



Victory Sustained

Joint Sustainment Command-Afghanistan

Vol. 1 issue 2

June 2009

Memorial Day ceremony honors fallen Soldiers

■ BY PFC. ELISEBET FREEBURG

Victory Sustained Staff Writer

On Memorial Day weekend, President Barack Obama asked in his weekly address for America to remember U.S. servicemembers who have given their lives for their country. On Memorial Day May 25, U.S. and Canadian Soldiers met together at Combat Outpost Huta, Afghanistan to honor the sacrifices of Staff Sgt. Joshua L. Rath, Cpl. Keith E. Essary and Pfc. Vincent C. Winston Jr. who died fighting in the Global War on Terrorism.

See Memorial Day, page 7



Pfc. Elisebet Freeburg | Victory Sustained

Capt. Trevor Voelkel, 2-2 Infantry C Company commander, salutes the memorial wall at newly-named Combat Outpost Rath, Afghanistan. The wall erected in honor of three fallen C Co. Soldiers was unveiled Memorial Day May 25 in a dedication and memorial ceremony.

Kandahar troops, civilian first responders train together first time

■ BY PFC. ELISEBET FREEBURG

Victory Sustained Staff Writer

As the gray smoke dissipates, men and women lie scattered on the gravel in the immediate area. Some moan, some call for help and some are silent. These U.S. servicemembers are role players taking part in a force protection exercise simulating a mass-casualty event at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan.

The U.S. military police operations for Task Force Anzio of Joint Sustainment Command-Afghanistan held the exercise April 30 in response to the Joint Forward Operating Base Force Protection Handbook directive.

The directive states that a force protection exercise should be held annually and evaluated.



Pfc. Elisebet Freeburg | Victory Sustained

Tech. Sgt. Rick Dickey, a shift leader of the U.S. Provost Marshal's Office, evaluates a role-player's simulated wounds during a mass-casualty exercise April 30 at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan.

Force protection describes actions used to prevent and to combat hostile actions against

military personnel and facilities.

The exercise, Task Force Anzio Force Protection 90-01, involved

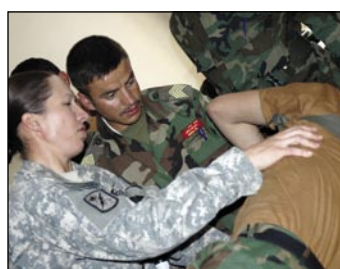
both the U.S. military police and NATO Maintenance and Supply Agency contracted civilians.

"The exercise was to test inter-operational ability between U.S. first responders and first responders of other agencies," said Master Sgt. Reed Witherite, the noncommissioned officer-in-charge of Task Force Anzio U.S. military police operations.

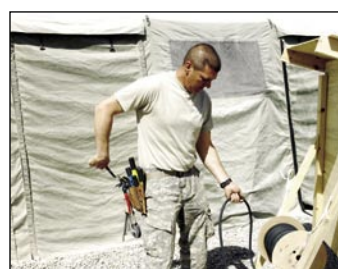
The scenario revealed that terrorists paid a suspect \$100 to place a bag of supposedly coin rolls on the ground and then take pictures as Americans fought over the quarters. One device exploded and a second device was to be found. Smoke canisters simulated the explosion and signified the beginning of the exercise.

See Responders, page 8

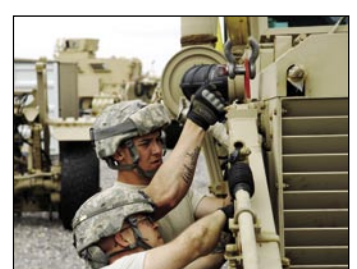
Inside this issue >>>



Training an Army to save lives Page 3



JSC-A Soldier has many trades Page 4



Preparing the Husky for a drive Page 5

The Commander's Corner



Brig. Gen. Daniel I. Schultz
Joint Sustainment Command-Afghanistan Commanding General

Thank you for your continued dedication to our mission and your hard work to make it a success. The challenges of defining the role of the 143d ESC as the Joint Sustainment Command

within this Theater continues; however, with your commitment it improves every day.

Many of you have heard me talk about our mission here being truly expeditionary. For that very reason, not everything that we do or what you see happening always seems that logical. Whether at Kabul, Kandahar Airfield or a FOB like Leatherneck, time is of the essence, so we cannot always wait to do things in a logical order. The commander of Kandahar Airfield stated the other day in reference to the major projects at Kandahar, which includes the roadwork, that they were trying to complete a five-year project in 10 months. As a result, newly paved roads near the airfield were torn up shortly after paving so fiber could go in. Tearing up and

repaving the road to lay fiber was more expedient than waiting for the fiber before laying asphalt. In situations like we are in now, where time indeed is critical, you will continue to see and experience situations where you may question the logic. Please understand the planning is driven by the need for a sense of urgency as the key factor is to ensure everything is in place to sustain and support the incoming forces.

