

ON POINT!



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COVER

Pfc. Frank Miranda, an infantryman with Alpha Company, 5th Battalion, 20th Infantry Regiment, rushes to his next position while providing security outside the district center in Spin Boldak, Afghanistan, July 30, 2012. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Brendan Mackie)

BACK COVER

(Photos by Sgt. Christopher McCullough, Combined Task Force Arrowhead Public Affairs) (Illustration by Spc. Mark Neace)

3-2 SBCT Commander
Col. Charles Webster Jr.

3-2 SBCT Command Sgt. Maj.
Command Sgt. Maj. Samuel G. Murphy

3-2 SBCT Public Affairs Office

Capt Troy Frey.....Public Affairs Officer
Staff Sgt. Joshua S. Brandenburg.....NCOIC/Photo Journalist/
Layout and Design
Sgt. Christopher G. McCullough.....Photo Journalist
Sgt. Nathaniel D. Phillips.....Broadcast Journalist
Spc. Mark E. Neace.....Illustrator

Contributors

Lt. Col. Daniel F. Bohmer, Chaplain (Maj.) Edward I. Choi,
1st. Lt. Davin Fischer, Staff Sgt. Brendan Mackie,
Sgt. Matt Young and Carlene Joseph

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The City of Lacey’s Homecoming for the Arrowhead Brigade

Story by Carlene Joseph
VP Harborstone Credit Union
Community and Military Relations

The City of Lacey, through the coordination of the Association of the United States Army Lacey Subchapter, is moving along with their plans to welcome you all home. We’re getting very close to securing a location. Considering that you’re coming home in the middle of winter, we really don’t have a selection of locations to choose from other than Saint Martin’s University. It’s cold during that time of year, so we have to be selective with our location options, which is very limited in the City of Lacey. We’re anticipating a February 4th date for the event, but we still need to confirm this with the university. You will be the first to know once we have a firm date.

Our plans to welcome

you home include the attendance of the City of Lacey Mayor, City Council members, Adopt a Unit leaders, business leaders, and of course the planners, which are the AUSA Lacey Subchapter. Since we’re still planning, I’ll leave the rest up to your imagination and hopefully we won’t fall short. The bottom-line is that your community wants you home. You’re all in our hearts and minds, and we miss you very much. Your family members are anxiously waiting to see you again too.

While you’re there, please watch out for each other and keep yourselves out of harm’s way when ever you can. We look forward to your safe return and we’ll keep you in our prayers as always.

S-2 is the Intelligence of the Arrowhead Brigade

Story and photo by
Staff Sgt. Joshua S. Brandenburg

There are many offices within a brigade for a commander to receive information from. The personnel office reports on personnel statuses, while the operations office reports on the current and future operations of the brigade but the intelligence office may be one of a commander's most important sources of information and advice.

The Intelligence Office, also known as S-2, is responsible for collecting and analyzing information from many different sources in order to give as clear a picture as possible about enemy locations, actions and movement so the commander can make decisive decisions on how to achieve his goals. It should respond to the needs of the commander, based on the objectives for any operation.

"We are responsible for knowing what's going on in the AO (area of operations), as far as what the enemy is doing," said Sgt. Betsy Nunez, a military analyst with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division.

The intelligence process is comprised of four main areas: collection, analysis, packaging and dissemination. The Soldiers of the S-2 office handle each report seriously and in a timely manner. When dealing with intelligence reports from the field they quickly analyze the reports, which they call 'on the spot intelligence,'

and distribute them up the chain of command and down to the Soldiers on the ground. "It's like 'hey if we have troops over here, this is what we think is happening with the enemy,' so that's the on the spot intelligence we give" Nunez added. "We're required to maintain situational awareness of what's going on in the battlefield from an enemy's perspective."

So how does all this intelligence help the effectiveness of a military unit?

"It helps you to arrest the bad guys that are out there, cause we find out who they are, where they are and who they are associated with," said Sgt. Christin Kim, a human intelligence collector, with Headquarters

and Headquarters Company, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division. "So we remove negative players from the battle-space and remove IEDs (improvised explosive devices) from the battle-space."

Kim went on to say that just last month they received a report of an IED emplaced near a road, so they got directions and a grid and sent the information out to the units in the area, whom were able to find the IED and safely detonate it.

