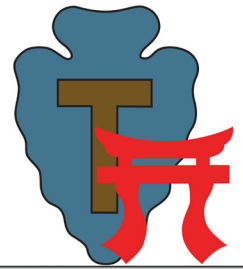




THE ARROWHEAD

"PA GADA BARAI" (Winning Together)



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Issue No. 6



From the Desk of the TAAC-S Commander

Happy Holidays from the TAAC-South team.

As I reflect on this time of year and the expression "season of giving" it brings to mind our Army value of

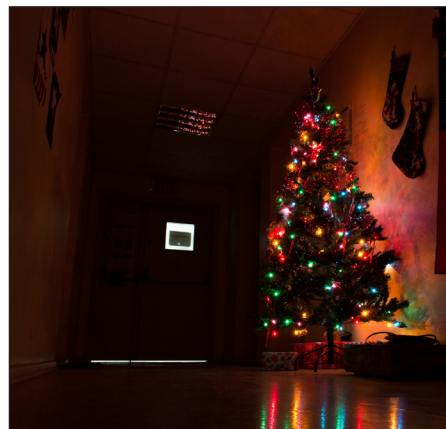


Brig. Gen. Lee Henry

Selfless Sacrifice. The daily commitment that every servicemember makes when we put on the uniform and get back in the harness. Even more importantly, the daily commitment made by our families to support us, to reaffirm this commitment to service, and to love us and keep us in your hearts when we are so very far from home.

The Army values remind me that the strength of our military is not in our weapons or our technology, but in the people that we have to our left, to our right, and in the homes where we are eager to return.

- Arrowhead 66

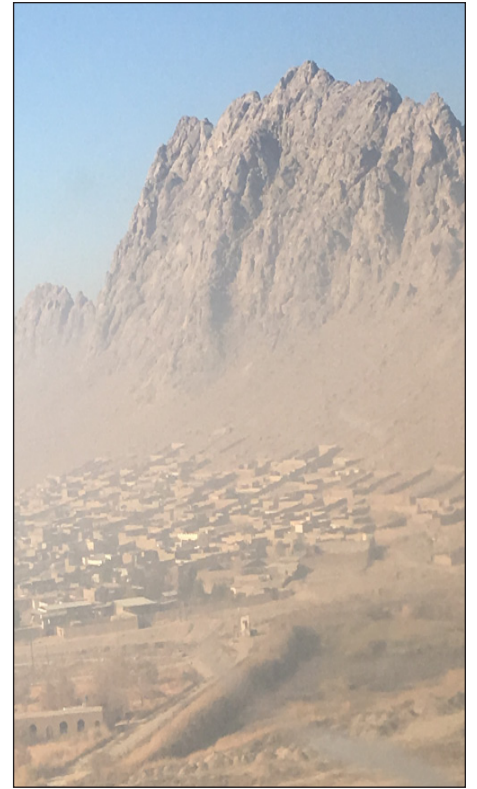


ADVISING IN AFGHANISTAN

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 and Assist Teams (SFAAT) have answered our nation's call to serve by directly supporting the Afghan National Army (ANA) and the Afghan National Police (ANP).



Afghanistan Views From the Ground Up: Rebuilding the Land



Improving the Foxhole: Over-The-Horizon Engineers Build A Better Kandahar Air Field



Kandahar Air Field Army-Navy PowderPuff Flag Football Game

FINAL SCORE: Army 5 - Navy 3



WOUNDED WARRIORS RETURN TO AFGHANISTAN, ON OWN TERMS

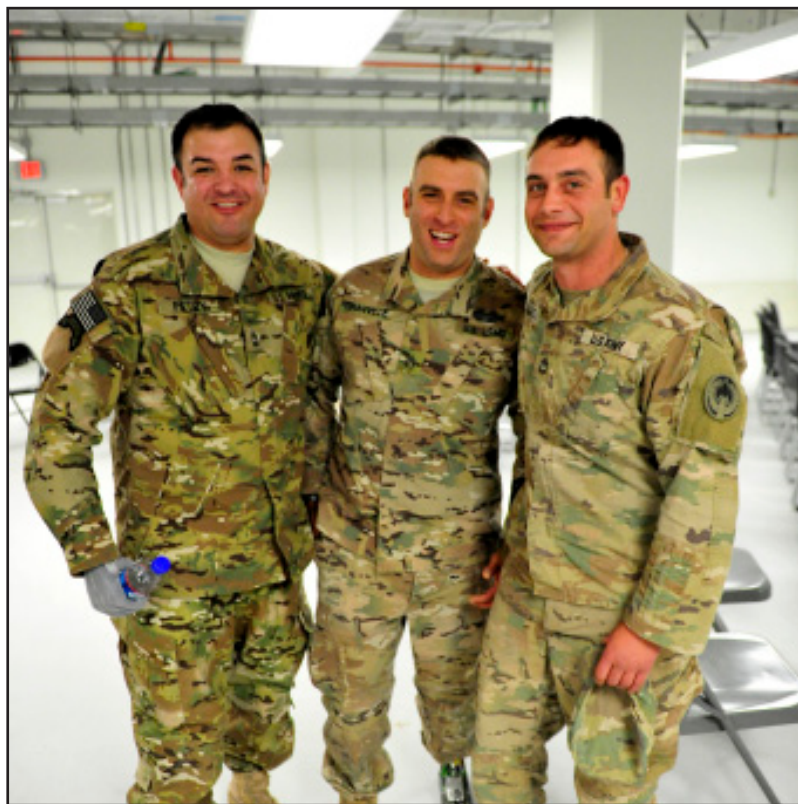


KABUL, Afghanistan (Nov. 20, 2016) — When Sgt. 1st Class Leroy Petry left Afghanistan in May 2008, it was not on his terms. During a pitched battle in Paktia province, Petry was hit by an enemy bullet and lost his right hand when he returned an enemy grenade that landed near two of his fellow soldiers.