The influence of your service is being felt in the far reaches of Afghanistan whether it's the impact of your sustainment work or your contributions through a variety of disciplines, including Special Staff and others, that contribute to base and regional operations.

I value the contributions of

each member of this command, and urge all to remain vigilant. Our adversaries can take many forms, from the insurgents that launch random rocket attacks against Kandahar Airfield and other locations or threaten our supply routes, or to the threats posed by the heat.

I'm holding your leaders responsible to ensure they protect you, our personnel resources. This protection includes allowing for adequate down time for rest, making sure everyone hydrates and they use all necessary safety and protective gear to mitigate risk where we can, including when playing sports! Your continued resilience is critical to our success.

Sustaining Victory — Army Strong!

The CSM Message to the Troops

Many Soldiers have crossed the bridge from being a junior enlisted to a noncommissioned officer. By adorning sergeant stripe, you are now a part of rich culture that can find its roots as far back as the Revolutionary War. That stripe is more than a pay increase. It is a privilege to wear that rank so wear it with pride and accept the responsibility that comes along with it.

As a newly promoted sergeant you are not expected to know everything. Putting on the stripe doesn't automatically make you a leader; it only puts you in po-

sition to become leader. Leaders are not created overnight so don't be afraid ask questions. Understand that as long as you remember that your main focus is to take care of Soldiers first, they will support you as a leader.

A leader leads by example, whether he intends to or not. Military courtesies and proper wear of the uniform are things that we were all taught at basic training. It is these things people look at to judge your character and your professionalism. You are now setting the example for

the junior enlisted. NCOs must lead by example, train from experience, maintain and enforce military standards. We are known as the "Backbone of the Army" for a reason. Do not shy away from responsibilities, embrace them. It is okay to make a mistake. We learn and grow from these mistakes.

Remember, you are always a leader whether you have subordinates or not. You are a sergeant in the Army, and you should always carry yourself as so.

Welcome to the NCO Corps. Step up and take charge.



Command Sgt. Maj. Michael D. Schultz

Joint Sustainment Command-Afghanistan Command Sergeant Major



Virginia Senator Mark R. Warner visits with Spc. Lance Nelson, a 143d Expeditionary Sustainment Command Headquarters and Headquarters Company maintenance administration specialist from Virginia, during the Senator's visit to Kandahar Airfield May 27. Besides Warner, Vermont Senator Patrick Leahy and Rhode Island Senator Sheldon Whitehouse ate lunch with KAF troops and civilians at the Luxembourg Dining Facility.

Pfc. Elisebet Freeburg | Victory Sustained

Joint Sustainment Command - Afghanistan

Commanding General
Brig. Gen. Daniel I. Schultz

Command Sgt. Maj.
Command Sgt. Maj.
Michael D. Schultz

Public Affairs Officer
Maj. Sheldon S. Smith

Editor
Staff Sgt. Marcos Alices

Staff Writer
Pfc. Elisebet Freeburg

Victory Sustained is authorized for publication by the Joint Sustainment Command - Afghanistan for the JSC-A community. The contents of *Victory Sustained* are unofficial and are not to be considered the official views of, or endorsed by the U.S.

government, including the Department of Defense or JSC-A.

Victory Sustained is a command information publication in accordance with Army Regulation 360-1.

The Public Affairs office is located in Bldg. 514A.



Petty Officer 1st Class Daniel A. Bristol | 45th Sustainment Brigade

Sgt. Clifford Bybee, who works for 45th Sustainment Brigade's Mission Support Platoon, teaches an Afghan National Army (ANA) soldier proper vehicle searching techniques as part of a three-day class that started May 11. The final objective of the class is for these ANA soldiers to train others from their group.

45th SB train, advise ANA Soldiers in combat skills

■ BY PETTY OFFICER 1ST CLASS
DANIEL A. BRISTOL
45th Sustainment Brigade

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – Members of the United States military taught Soldiers of the Afghan National Army, May 11 - 21, some valuable skills needed to lessen the threat of attack and to help those who have been attacked.