The intelligence analysts of the Arrowhead Brigade are always reading up on the situations in the Zabul and Kandahar Provinces and are always ready to provide the vital intelligence that the commander needs.



(From left to right) Staff Sgt. Christin Kim, Spc. Corey Phillips, Master Sgt. Maricella Derrick (front), Spc. Terry Andrews, Warrant Officer Mathew Toman, Staff Sgt. Daniel Garcia and Capt. Heather Garcia are some of the hard working soldiers of 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division's Intelligence Office.

New Qalat Slaughterhouse Opens

Story and photos by 1st. Lt. Davin Fischer
Zabul Agribusiness Development Team

With the Castle of Alexander the Great as a backdrop, Afghan government leaders in the Zabul Provincial Capital of Qalat gathered to open a new slaughterhouse facility for use in the city's livestock trade.

Planning for the slaughterhouse has been in the works since November, 2011. The butchers and traders of Qalat, the mayor of Qalat, the Director of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock, RampUp South, United States Agency for International Aid, Zabul Provincial Reconstruction Team and Zabul Agri-Business Development Team, worked together in partnership with each other to determine the location, and design of the facility.

Maj. Cheryl Wachenheim a ZADT member who works closely with the DAIL, ZPRT and other partners indicated the diversity of contributors may be a reason the project has been successfully executed, "It was an effort that involved all stakeholders during the planning stage, which helps explain its success. This effort is the first public-private partnership in Zabul province."

Wachenheim added, "This is a significant event for Qalat and all of southern Afghanistan in that it provides an example of how private industry can leverage the resources and strengths of municipalities to generate income and to improve



Afghan government officials, members of the Qalat Butcher's Union, and International Security Assistance Forces mark the opening of the new Qalat slaughterhouse underneath the battlements of Alexander's Castle in Qalat City, Zabul Province, Afghanistan.

the lives of its entrepreneurs and residents."

Previous livestock trade took place mostly in the open, at the foot of the castle site, and with little regard for sanitation and public health issues.

The new facility, says Wachenheim, "provides a clean, safe place to slaughter livestock and greatly reduces the environmental impact of the slaughter process. It also helps ensure meat purchased in Qalat and exported is clean and safe. It also provides a model of provincial, local municipal and private sector Afghans working together towards common economic and social goals."

The effect of the slaughterhouse project is greater than simply boosting Qalat and Zabul province's livestock trade; it may spark the beginning of more governmental influence, involvement, and services provided to local trades and industries.

An Afghan official, who was integral in the planning, believes that the coordination necessary to bring the project to fruition inherently increases the capacity of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, saying "As part of this public private partnership, the municipality worked to develop associated ordinances. As such, the project helped empower the municipality to govern."



Members of the Zabul Provincial Government, the Qalat Municipal Government, and members of the Qalat Butchers Union participate in a ribbon cutting ceremony at the opening of the new Qalat slaughterhouse.

Making money without marijuana: Afghan farmers enabled to grow legal crops

Story and photos by
Staff Sgt. Brendan Mackie
117th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Cannabis is the most lucrative cash crop in Afghanistan, generating an annual income of more than \$9,000 per farmer, according to a report by the United Nations Office on Drug and Crimes. Last year, a Robat-area farmer more than doubled that amount by growing and exporting an even more profitable, but legal, crop: sweet melons.

With assistance from the U.S. Agency for International Development and U.S. Army civil affairs, farmers in Afghanistan now network with traders to sell legal crops such as melons for higher prices in markets such as India and Dubai.

"Products such as pomegranates, apricots, almonds, figs, melons, grapes and pistachios are

receiving increasingly higher prices in these new markets," said Steve Tavella, a field program officer for USAID. "Increased stability enables farmers to invest more time and money in their businesses without fear of war ravaging their land."

Farmers in the district of Spin Boldak traditionally export their goods across the international border to Pakistan due to its close proximity and liberal export policies.

Pakistani traders are often willing to assist Afghan farmers financially in return for a lower and fixed rate on their products, Tavella said. Because of the Kandahar province drought that started in the 1990s, water is generally only found in wells deep underground.

Afghan farmers are often forced to accept loans from Pakistani

traders in order to run expensive diesel-operated equipment needed to pump water for the crops.

"A lot of these [Afghan] people are just trying to survive, which is seen by the way some never get out of debt from Pakistan," said Capt. Pennie Llorente, team chief with Civil Affairs Team 613 here. "They, more or less, are living paycheck to paycheck."

