



THE ARROWHEAD

"PA GADA BARAI"
(Winning Together)



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From the Desk of the TAAC-S Commander

It is said that the truest test of our character is how we perform on our worst days. As I look back at my own life and the difficulties I have faced and overcome, I realized I made it through because of the people around me, the support they provided, and my own spiritual foundation.



Brig. Gen. Lee Henry

Last month, we lost a member of the team. SFC Charles "Chuck" Ellis was our touchpoint back home. He was a father, a husband, a brother, a friend, a medic, and a Soldier. As we grieve for our loss, remember those who support us, our families. For those who face difficult times, you are not alone. There are so many people who you may not even know willing to help. For those among us who have the opportunity, don't wait for a brother, a sister, or a friend to ask for help; actively seek those in need who may not want to ask. Offer to babysit, share a meal, ask them how they are and actively listen to their feelings so that we may share the burden together. We are a family, spread all over the state, and going about our lives in so many directions, but we are always there for each other when we need one another. Just as SFC Ellis was always there taking care of us, we shall honor his memory by always taking care of each other and continuing the mission until we can all come home.

- Arrowhead 66



KANDAHAR AIRFIELD BEST SOLDIER COMPETITION



36th Infantry Division Soldier's from the CJ6 Section, Sgt. David Smalls and Spc. Alexander Plucker, join the other US Army Soldiers and Sailors, as well as Romanian and Bulgarian military competitors, during the Kandahar Airfield Best Soldier and Best NCO Competition.



Sgt. First Class Douglas Smith, Staff Sgt. Joseph Perez, and Sgt. Juan Ponce De Leon were among the cadre supporting the ruck march, map orientation, and stress shoot events.





"We Shall Conquer..."

UNCLASSIFIED

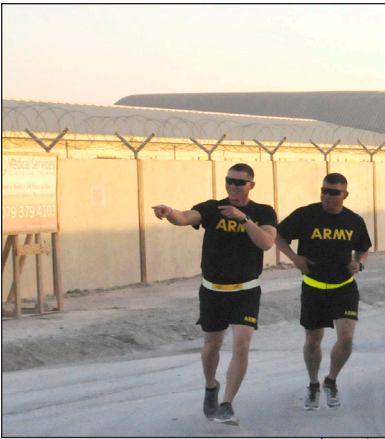
... in Spite of Hell!"

ARMY 10-MILER SHADOW RUN KANDAHAR



On September 25, 2016, over 200 Soldiers, Sailors, and Airmen from all nations represented upon Kandahar Airfield gathered for the Army 10-Miler Shadow Run. The 36th Infantry Division's own Maj. Jane Callahan, Chief Warrant Officer-3 Kristie Dean, and Sgt. First Class Bryan Ellingson were among the top finishers, each placing within their respective divisions.





TWO MILES..
NO SWEAT

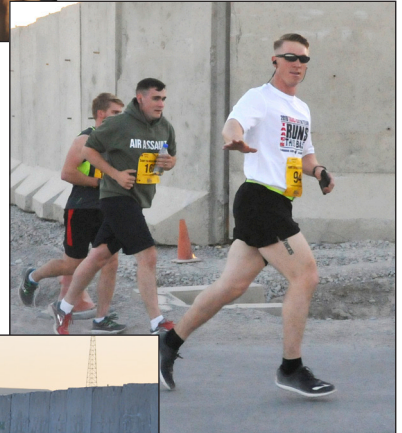


FOUR MILES..
BETTER YET

SIX MILES..
GIMME MORE



EIGHT MILES..
ALMOST
THERE



TEN MILES..
GOOD TO GO



ADVISING IN AFGHANISTAN

TAAC-South's mission is to advise and assist the Afghan National Defense Security Forces (ANDSF) as they defend their country from all enemy forces fighting against the growing democracy. The Security Forces Advise Assist Teams (SFAAT) have answered our nation's call to serve by supporting the Afghan National Army (ANA) and the Afghan National Police (ANP).



(Above) Secretary of the Army Eric Fanning receives a mission briefing from 1st Lt. Matthews during a troop visit on Kandahar Air Field.



(Above) Capt. Joseph Okunbanjo and Master Sgt. Jason Shipman train their Afghan Army counterpart on the operation of Radio-In-A-Box, to assist with the ANA ability to inform the local population of operations. (Below) Lt. Col. Jose Rivera arrives at Tarin Kot before the leadership shura briefing the Australian, Dutch, and German Ambassadors on progress made for the local district's security.