Soldiers of the Hawaii based 45th Sustainment Brigade Task Force Lightning Support, at Camp Phoenix, Kabul, taught ANA soldiers combat life support techniques and combat radio techniques. The 45th SB held classes at both the Central Movement Agency and the Ministry of Defense for the Afghan Soldiers. The CMA Soldiers also learned personnel and vehicle searching techniques while standing guard at an entry control point from May 11 - 13, and the MOD Soldiers also learned how to operate a large wrecker truck May 18 - 21.

"Thank you for the opportunity to teach you some valuable skills," said Maj. Gbenga Kaffo, 45th SB's ANA partnership officer in charge. "These are skills I know we all will benefit from whenever the need arises to use them."

The underlying objective of this training is to have the Soldiers of the ANA learn these skills, use these skills to combat threats and teach these skills to their fellow ANA Soldiers to increase the security posture at both locations.

"Be patient, be attentive and learn as much as you can from this class," said Lt. Col. Hafiz Ullah, administrative commander for the MOD, as he addressed the CLS class. The students of the CLS class, held between May 11 and 13, learned basic first aid, but the ANA students at the MOD were primarily Afghan medics and received more advanced medical training.

Kaffo met with Ullah and his mentor, Major Oscar Guzman, who works for the Afghan Regional Security Integration Command/Regional Division Assistance Command, earlier in the week to talk about future training topics and dates for the Soldiers at the MOD. During this meeting, Guzman expressed an interest of the ANA Soldiers to learn basic operating techniques of the large 2008 wrecker truck they own.

"Before this training, we had to pay civilians to use the wrecker and move things or pull things," said Mohammed Nasir, an E-7 in

the ANA (Sar Prak Meshra Qetah/Zabet means Sgt. 1st Class) and a student of the class. "Now that we are well trained, we are confident that we can move forward."

Staff Sgt. Russell Brown and Spc. Richard Ellis, both work for 45th SB's Mission Support Platoon, taught the wrecker class. They taught the Afghan Army mechanics how to work the controls on the wrecker, how to extend the boom and how to hook a vehicle or an object to the wrecker.

"We have a good class," said Ellis. "We are the United States, and they want to learn from us. They believe we are the best. 'Give a man a fish, and he eats for a day. Teach a man to fish, and he will eat for a lifetime.' That is how I feel when I am teaching these guys."

Many of the mechanics have been in the Afghan Army for only a few years, but have worked for the MOD as civilian contractors for many years prior to joining.

"We learned just as much from the students as they learned from us," said Ellis. He said there are many different ways to look at everything, and teaching the ANA Soldiers has made him realize there are many different ways to teach.

At the end of each training week, Kaffo held a small graduation ceremony for the ANA students. Each soldier received a graduation certificate with a group photo of the class printed as the background. Thirty nine ANA Soldiers graduated between May 11 and 13, and 46 ANA soldiers graduated between May 18 and 21. The honor graduates for each class also receive a small flag and a silver pen with both the American and the Afghan flags printed on it.

"With this training you have received, you guys standing here in formation have the future of the Afghan Army in your hands," said Kaffo to the graduating classes. "Your training was quick, but you must retain it, use it and teach it to your fellow Soldiers. Thank you for the opportunity to train you, and we will be back with more advanced training in the future."

According to Kaffo, the future plans for training include more advanced medical training, advanced wrecker truck training and possibly some weapons training for the ANA Soldiers. There will also be noncommissioned officer leadership training and officer training for the ANA as well as some convoy leadership training.

Soldier fills civilian gap, supports troop build-up

■ BY PFC. ELISEBET FREEBURG

Victory Sustained Staff Writer

As thousands of troops arrive in Afghanistan, the Obama administration expressed concern over having enough civilian experts to fill an increasing shortage in support roles. In April the U.S. Secretary of Defense, Robert M. Gates, stated that he may ask reservists skilled in certain areas to deploy and fill these roles until replacements arrive. Months before these announcements were made by the Pentagon, the Joint Sustainment Command-Afghanistan already utilized civilian skills of some Soldiers.

Army engineer 1st Lt. Alex R. Chester III originally filled an environmental science officer role with the 143d Expeditionary Sustainment Command at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan.

Chester, who holds Master of Science degrees in structural engineering, civil engineering and electrical engineering, has worked in the engineering field for 22 years and owns his own company.

"Before we moved out here, they found out that I had some engineering degrees and backgrounds," said Chester. "They asked me to be part of the torch party and come out here and fill that position and start the build-out [building] of the 143d compound."

The torch party deployed before the main body of the 143d ESC and ensured that living and work spaces were ready for the main body.