USAID assists local farmers in obtaining loans from different sources in an effort to disconnect them from these 'middle men' and by linking them up with traders in the more lucrative markets who are eager to buy their products at higher prices.

In addition to assistance with loans and networking, USAID offers training for these farmers.

"We have provided training in integrated pest management, proper pesticide application, personal protection, and proper storage of these chemicals," said Tavella. "As we have assisted in opening up new markets, we have also provided training in sorting, grading and packing produce for these markets."

Teamwork is also a priority for USAID and civil affairs in Spin Boldak; farmers are now forming cooperatives where they are now able to own and control their business by increasing their strength in numbers.

Since last year, almost 200 farmers joined the cooperative in the Robat

area of the Spin Boldak district.

"Cooperatives provide an assured source of supply. If one farmer's crop fails there are other sources of supply," said Tavella. "By pooling supply purchases, sales, and handling and selling expenses, cooperatives can operate more efficiently—at lower costs per unit—than farmers can individually."

All these proactive measures are incentives for farmers to grow licit crops. This also provides the farmers with legal alternatives in order to maintain financial stability.

Farmers face the threat of illicit crop eradication by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. Certain districts in the country are already having illegal crops eradicated.

"If we eradicate the illicit crops without providing a comparable alternative, we take away their livelihoods," Llorente said. "By broadening their market base, the farmers will have more avenues to sell their crops for a higher price."

"As this GIRoA initiative matures, farmers assume increasing risk of losing their crops, and significant income," Tavella said. "If a farmer has taken out loans with drug lords, failure to repay can translate to consequences that risk the safety of the farmer and his family."

Although many farmers have profited by selling legal produce, it is unclear how long it will take for the majority of farmers



Steve Tavella, a field program officer for the U.S. Agency for International Development, speaks with Dadullah, an Afghan farmer, amongst a crop of cucumbers near the village of Haji Nikal, Afghanistan, July 22, 2012. USAID and Army civil affairs teams often conduct impromptu meetings with local farmers to better understand ways to improve agriculturally.

to meet or possibly exceed the prices paid for illegal crops.

"That will take several years to determine," Llorente said. "It has to be more of a commitment of the farmers that understand that selling illicit crops is not contributing to the development of their nation."

the Afghan-led Robat cooperative, said that his farmers are grateful, and have benefited from all the training and assistance offered to improve their way of life.

"My dream is to sell mainly to other international markets," Khan said, "get rid of those illegal crops and get a better name for Afghanistan."

Shadullah Khan, vice president of



Steve Tavella, a field program officer for the U.S. Agency for International Development, surveys a field of cannabis (marijuana) near the village of Haji Nikal, Afghanistan, July 22, 2012. USAID focuses on projects such as providing assistance and resources for legal crop production to the Afghan people.



Dadullah, an Afghan farmer, speaks with a field program officer of the U.S. Agency for International Development, and members of Alpha Company, 426th Civil Affairs Battalion (Airborne), in a cucumber field near Haji Nikal, Afghanistan, July 22, 2012. Dadullah said the pest problem is a significant threat to crops this year. The U.S. Agency for International Development offers programs to properly educate local farmers on proper implementation of pesticides.

WWII tradition continues in southern Afghanistan

Story and photos by
Staff Sgt. Brendan Mackie
117th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

During the American Civil War, soldiers wore colorful corps badges on their caps and blouses to differentiate themselves in the chaos of battle.

By the end of World War I, these simple insignias evolved into

more intricate unit patches also known as shoulder sleeve insignias and were worn on the left sleeve to denote membership in a certain Army unit. Insignias on the opposite sleeve, signifying time in a combat zone, began to be donned in the mid-1940s.

In the months of June and July, several unit commanders

continued the long-standing tradition of presenting each of their Soldiers with shoulder sleeve insignias, denoting wartime service during ceremonies here and at nearby Combat Outpost Lakaray.

“By volunteering to serve in our nation’s Army and deploying in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, you have now earned lifetime membership in this unique clan,” said Lt. Col. Deborah Ellis, the commander of the 502nd Military Intelligence Battalion. “I ask every one of you to wear the 201st Battlefield Surveillance Brigade and the 1st Medical Brigade patch on your right shoulder with pride.”