Now a Medal of Honor recipient for his actions that day, Petry again journeyed here today with five other combat veterans. Like him, they were wounded during their service here; and like him, they are back on their own terms to gain a sense of closure and tell their stories.

Operation Proper Exit, a charity program ran by Feherty's Troops First Foundation, flew the Purple Heart recipients here specifically for that closure, and they received a well-deserved hero's welcome on arrival. Hundreds of people from Resolute Support lined the street and applauded.

"We honor the sacrifice and tremendous resilience of these heroes, and pledge to accom-



plish the mission for which they and our fallen comrades have given so much,” said Gen. John Nicholson, commander, Resolute Support.

One by one, the American heroes stirred an emotional audience with their sobering yet inspirational stories. Each one full of loss, struggles, and heartbreak, yet their unified focus was on determination and hope.

Senior Chief Petty Officer Ren Hockenberry’s tribute was especially emotional. In August 2014, she served here at Resolute Support as Maj. Gen. Harold Greene’s senior enlisted advisor. During her tour, the general was tragically killed and 18 coalition service members wounded, Hockenberry among them.

“My story, how I ended up here ... it’s very personal,” Hockenberry began, then describing how she once sat in the audience two years ago, listening to a previous iteration of Proper Exit telling their stories. “You’re



fighting an amazing fight, and thank you all so much for doing it.”

Staff Sgt. James Fitzgerald was wounded in Afghanistan’s Pech River Valley in 2010. Instead of focusing on his wounds, Fitzgerald talked about his passion and the collective strength of active duty service

members, veterans, and the families who support them. Knowing I leave here and go back to a country that stands with me, with you, is extremely helpful, he said.

Fitzgerald now works for Michelle Obama, the first lady of the United States, advising on military matters related to troops, veterans and their families.

“One thing is for sure, you cannot drown me out,” Fitzgerald said emphatically, as two helicopters began flying overhead on their way to land nearby. He took the opportunity to draw a parallel to his commitment to service members and their families. “Just like the sound of those helicopters, I’ll get louder, and louder, and louder!”

Petry spoke last, and talked about the tough 2008 deployment - one of six combat tours - that would lead to him speaking here today.

“This Medal isn’t mine. It belongs to us. And especially to those who paid the ultimate sacrifice,” Petry said.



Chaplain's Corner

A well-known miracle in the Bible is The Feeding of the Five Thousand. In this event taken from the Gospel of Mark, Jesus takes two fish and five loaves of bread and feeds well over five thousand people. Perhaps the tendency is to focus on the miracle itself rather than the motivation behind it.

The story begins with Jesus and his disciples making plans to take a break. They were tired and hungry, but then word got around that they were heading to a certain area and thousands of people flocked to them.

At the sight of all these people the passage says that it "broke his heart to see them." In another translation it says that "he had compassion on them" (New Living Translation). So he began teaching them and then when it became late, his disciples wanted to send everyone away so that they could get some supper. But Jesus said, "Fix supper for them" (The Message).

While in the midst of the holiday season, stop and ask yourself this question, "What breaks my heart?" When you see something that fills you with emotional pain, you may feel as completely helpless as Jesus' disciples felt. Their first words after Jesus said, "Fix supper for them," were "Are you serious?" (The Message). Yet, Jesus didn't scold them. He simply asked them what they had and to use it.

What about us at home? I'm sure many of us are heartbroken by the overwhelming needs of those around us and perhaps we feel helpless to "fix" the situations. Sometimes children can be our best teachers in "doing" compassion.

Murray Lancaster illustrates this best in *Helping Cry*,

A little girl was late coming home for supper. Her mother made the expected irate parent's demand to know where she had been. The little girl replied that she had stopped to help Janie, whose bicycle was broken in a fall. "but you don't know anything about fixing bicycles," her mother responded. "I know that," the girls said. "I just stopped to help her cry."

So again, what breaks your heart? And what do you have? Just tears? It is enough. With God, what you have will multiply beyond your imagination. But you must be, first of all, compassionate and willing to give up what you have. So the next time a sight or situation breaks your heart, take inventory and give what you have.

Recognitions & Honors



Above: Sgt. 1st Class Bryan Ellingson receives the TAAC-S Commander's Coin for Excellence.

Right: Sgt. Maj. Adam Durand reaffirms his oath during his enlistment extension ceremony with Maj. Benjamin Hart.



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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 1-888-443-2124 (Spanish)

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