His current Army job is almost identical to his civilian job, said Chester.

Now that he works in an engineering role for the Army, Chester will continue in that role for the rest of his deployment.

"In the Army you're basically training with a single [military occupational specialty]; whereas

with my civilian background, I've had 22 years of work. I've been trained in a multitude of skills, and I can use those skills here."

As hundreds of Soldiers arrive at KAF weekly, Chester's expertise in engineering is an integral part of the build-up of forces in Afghanistan.

For JSC-A, Chester designs and builds. He designed the compound for the 143d ESC and will build it as well. The 143d ESC leads the JSC-A in controlling movement of supplies and personnel into and throughout Afghanistan.

Besides working for the JSC-A, He volunteered his services as the only licensed engineer on base to Logistics Civil Augmentation Program, a U.S. enterprise that uses civilian contractors to support U.S. servicemembers.

"I work a lot with LOGCAP," said Chester. "I do a lot with electricity. They come to me for advice on what to do."

Master Sgt. Albert O. Ouellette, the 143d ESC engineer noncommissioned officer-in-charge, works with Chester building the 143d ESC compound. The two Soldiers have worked together since February. Besides building desks, walls, floors and chairs, they have worked on generators and electrical wiring.

"He's willing to help pretty much anybody," said Ouellette.

According to Ouellette, people will see Chester and stop to ask him for advice. People will bring by sketches for him to review or supply lists of materials for him to check.

Chester helps contractors by rewiring buildings and planning structures. Employing his skills, more bathrooms and showers can be built for Soldiers' living quarters. He has also utilized his abilities to build the briefing and training office, and the personnel and reception center for Soldiers arriving at KAF as part of the



Pfc. Elisebet Freeburg | Victory Sustained

Joint Sustainment Command-Afghanistan engineer, 1st Lt. Alex R. Chester III, installs electrical wiring while building the 143d Expeditionary Sustainment Command compound at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan. Chester utilizes his civilian skills to support the build-up of troops in Afghanistan.

troop build-up.

Chester enjoys using his civilian proficiencies to support the troops arriving in Afghanistan.

"I think it's great, because I'm not sitting around a desk doing slideshows," said Chester. "I'm out doing hands-on work, which I like to do. It's helping the troops and helping the efforts out here that we're here to do."

Other Soldiers have noticed his work-ethics and skillfulness.

"He's willing to put out as much time necessary," said Ouellette. "He's relentless. It'll be pouring rain, or they'll call him at three in the morning to work on the

generator, and he'll come on down."

After finishing the 143d ESC compound, Chester plans to visit forward operating bases, using his expertise to further support the additional troops.

"I'll be going out primarily to do some inspections and some rewiring and build-out," said Chester.

Chester continues to work with what materials are available, blending his civilian skills with his Army-trained skills to support the JSC-A as it prepares and supports the influx of troops into Afghanistan.



Soldiers of the Afghan National Army played in a volleyball match against Coalition Forces and civilians here May 16. The match, held at the KAF boardwalk, consisted of three games and was a positive indication of the cooperation between ANA troops and Coalition Forces. The ANA team won all three games.



Pfc. Elisebet Freeburg | Victory Sustained

Pfc. Michael McKay, a 4th Engineer Battalion combat engineer, assembles pieces of the Redpack, the mobile spare part unit, during a three-day assembly process May 4 at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan.

No nail too small for the Mk3 Husky

Combat engineers in Afghanistan receive mine-detecting vehicle training

■ BY PFC. ELISEBET FREEBURG

Victory Sustained Staff Writer

In a war in which the most prevalent cause of death for troops is the improvised explosive device, the U.S. military constantly seeks to improve vehicles that safeguard the lives of servicemembers. Troops have driven the Husky, the premier vehicle in the U.S. Army Interim Vehicle Mounted Mine Detection Program, in Iraq since 2003. Because of its success in the battlefield, the upgraded Mk3 Husky is now being fielded in Afghanistan where an increasing amount of Soldiers arrive weekly.

As a preemptive measure, Soldiers of the 4th Engineer Battalion fielded the Mk3 Husky, currently manufactured by Critical Solutions International, at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan.

The Department of Defense contractor CSI has been training and supporting combat engineers in Iraq and Afghanistan since the beginning of the Global War on Terrorism.

"We've currently got about four or five operational systems, which are two huskies and one Redpack, in [Afghanistan] for the United States Army as well as other huskies assigned to the United States Marine Corps down south," said Richard L. Lowdon, a CSI field service representative.