Second Lt. Yvette E. Huston, a personnel officer for the 502nd, mentioned the history associated with combat patches as she spoke to the troops receiving patches.

“The combat patch ceremony is a tradition started by the Army during World War II,” Huston said. “Soldiers who served in a combat zone during a period of active enemy engagement placed their unit patches on their right shoulders to signify their participation.”

Other unit commanders made similar speeches, citing their Soldiers’ dedication to duty and selfless service.

“It’s great that command elements see the importance

of formally addressing the accomplishments of its Soldiers,” said Cpl. Brendan Birch, behavioral health specialist with the 1972nd Medical Detachment here. “I am proud knowing I belong to an organization that takes the time to recognize outstanding accomplishments such as a patch ceremony.”

Units that held combat patch ceremonies included: three companies of the 1st Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division; Alpha

Company and the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 502nd Military Intelligence Battalion, 201st Battlefield Surveillance Brigade; 1972nd Medical Detachment, 1st Medical Brigade; and Soldiers with the 27th Joint Border Coordination Center, 82nd Airborne Division.

Proper wear of the shoulder sleeve insignia - former wartime service is outlined in Army Regulation 670-1. To earn this combat patch, a Soldier must serve for at least 30 days in a

theater of operations declared a combat zone by the Secretary of the Army or a higher official.

“Whenever I see a soldier wearing a SSI-FWTS, I think about the hardships the Soldier and his/her family may have endured during that time away,” Birch said. “It makes me proud to be a Soldier in the U.S. Army knowing that I have brothers and sisters willing to sacrifice certain luxuries that we fight to ensure generations after us will get to enjoy.”



Pfc. Jarred Keith, an infantryman with Charlie Company of the 1st Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment, receives his ‘combat patch’ from Staff Sgt. Stanley Arnold during a patching ceremony at Combat Outpost Lakaray, Afghanistan, June 16, 2012. The 1-17th Inf. Regt. is part of the 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division.



Staff Sgt. Darren McNeil receives congratulations from 1st Sgt. Robert Hunt after receiving his ‘combat patch’ during a ceremony at Forward Operating Base Spin Boldak, Afghanistan, July 20, 2012. Both soldiers are members of Alpha Company, 502nd Military Intelligence Battalion. The unit is from Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash.



U.S. Army photo by Lt. Col. Daniel F. Bohmer



Courtesy photo



U.S. Army photo by Lt. Col. Daniel F. Bohmer



U.S. Army photo by 1st. Lt. Davin Fischer



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Brendan Mackie



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Matt Young



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Matt Young



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Joshua S. Brandenburg

Ramazan offers agricultural training opportunities in Zabul province

Story and Photo by
1st. Lt. Davin Fischer
Zabul Agribusiness Development Team

The Islamic Holy Month of Ramazan is a time of worship and reflection intended to bring individuals closer to God. For Afghans, this means fasting during daylight hours and a devotion to prayer and other religious activities in the evenings – but it also means lower energy levels for everyday work.

At the Zabul province offices of the Department of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock this presents unique difficulties with continuing to train with the Zabul Agri-Business Development Team whose mission is to mentor DAIL employees.

Maj. Dana Dobbs, the ZADT Veterinarian and a liaison to the DAIL offices in Qalat, the provincial capital of Zabul, observed a change in work patterns with her Afghan

partners: “People are still coming to work at the DAIL; I’m not sure how much their hours have been altered. But they do seem to be getting tired and activities have reduced about 25 percent.” Together, DAIL and ZADT personnel developed a plan of conducting limited classes during the month of Ramazan, executing them briefly in the mornings to ensure participation. A senior manager at the DAIL who helped coordinate the class schedule believes the strategy is an important part of maintaining the progress the DAIL has made during the last year.

“The DAIL needs to continue to build the capacity of our staff and this way we can make sure that happens during Ramazan” the DAIL official said, continuing “We are not able to go out of the office and perform many of the normal duties, but we want to take advantage of some of the

free time we have in the office.” Classes planned include project management, professional writing and correspondence, communication skills, bee training, horticulture, water management, among others.

“The intent is to continue to mentor our DAIL staff with an emphasis on business practices. These classes may help the organization run more efficiently and help them be more organized and forward thinking” said Dobbs, optimistic the effort will further both the DAIL and ZADT missions.