(Above) 1st Lt. Jason Patterson visits the Kandahar Military Hospital at Camp Hero to check the progress of their Wounded Warrior Care Center construction. (Left, Right) Advisors with Train, Advise, Assist Command - East observe farmland within the desert terrain of Afghanistan as they fly towards their daily mission rounds. (Below Left, Below Right) Members of 36th Infantry Division advisor missions for TAAC-E train on their tactical fire and maneuver from unconventional cover positions they may encounter while moving in the battlespace.



Afghan children defy the enemy through education

Story by Ken Griffin

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan — Children throughout Afghanistan face an enemy who wants to keep them from school and rob them of their education. In a courageous act of defiance, students from Sayed Pacha School here have promised their principal they will not drop out.

The students and teachers here haven't had it easy. In December 2015, the Taliban launched a ruthless attack on what had been these children's safe haven. The principal's brother, among others, was killed while many more were injured.

"I told the kids the enemy is here to stop them from learning, and to defy the enemy by staying in school. They were excited by

Local children in front of the Sayed Pacha School outside Kanahar Air Field



that and promised to continue. It was very motivating," said Mohammed Essa, the school's principal and administrator. "This is my only wish and dream - educating the children here."

With a growing student body of more than 800 children and 24 teachers, Essa is realizing his dream and providing a hopeful future for countless lives.

Rebuilding the school is possible because of a \$2.1-million NATO construction fund, with the majority of money coming from Australia. The 205th Corps Coalition Advisory Team and Combined Joint Engineers from Train, Advise, Assist Command – South monitor the project closely. Their reward will be watching the children return to school this month.

"It breaks my heart knowing these children want to go to school and can't. But that will change soon," said 1st Lt. Jason Patterson, a project officer



1st Lt. Jason Patterson and his interpreter discuss renovation progress with the local construction foreman in front of the Sayed Pacha School.

with Combined Joint Engineers. “Being here three years ago, we traveled down the school road every day and saw the kids going to school. We do a lot of work with the Afghan National Army and know those are mostly their kids. And we know they want to see them educated – especially the girls. Having three daughters myself, I took this project personally.”

Patterson said one of the bigger issues with rebuilding the school was that the damage from the attack ended up being more extensive than he’d originally thought, but they were able to push past that. The project is wrapping up soon.

Since the school serves the children of Afghan soldiers, the attack wasn’t the only time students’ lives have been touched by war. It’s their daily reality.

“Sometimes we take a step forward, sometimes a step back. Here we talk about war and how

Mohammed Essa, principal of the Sayed Pacha school in his office where he provides daily monitoring of renovation efforts for his school house.



it destabilizes systems. I teach them that it is peace – not war – that truly changes lives. Peace is what brings

hospitals and schools. Be aware of war, but do not give up,” Essa said. “We don’t lose hope here.”



The view from Mohammad Essa’s office of the nearby battle-damaged apartment complex nicknamed ‘the Russian flats’ where many of the Afghan Army Soldiers still live with their children.



Chaplain's Corner

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. (John 14:27 - New International Version)

One of the things we all could use more of is peace, real peace...peace that makes a difference in our lives each and every day. We need to be at peace - with our neighbors, our planet, our family, and ourselves. But we have trouble finding that peace. We may find ourselves restless, irritable, discontent with the deployment, the kids, the in-laws and tired of the separation. GOD

does not want us to be afraid, anxious or worried...HE wants us to have peace, HIS peace, knowing regardless of the situation, deployment or drama we find ourselves wrapped up in HE loves us and we are right with HIM. This is a real and lasting peace that surpasses what we humans think of as peace. Peace is not the absence of strife but knowing that we are right with GOD and HE is in control. There is a phrase that I find both profound and comforting: "No God, no peace. Know God, know peace." HE is an ever present source of peace available to all regardless if you're in Texas, Afghanistan or anywhere else we just have to turn to HIM for that peace...in spite of Hell.

Promotions & Awards

Capt. Amber Luecke shares her promotion ceremony with family in College Station, TX via Skype as Brig. Gen. Lee Henry places her newly minted Captain's rank upon her at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan.



Family Readiness Group: Ears to Hear, Hands to Help

Get linked into Texas Military Forces Family Support Services on the web:
tmd.texas.gov/tmd-family-support-services

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