The Redpack, towed behind the Husky, consists of mobile spare parts including extra pulse-detection panels and tools for assembly and repair. As a route-clearance vehicle, the Husky drives in front of con-



Pfc. Elisebet Freeburg | Victory Sustained

Pvt. Anthony T. Hill and Pfc. Michael McKay, 4th Engineer Battalion combat engineers, assemble the Husky Mk3 Redpack at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan.

voys using pulse induction to detect metallic content buried underground. The system is extremely accurate in identifying the size of objects.

"We can actually track it down to where they can count nails in a board if they need to," said Lowdon.

Lowdon trained and supervised 4th BN combat engineers as they assembled two Huskies at KAF. Beginning May 3 the assem-

bly process took several days, and after completion Lowdon conducted driver's training.

Because the Husky carries a single occupant, the driver is carefully chosen.

"You don't have the chatter you would have in a regular vehicle with a few or more soldiers in it. They're up front. They lead the way," said Staff Sgt. Timothy Brown, a squad leader in 4th BN. "So definitely they have to be mentally strong."

The Husky is designed to protect the driver in case of explosion.

"The majority of your injuries," said Lowdon. "If you do have a mine blast in these [Mine Resistant Ambush Protected] type vehicles, is usually due to roll-over as well as stuff and personnel flying around inside the vehicle."

The driver is buckled into the seat by a four-point safety harness. The seat itself places the driver's spine in an optimal position to minimize back injuries. The driver's rifle can be secured into a special mount.

"I've driven in this vehicle for quite a long time, said Pfc. Steven Warren, a combat engineer and Husky driver in 4th BN. "It's extremely safe. It's well put together. I feel totally confident in this vehicle that it will protect me and safeguard my life."

In April, the 4th BN was reassigned from Iraq to Afghanistan as part of the troop build-up. As more than 20,000 troops arrive during 2009, detecting roadside bombs will become an increasing importance. The 4th BN use of Huskies may prove integral to the lives of U.S. servicemembers and Coalition Forces.



Staff Sgt. Marcos Alices | Victory Sustained

The warrant officer community comes together to establish the first recognized U.S. Army Warrant Officer Association chapter in a warzone, the Kandahar Airfield Provisional Chapter.

Historical, memorable event in the desert

Warrant officer community establishes local chapter

■ BY STAFF SGT. MARCOS ALICES

Victory Sustained Editor

A historical event took place May 21 at Kandahar Airfield, as the warrant officer community established the U.S. Army Warrant Officer Association Kandahar Airfield Provisional Chapter, the first recognized chapter in a war zone.

The USAWOA is a nonprofit organization that provides social and professional opportunities for warrant officers. A community meant to address the specific issues and concerns of the Warrant Officer Corps.

"It [USAWOA] is a vehicle meant to support the warrant officer community," said Chief Warrant Officer 5 David N. Conrad, the Joint Sustainment Command-Afghanistan command chief warrant officer. "A good part of our efforts will be focused on warrant officer development."

As a community, the organization will help further the career of its members by providing programs and social activities concentrating on professional development. The KAF Provisional Chapter will look to create a mentorship program. The program is a chance for newly commissioned warrant officers to receive advice from their more experienced peers.

They will also hold events to improve its

members, the chapter and the community. Already in the planning stages, the chapter will celebrate 91 years since Congress authorized the rank of warrant officer in the military July 9. This event is not only any opportunity to celebrate the accomplishments and achievements of the Warrant Officer Corps but will serve as a forum. The celebration will be open to all warrant officers of all U.S. armed services in Afghanistan and others who are interested. It will be an opportunity for Soldiers to talk about the direction of the Corps with regimental warrant officers from the quartermaster, transportation and human resource branches.

"We try to help guide them [Soldiers] in their profession by being here to help them get through the process," said Conrad.

The USAWOA is open to all Army warrant officers regardless of component or status. The KAF Provisional Chapter doors welcomed more than twenty attendees to their first meeting. Soldiers from the ranks of sergeant to chief warrant officer five were present. The organization also opens its arms to enlisted Soldiers who are interested in joining the Warrant Officer Corps. They will be able to provide assistance to enlisted Soldiers. The chapter will offer mentorship, classes to improve their Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery and review Soldiers

paperwork.

"Stay up-to-date on your [military occupational skill]," said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Benjamin A. Joyette, a JSC-A ammunition technician and chapter president. "You are the expert in your field and people look to you for advice."

