



Victory Sustained

Joint Sustainment Command-Afghanistan

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Tying the knot



Spc. Elisebet Freeburg | Victory Sustained

Spc. Oscar N. Ruiz, a 647th Quartermaster Rigger Detachment parachute rigger from Miami, Fla., prepares fuel barrels for aerial deliver to remote forward operating bases in Afghanistan.

Riggers secure loads for aerial deliveries

■ BY STAFF SGT. MARCOS ALICES
Victory Sustained Editor

The mountainous Afghan terrain makes it difficult for convoys to travel to many remote forward operating bases throughout the country to provide needed supplies to troops. Coalition forces have only one other option for transporting supplies, aerial deliveries.

Soldiers of the 647th Quartermaster Rigger Detachment prepare items for delivery to troops in Southern Afghanistan.

"I enjoy being able to help out as much as possible and getting things out to people that don't have it," said Spc. Shane F. Standaert, a 647th QM Rigger Det. parachute rigger from Muscatine, Iowa.

The increase in the number of troops in Afghanistan has demanded more from parachute riggers as they help supply the frontline Soldier. The 647th QM Rigger Det. helps supply Soldiers with food, water, ammunition, clothing and building material, but it is not limited to only these supplies. Its Soldiers have helped dropped more than 6.5 million pounds of supplies.

The parachute riggers use three different methods in their efforts in providing equip-

ment and supplies to troops.

The most commonly-used method is the Containerized Delivery System. It starts with the parachute riggers constructing skid boards, which are one-inch plywood with an energy-dissipating material, and honeycomb cardboard, glued to the skid board. The purpose of the honeycomb cardboard is to ensure nothing is damaged during delivery. The supplies are centered and secured on the skid board. The parachute is then placed on top.

There are three standard skid board sizes that the 647th QM Rigger Det. Soldiers use. They are 48 inches by 48 inches, 48 inches by 72 inches or 48 inches by 96 inches. Each skid board with a load can weigh 500 to 2,200 pounds.

"Some of the challenges we face are equipment and aircrafts always changing, but other than that the same basic [rigging] principles still apply," said Sgt. 1st Class Frank Lyons Jr., a 647th QM Rigger Det. platoon sergeant from New Orleans, La.

A new method of air dropping supplies at low elevation is the Low Cost Low Altitude Aerial Resupply. The advantage of using this method is parachute riggers will be able to

send shipments weighing 30 to 500 lbs and delivering shipments from 100 to 200 feet of altitude with fast-opening parachutes. Loads can be air dropped from commercial or military aircraft.

"We can delivery anything you can imagine," said Spc. Oscar N. Ruiz, a 647th QM Rigger Det. parachute rigger from Miami, Fla.

The riggers are capable of sling loading large equipment such as tactical vehicles and generators to a CH-47 Chinook for deliver.

The riggers can have supplies ready for air delivery for CDS or LCLA aerial resupply in as little as 12 hours. Sling loading equipment can be done in a little under an hour. The riggers transport all materials to the airfield to be inspected and loaded on an aircraft. Some aircrafts can fit up to 40 bundles.

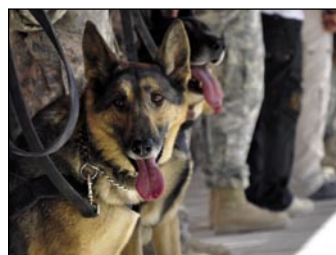
"[A parachute rigger is] a critical job in my eyes to the Army for people who have difficulty getting supplies in the hard to reach areas, FOBs," said Spc. Noel R. Phelps, a 647th QM Rigger Det. parachute rigger from Woodhaven, Mich.

Aerial deliveries are essential in providing the war fighter with the equipment he needs when he needs it.

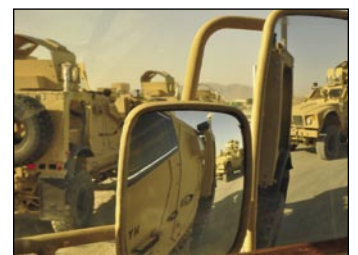
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The Commander's Corner



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

As we approach the point in time where President Obama will make a decision about the additional U.S. forces that General McChrystal has requested for the mission in Afghanistan, it is a good time for me to update you on the status of our current efforts to sustain U.S. forces in Afghanistan as well as our posture for future sustainment to support this request.

The efforts of the 4,200+ Soldiers that make up the Joint Sustainment Command play a vital role in the Operation Enduring Freedom mission in Afghanistan. They have done a

phenomenal job of meeting the requirements to support the U.S. forces here. With only one sustainment brigade, three combat service support battalions and one movement control battalion along with their supporting companies, this strong logistics force was able without fail, to maintain sustainment as well as provide all logistics necessary to support the buildup of forward operating bases for this year's plus-up of more than 20,000 Soldiers and Marines. This is significant because Afghanistan is land-locked and has no safe areas, like Kuwait, for unit reception and staging in preparation for onward movement to the FOBs.

As we look to the future and potential additional U.S. forces in Afghanistan, we have also requested an increase in sustainment forces to support that increase. However, due to the uncertainty of approval for additional sustainment forces, we are developing contingency plans to provide the necessary sustainment and distribution required to meet the mission regardless of the outcome.