The Zabul ADT partners with the DAIL staff and other entities in conducting agricultural outreach and activities throughout Zabul province. The ADT concept is a National Guard initiative to utilize the civilian agricultural skills of Guard members throughout the United States.



Staff members at the Zabul Department of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock receive a class from their partners, the Zabul Agri-Business Development Team.

New policemen in the ranks: More than 300 cadets graduate from academy

Story and photos by
Staff Sgt. Brendan Mackie
117th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

A nondescript, extremely hot day became extraordinary for 300 Afghan cadets when they graduated from the police academy, July 28.

A joint graduation ceremony was held for both Afghan Uniformed Police trainees marking the end of their basic training and Afghan Border Police non-commissioned officers concluding their NCO academy coursework.

The academy is run by the Afghan National Police with U.S. and Romanian Soldiers providing support as advisers to the Afghan cadre.

During the graduation, the top students demonstrated unarmed self-defense techniques learned during training.

“We started practicing one month ago,” said Romanian

Army Capt. Claudiu Cotet. “They were training everyday for two hours on these techniques.”

With the onset of Ramadan toward the end of the course, training was minimized to the morning hours. Other activities such as reading and writing took precedence over unarmed self-defense training during the month of spiritual reflection.

“Ramadan had started,” Cotet said. “We were afraid they would not remember what they learned, but they did.”

The NCO course was 14 weeks, including six weeks devoted to literacy and eight weeks focused on tactical training, said 1st Lt. Mohammed Naim, the deputy commander of the training center here.

The AUP basic course consisted of eight weeks and focused on technical and tactical requirements, Naim said.



Two Afghan Uniformed Police members demonstrate hand-to-hand fighting techniques during a police academy graduation at Forward Operating Base Spin Boldak, July 28, 2012.

“They learned things like hand-to-hand fighting, Afghan Constitution, use-of-force, and drills, but the most important thing these guys learned was literacy,” said Afghan 1st Sgt. Naqeebullah of the AUP cadre. “They did very well in the literacy course and will get to graduate as well-educated NCOs and basic policemen.”

Naqeebullah said that the two courses conducted here prove beneficial both to the students as well as the communities they are set to serve in after graduation.



A member of the Afghan Border Police marches to the podium to receive his certificate during a police academy graduation at Forward Operating Base Spin Boldak, July 28, 2012.



A member of the Afghan Border Police receives a certificate during a police graduation held at Forward Operating Base Spin Boldak, Afghanistan, July 28, 2012.

Iron Chef Challenge - Arrowhead Style

Story and photos by Sgt. Matt Young
117th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Everyone who has ever seen the television show "Iron Chef America" knows how hot and hectic it can get in a kitchen.

Now imagine an Iron Chef challenge in Afghanistan where the temperatures inside and outside the kitchen can reach well over 100 degrees, the cooking spaces are tight, supplies are limited and there are more than 300 hungry soldiers to feed.

On the morning of Aug. 10, Staff Sgt. Anquone Conyer, the dining facility non-commissioned-officer-in-charge for the Masum Ghar chow hall, decided to put together his own Iron Chef challenge between two of his cooks, Spc. Van Casis and Pfc. James Bradbury. Both Soldiers are with the 296th

Brigade Support Battalion. Conyer gathered Casis and Bradbury into the front of the dining facility and kicked off the competition by reading off the rules and revealing the "secret ingredient" beef tenderloin.

"In the kitchen it was chaotic, you have only four or five pieces of equipment to use with very limited space," Bradbury said.

Both chefs had 90 minutes to prepare the tenderloin in their most creative way, but they also had to serve 300 soldiers and have five plates on the table by 11 a.m. to be judged. "It's a huge humbling experience to put out something unique and worry if someone will like it," Bradbury said. "It's a big deal and it takes a lot of guts. You have to be really confident in that final product."

The judging was based on a points system, 10 points for taste, five points for plating, another five points for originality and the final 10 points based off of the popular vote.

Once Casis and Bradbury had their secret ingredient in hand the cooking began.

Both chefs worked quickly, but methodically, as they prepared their meals against the clock with only one sous-chef to help them in the kitchen.

Bradbury took a creative approach with the well-known energy drink here in country, rip-it, and created a sauce with it.

"Watching the show 'Iron Chef America,' and seeing those chefs create innovative things with ordinary food we eat every day is what inspired me," Bradbury said. "I wanted to go for big bold flavor on a nice piece of meat."