Warrant officers are technical experts. They are leaders who specialize, throughout an entire career, in a specific area. Though they comprise of less than three percent of the total Army they are a valued assets, according to Conrad. They provide commanders and organizations valuable skills, guidance and expertise in their particular field.

To apply for the position of warrant officer, a Soldier must have already attained the rank of sergeant, at least a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university, and meet certain requirements. Chief warrant officers are commissioned by the president and take the same oath as commissioned officers. The Warrant Officer Corp provides their expertise in 15 Army branches filling 67 MOS.

The KAF Provisional Chapter is a medium to continue to build, though deployed to Afghanistan, on a tradition of 91 years of technical expertise in the Army.



Gen. David Petraeus promotes 1st Lt. Chris Heath during a mass-promotion ceremony of 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division first lieutenants to the rank of captain at Forward Operating Base Ramrod, Afghanistan May 25.

While promoting the officers, Petraeus presented each with his personal coin. After the ceremony, Petraeus conducted a question and answer session with leaders of the 2-2 Inf. out of Fort Hood, Texas.

Pfc. Elisebet Freeburg | Victory Sustained

Deployed mothers share similar concerns

■ BY PFC. ELISEBET FREEBURG

Victory Sustained Staff Writer

More than 90,000 U.S. military women have deployed since 9/11 to serve their country. In 2008 alone, more than 15,000 women deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan as part of the Global War on Terrorism. Many of these women are mothers, who left behind infants and children to be raised by spouses or extended family members.

Naval Petty Officer 2nd Class Sarah M. Washington, an electronic key management system alternator for the 25th Naval Construction Regiment, left her three children when she deployed to Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan.

"There's a lot of preparation," said Washington. "Talking with them and trying to get them to understand what's going on."

Besides trying to prepare family members emotionally, mothers have to establish a family care plan and compile information for their child's caretaker.

During the deployment, the military and patriotic organizations make available to service-members programs for them and their families.

Naval Petty Officer 1st Class Kourtnei N. Holmbo-Ayers, an intelligence specialist in the 25th NCR, left her daughter, 1, back in the states with her husband when she deployed to KAF.

Holmbo-Ayers used a program through her unit called United

through Reading®. She read aloud a book for her daughter while she was recorded onto a DVD. The DVD was then sent back to the U.S., where her daughter viewed it.

"It worked well," said Holmbo-Ayers. "She recognized me. I was told later that throughout the video, she was saying 'Mama'. It made me feel good."

For older children, many organizations in the States offer free camps, activities and sports programs, but having a deployed parent can still be a very stressful environment for a child.

Even when mothers return home, there are still issues to be faced while transitioning back into a normal life.

"My daughter is going to be in high school by the time I get back," said Air Force Tech. Sgt. Christel D. Perkins, a broadcaster for the Multipurpose Public Affairs Team at the International Security Assistance Force Headquarters in Kabul whose daughter, 14, lives with Perkins' own mother.

"I suspect there will be challenges of having had her Mom gone and then also being in high school," said Perkins.

For mothers with younger children, some issues will be different.

"My biggest fear," said Holmbo-Ayers, "Is that when I get home, she's not going to know who I am."

One mother expressed another



Pfc. Elisebet Freeburg | Victory Sustained

Mother and Air Force Tech Sgt. Christel D. Perkins, a broadcaster for the Multipurpose Public Affairs Team at the National Security Assistance Force Headquarters in Kabul, interviews an Afghan National Army Soldier via interpreter before a volleyball match between ANA Soldiers and KAF troops and civilian. While deployed, Perkins' 14 year-old daughter lives with Perkins' mother.

concern about her daughter, 2.

"I left her when she was eight months old for Basic Training and missed her first steps and words," said Spc. Rosa Malagon, a personnel specialist in the 143d Expeditionary Sustainment Command. "Now this time when I come back home she'll be speaking full sentences."

In spite of possibly spending four months to more than a year away from their children, some women believe there are benefits of being a mother and a service-member.

"To me the military has provided so much support, understanding and resources," said Perkins. "I was so young when I had her, that I don't know if I could have

done it without the military."

Although it is a great benefit to be in the military because of its support, you must have a plan, said Washington.

The military offers medical, dental and educational benefits to families, as well as housing allowances, family separation allowances and cost of living allowances.

Numerous programs and facilities such as youth centers, sports programs and camps are also available to families. The Department of Defense also established a 24 hour assistance center called Military One Source, which helps families in a variety of situations from the everyday to the complicated.



