in her best seller *Eat, Pray, Love*. Especially with all the demands of a deployment, taking time for yourself does require some effort. However, it is well worth it.

As we progress into the summer months the operational demands placed on everyone will increase. As this happens, it's important to take time to reset. We cannot maintain optimal performance without it.

As always if you have submissions for the newsletter or have story ideas I can be reached at the following email.

elise.vanpool@us.army.mil



Just for fun...



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