Casis took a more conventional approach with a cognac sauce, but because there is no alcohol in the combat theater he substituted sparkling grape juice for the cognac.

When the chefs' time had expired, both Casis and Bradbury had completed their mission and were ready to be judged. Casis presented his meal to the judges first; it consisted of beef tenderloin roulade stuffed with mushrooms, pan-seared and then oven-

roasted, handmade onion crisps and his sparkling grape juice sauce.

Next up was Bradbury with his pan-seared, oven-roasted tenderloin topped with a bacon onion relish and rip-it sauce with handmade, crispy, spring onion straws and cooked carrots cut into the shape of flowers.

The judges critiqued both meals and were very satisfied. Overall the judges' main complaint with both meals, besides wanting more, was that each chef might have been a little heavy-handed with the pepper.

"This competition was a fun way to not only gauge our skill set, but also get a chance to show it off a little," Bradbury said. "Food is huge on morale, so if we can make sure Soldiers are having a good meal, it makes us feel good,"

After all the votes had been tallied and the points added up, Casis came out the winner with a total of 104.9 points to Bradbury's 95.5.



Pfc. James Bradbury, a food service specialist with 296th Brigade Support Battalion, displays his dish for the judges at Forward Operating Base Masum Ghar.



Pfc. James Bradbury, a food service specialist with the 296th Brigade Support Battalion, explains his meal to the judges at Masum Ghar, Aug. 10, 2012.

"Being able to participate in these competitions with the support of my fellow soldiers in the unit allows me to get more experience with culinary arts, show off what I can do, and have the Soldiers' appreciation that makes it worth it," Casis said. "Regardless of if I won or lost, it was just a fun thing to do."



The winning dish of beef tenderloin roulade stuffed with mushrooms belonged to Spc. Van Casis, a food service specialist with 296th Brigade Support Battalion.

Conyer hopes to challenge other field feeding teams and continue the competition until there is only one champion Iron Chef in southern Afghanistan.



Spc. Van Casis, a food service specialist with the 296th Brigade Support Battalion, lays down his homemade grape juice gravy for the Iron Chef competition at Masum Ghar Aug. 10, 2012.



From left, Pfc. James Bradbury and Spc. Van Casis, food service specialists with the 296th Brigade Support Battalion, receive their "secret ingredient", beef tenderloin, at the beginning of their Iron Chef competition at Masum Ghar Aug. 10, 2012.



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Brendan Mackie



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Matt Young



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Matt Young



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Brendan Mackie



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Matt Young



U.S. Army photo by Lt. Col. Daniel F. Bohmer



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Matt Young



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Matt Young



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Matt Young

Insurgents lay down weapons for new life

Story and photo by Sgt. Matt Young
117th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Fighters all across Afghanistan are laying down their weapons to start a new life and rejoin their families with the help of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Program.

Some of the ways the word of reintegration is being spread is through news, radio and flyers handed out by the Afghan Uniformed Police and Afghan Border Police.

"It is really important we pass out these flyers and talk to the villagers about reintegration," said Mohammad Hashim, an ABP officer here. "Afghanistan needs reintegration. It is a way to have peace."

Many of the AUP and ABP share similar beliefs on reintegration and the peace it may bring to the country.

"We all think positively of reintegration," Hashim said. "When we go to villages on missions, we always encourage the people to spread the word about reintegration and come back to live a peaceful life."

The reintegration program provides the opportunity for insurgents to return to their villages with dignity and honor. To be accepted into the program, insurgents must renounce violence and break their ties with the insurgency. They must also abide by the Afghan Constitution, and commit to supporting the government.

Upon renouncing violence, program participants begin a three-month evaluation phase. Applicants explain why they wish to be reintegrated back into the community and rejoin families. They also discuss their family history and their reason for initially

choosing to fight and why they want to stop. "All of the locals I came in contact with while out on patrols seemed genuinely appreciative of the efforts made by the government, Afghan National Security Forces and

International Security Assistance Forces to bring the men home," said Capt. Lawrence Csaszar, the company commander of Alpha Company, 5th Battalion, 20th Infantry Regiment.

After the individuals have been accepted and reintegrated back into the community, the community becomes eligible for new development projects and the program participants along with fellow villagers are then hired to work on new community developments.