Memorial Day Continued from page 1

In honor of their three fallen comrades, Soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division out of Fort Hood, Texas held the ceremony to rename Combat Outpost Huta to Rath and their helicopter landing zone to Essary and to dedicate and unveil a memorial wall to their memory.

The unit's first fallen Soldier, Winston of St. Louis, Mo., died Sept. 4, 2008, in the Maywand district of Afghanistan when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle.

"Winston was like the heart and soul of our unit," said Staff Sgt. Anthony M. Roszko a 3rd platoon squad leader for C Company. "No matter the situation, he brought a smile to our faces. Not a single person can say anything bad about him. Everyone misses him."

The memorial wall was designed by the first sergeant of C Company, 1st Sgt. Raymond S. Harris. Four Soldiers of C Com-

pany worked through the week before the ceremony, building and painting the wall. Some Soldiers worked 72 hours straight without sleep.

In Winston's honor, the first name on the memorial wall is his. The second name on the wall belongs to Rath.

Rath of Decatur, Ala. was killed Jan. 8 by a suicide bomber in the Huta bazaar.

"When I first met Staff Sgt. Rath, he was a team leader and a corporal," said Sergeant 1st Class Jeremie M. Wickman, the 1st platoon sergeant of C Company. "I was hard on him, because I saw his potential. He'd do anything for his guys."

According to Wickman, Rath was held in such high regard, that the Canadian forces that have operational control of the area supported the COP's name change to that of an American Soldier.

The memorial wall also bears the name of Essary of Dyersburg, Tenn., who died with Rath in the Huta bazaar Jan. 8.

"I could always get a laugh from Essary," said Sgt. Christopher W. Styron, a 1st platoon team leader of C Company. "He'd say funny stuff with his Southern accent."

Soldiers from 1st platoon attested that Essary was a hard-working Soldier and always ready to help out and volunteer.

Leaders of the 2-2 Inf. arranged the ceremony. A bagpipe player from the Canadian army participated, and Canadian leaders presented red poppies to several 2-2 Inf. Soldiers. Many Canadians traditionally wear red poppies on Canada's Remembrance Day in honor of their fallen heroes.

"It's nice that they're being remembered," said Cpl. David A. Kennedy, a 1st platoon team leader of C Company. "They're not going to be forgotten."

According to Wickman, the 2-2 Inf. mission in Afghanistan is to help the populace. Since its arrival in Afghanistan the summer of 2008, the 2-2 Inf. has distributed wheat seed in an effort to turn farmers from opium crops, given supplies to a local school, built up the local government District Center and given food supplies to a local mosque for distribution to Afghans.

2-2 Inf. falls under the operational control of the Canadian Task Force Kandahar and the administrative control of the U.S. Joint Sustainment Command-Afghanistan.

Reflections by the Chaplain

■ Bridging the Deployment Blues

There are no easy answers when facing the deployment blues. During deployments you can feel alone, overwhelmed and as if life is spinning out of control.

At a location where personal space is practically nonexistent, with overcrowded rooms and in even more crowded tents, feelings of loneliness and isolation can set in. Sometimes the larger the crowd, the easier it is to get lost. When taking care of so many Soldiers in a team, squad, section or unit – sometimes the business daily “to do’s” shift focus from people to jobs that have got to get done. Although Army expressions like “Mission First” and “Git R Done” put a priority on taskings, at the same time leaders and battle buddies should not lose sight of the people in their care.

Getting lost in the crowd is an easy thing to do. It is the responsibility of each Soldier to let those closest to them know what is going on in their lives, just as it is the responsibility of each leader to know their Soldiers, Soldiers’ families and friends. Being a part of a caring and loving community helps reduce the amount of stress we carry on our shoulders. Allowing others into our lives, building relationships can provide a bridge over the blues.

We are all a long way from home. Web cams, phone calls, and email all help bridge the gap. Programs like United Through Reading, sponsored by our Navy neighbors at Kan-

dahar, where parents can record themselves reading a book to their children to send back home, help. Reading the same books with our spouses and family members, whether it is the Bible or a new best seller, can help. Even so, the geographical and emotional distance still exists. Each of us has to find a means to survive the distance and overcome the struggles.

The old cliché, “what doesn’t kill you, will make you stronger” can be heard in the echo of a Kanye West song or in the memory of what a grandparent may have told you growing up.

There is some truth in that expression. However, you can only grow stronger through spiritual, physical, and intellectual nourishment. Allowing life to give you a beat down will never make you stronger. Overcoming life’s challenges as if they were pebbles in your pathway will.