"I know of several Taliban fighters who have reintegrated," Csaszar said. "After coming forward to seek reintegration, the fighters were cared for and instructed to speak in front of their community to determine if the local populace was willing to support the reintegration nominee and would allow him to return home."

Since the program started, thousands of former fighters from throughout the country have returned to their homes and families and started a new life working to build a better Afghanistan.

"It is a healing process that enables us to close the wounds of war and reunite families that have been separated due to political or military differences," Csaszar said.

Chaplain's Corner

In the Army we stress the importance of having a "battle buddy" all the time. Well, just like the Army, in life it is also important to have a "battle buddy" for life. There is an African proverb that says "If you want to go fast, go alone; but if you want to go far, go together." There is something in each of us that says, "I can stand alone" or "I don't need others." But is that really true? Being self-disciplined and independent is important, but the fact of the matter is we all need someone who we can trust and lean on.

The same thing is true in our spiritual lives. A person's faith is dependent on the individual choice but to live out one's faith you must have someone you can depend on. Isolation is our silent enemy. It is quite different from silence or solitude, which are two powerful spiritual disciplines. Isolation is pride making us think we can live our faith through our own power. As a result, we distance ourselves from those who know us best.

Isolation makes us believe we can commit sins and be free of the consequences. King David, in the Old Testament, had that mindset until the prophet Nathan showed up and told him exactly how badly he was messing up (2 Samuel 12). Isolation also convinces us that we are the only ones wrestling with a particular problem. We begin to believe no one will understand, so why open up and seek help? After all, if we just keep



a lid on our problems or issues, we'll contain them, but secretly they will control us. Don't fall into the trap of isolation.

I once heard that the banana that is separated from the bunch gets peeled first. That analogy hits home. Don't live your life without being connected with someone or you will fail. Here are some things I recommend doing:

1. **Find a battle buddy.** It could be your spouse, a family member or a good friend.

2. **Be transparent.** You must be willing to be seen for who you really are. Many of us are afraid to let anyone see who we are deep down. We are afraid of rejection or of damaging our reputation so we put on the mask. I believe it takes a real strong person to be transparent.

3. **You must choose.** You cannot make someone commit to

something they do not want to commit to. Each person must willingly choose to change.

4. **Confidentiality.** Everything shared with a battle buddy (friend) goes no further than the two of you.

5. **Commitment.** Each of you must be willing to live to a higher standard and be held to the commitments you make. The person across the table must have a deep desire to see you succeed. Your shared goal is to help each other live your best for God.

6. **Confrontation.** Resist the temptation to "go easy" on each other because of your close friendship. Accountability requires confronting the reality of the situation, facing the truth and accepting the challenge to do the right thing.

7. **Compass.** The Word of God must serve as the compass and the standard for all counsel, encouragement, and correction.
Chaplain (Maj.) Edward I. Choi, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division



A local Afghan holds pamphlets on the reintegration program, while listening to a fellow Afghan speak to members of Combined Task Force Arrowhead in the village of Regay in southern Afghanistan, Aug. 22, 2012.

Arrowhead Remembers



Sgt. 1st Class Coater B. Debose

Sergeant First Class Coater B. Debose of Moss Point, Mississippi was born on 11 March 1957. SFC Debose was attached to 5th Battalion, 20th Infantry Regiment, Forward Operating Base Spin Boldak, Afghanistan, where he served on the Security Force Assistance Team.

SFC Debose's military awards include the Bronze Star Medal (Posthumous), Purple Heart Medal (Posthumous), Army Achievement Medal, Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign

Medal with Bronze Service Star, Iraq Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon, Army Reserve Overseas Training Ribbon, Armed Forces Reserve Medal with Silver Hourglass and M Device, NATO Medal (Posthumous) and the Combat Action Badge (Posthumous).

SFC Debose is survived by his wife Juanita Debose, his son, Latravis Debose, Daughter, Caronica Jackson and mother Doris Jackson.



Spc. Michael Demarisco

SPC Michael Demarsico, born in Massachusetts, joined the US Army in February 2011 as an Infantryman. He went to Fort Benning, Georgia where he completed basic combat training and AIT. He arrived at Joint Base Lewis-McChord to the 1st Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment in July 2011.

He is posthumously awarded the Bronze Star Medal and the Purple Heart. His other awards include the Army Com-

mendation Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal with Campaign Star, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon, and the NATO Medal (ISAF).

He is survived by his mother and father, Lisa and Michael Demarsico.





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