Many of our Soldiers in the JSC-A have stepped up to provide leadership in clearing those pebbles in the pathway by helping our Chapel communities. Their leadership and friendship foster a true sense of family in the spiritual sense. We give thanks to our music leaders in the Gospel, Chapel NeXt, and Catholic communities; we give thanks to the Bible Study leaders for Purpose Driven Life, the Spanish Bible Study, to the Latter Day Saints leaders, Seventh Day Adventist leaders, as well as our Jewish and Buddhist nurturers of faith. We also give thanks to those who on their own spend time in fellowship with oth-



ers. We also give thanks to those behind the scenes who provide tremendous blessings of support to include the Santos family’s provision of Spanish Language Rosary Guides, Master Sgt. Ouellette’s carpentry, and Sergeant 1st Class Huggins’s behind the scenes support. Again there are so many who have opened their arms in faith innumerable to count. Knowing that these doors are open for those seeking spiritual nourishment is a true blessing. Those who are knocking on heaven’s door are sure to find an answer.

As we cope with deployments and life’s struggles, we often see things in new light. Sometimes, the more life gives us the more our perspectives are challenged. Spiritual strengths and foundations can provide a bed rock of stability in our time of need.

I encourage each and everyone of you at all levels to open up and reach out to a friend in fellowship, share your troubles with your brothers and sisters in arms and you may just find that the burden will become all the much lighter.

▶▶ Responders Continued from page 1

First responder describes those medically-trained who first arrive on a casualty scene. Besides the U.S. MPs, the first responders of the exercise included the NAMSA-operated fire department and paramedics.

After the detonation, first responders moved the wounded to a casualty collection point and then simulated triage. Triage is the practice of evaluating victims and deciding on priority of treatment, based on the seriousness of the injuries.

According to Mark T. Barabe, project manager of NAMSA-contracted medical crash crew services a medical response team normally has four members: a physician, nurse, paramedic and driver.

Besides performing triage and evacuating the wounded, the medics’ responsibilities included communicating with the explosive ordnance disposal team, the incident commander, the fire chief and the MP NCOIC.

According to Barabe, a mass-casualty incident in the U.S.

would usually be the result of a fire or natural disaster. In Afghanistan, an enemy attack is often the cause of a mass-casualty incident.

“The fire department was tasked with incident command, fire extinguishment, search and

the JSC-A executive officer of Regional Support Group Provisional KAF.

“The medical personnel had extra stress put on them,” said Spc. Hollyann Greenwood, a 143d ESC Headquarters and Headquarters Company admin-

The biggest milestone was just to have it ...

Master Sgt. Daniel Lopez
Joint Sustainment Command Afghanistan
safety noncommissioned officer

rescue, and victim removal,” said Mr. Desi Wade, chief fire inspector of the NAMSA-contracted fire rescue crash services.

The role players were also a vital part of the exercise. MPs sent a base-wide message to U.S. forces on KAF asking for volunteers.

Servicemembers from the U.S. Army 143d Expeditionary Sustainment Command, JSC-A, U.S. Air Force 451st Air Expeditionary Group and the 362nd U.S. Marine Corps Heavy Marine Helicopter Squadron participated.

“Putting people under stress in a training environment was for the [betterment] of the first responders in a real occurrence,” said Lt. Col. Richard O. Wilson,

istrative specialist. “In a real life situation, if this were to occur, not everyone [who was injured] would remain calm.”

Greenwood simulated a disgruntled and burned person from the explosion who badgered medical personnel while they were treating the more severely wounded.

Another arranged situation was how the first-responders would handle treating someone they could not understand.

“I was lying on the ground asking for help in English and Spanish,” said Staff Sgt. Carmen E. Ayala-Cruz, a JSC-A support operations NCO, “I was having a lot of pain in my left foot.”

The medics had to diagnose the severity of her wounds, without being able to ask her questions.

After evacuating victims, Operation Roundup commenced and the MPs gathered suspects into a cordoned-off area.

Warrant Officer 3 Jeffery L. Rhoades and Master Sgt. Daniel Lopez, both of JSC-A safety, viewed the exercise to ensure a safe environment for all participants.

“The biggest milestone was just to have it and get all these units involved,” said Lopez. “No matter what, we now know where it needs to be, how we need to communicate and how we need to work together.”

Although some issues arose during the exercise, most evaluators believed the exercise to be successful.

“I’m glad that KAF is finally conducting these training exercises,” said Wilson. “Because it’s very real that we could have a real occurrence of mass-casualties at KAF.”

A variety of training exercises are planned for the future by several different units and organizations at KAF.