The last issue I would like to

address, which has received a fair amount of interest recently, is morale activities at FOBs and at the major hubs like Kandahar and Bagram Airfields. While General McChrystal has made it clear that he supports the Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) and Quality of Life such as fitness centers, SPAWAR Internet Support, the Army Air Force Exchange Services PX and limited concessions, he has also made it clear that he does not support an excess of vendor concessions or MWR activities that distract or change the focus of our personnel who are here to accomplish a critically important mission.

I fully understand the argument that Soldiers need opportunity to unwind and relax; however, what we find is that some MWR activities, especially sports leagues or regularly scheduled re-occurring events often become distracters. These events distract from the mission because competitive Soldiers become compelled to practice and prepare for these events which then often can cut into either work or rest, which then impacts performance at work. As a result, and

to meet the intent of General McChrystal, participation by the Joint Sustainment Command Soldiers in reoccurring MWR events like leagues, karaoke and Salsa are not allowed. While in fact many of our Soldiers were not participating in any of the activities that have been curtailed and it has not negatively impacted morale, it is important that those who were participating in these activities understand why they were cut.

The resilience of Soldiers as well as the 'we can, we will' attitude is amazing. The challenges we face here in Afghanistan and the ability of Soldiers to overcome those challenges and meet the demanding needs of the mission have those outside of the Theater in awe of what we were able to accomplish. I am very proud to serve as the Commanding General of the Soldiers in the Joint Sustainment Command, and to tout their abilities and accomplishments. Thank you to the Soldiers for all you do in support of this mission and for America, and to the families, friends as well as others who support us!

Sustaining Victory!

The CSM Message to the Troops

November 11th is Veterans' Day. It is a day dedicated to honor and pay our respects to the veterans who served our country. You can especially take pride that you are a combat veteran. For many of you, this is your first deployment and others may be your third or fourth. Everyone should feel a great sense of honor because you are now part of a small population of great Americans, who have defended freedom and democracy.

Some may never fully understand what it takes to defend freedom and democracy, but I believe the majority of Americans appreciate our sacrifices. You may

see your deployment here in Afghanistan as us just doing our job, but to the Afghan people, you are making a difference. Many of our comrades gave the ultimate sacrifice for our country. Veterans' Day is a day for us to remember those who have stood on the front lines to protect and defend our nation. Several Soldiers within our command have stepped up to answer the call of its nation several times. Master Sgt. Andrew Cioppa is just one of these great Americans who served in Vietnam and now is here in Afghanistan.

Our nation supports its veterans with benefits through the Department of Veteran Affairs.

As of late, the VA now offers the new Post-9/11 GI Bill for veterans who served on active duty on or after September 11, 2001. A great benefit of the post 9/11 GI Bill is that it can be transferred to family members. This is a great opportunity for many Soldiers and now their family members to attend college and acquire a degree. It will cover living expenses, tuition and fees.

November 11 is OUR day! The one thing you can and should always be proud of...You are part of a small population of our society that defended freedom for so many. Remember our fallen comrades and NEVER LET



Command Sgt. Maj. Michael D. Schultz
Joint Sustainment Command-Afghanistan Command Sergeant Major

ANYONE FORGET!

Thank you for what you do, 143d!

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

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The Public Affairs office is located next to Bldg 515.

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Deployed reservist receives rare War College opportunity

■ **BY MAJ. SHELDON SMITH**
JSC-A Public Affairs Officer

As a decision on sending additional forces to counter gains by the Taliban looms in Washington, sustainment Soldiers on the ground continue to provide logistical support to the fight in Afghanistan. The 143d Expeditionary Sustainment Command, an Orlando, Fla. Army Reserve unit, was sent to Afghanistan to play a critical role in the addition of forces to shore up security.

The bulk of the 143d ESC members are assigned to Support Operations or SPO. The largest section in SPO is the Support Operations Distribution Management Center, led by recently-promoted Col. Thomas Vaccaro of Stafford, Va., who also serves as deputy SPO chief.

Vaccaro, a distinguished military graduate of the Shippensburg University Army ROTC program, is responsible for coordinating the efforts of 139 DMC Soldiers to ensure efficient and timely sustainment support to U.S. Forces - Afghanistan and more than 68,000 servicemembers. As an Army reservist, he has also been given a rare set of opportunities.

Most reservists achieve their military education requirements through a combination of correspondence courses and on-site classes often that can be accomplished within a two-week period. Vaccaro, however, is one of a small group of Army reservists selected this year to attend the Army War College as a resident student.

"I submitted my package, and out of 650 [U.S. Army Reserve] Soldiers, I was one of three that were selected," Vaccaro said.

The War College will allow Vaccaro valuable insight into the workings of the Army



Maj. Sheldon Smith | Victory Sustained

Prior to his promotion, then Lt. Col. Thomas Vaccaro listens to Spanish officers at Provincial Reconstruction Team Heart describe challenges related to the future expansion of their base in Western Afghanistan. JSC-A will play a critical role in the movement of equipment and supplies necessary to build new facilities at the PRT to support an influx of U.S. personnel.

as a whole, he said. "[It] will make me a more valued asset to the USAR through interaction with future Army leaders as I am learning from them and the instructors."

The Army Reserve has also selected Vaccaro to command the 165th Quartermaster Group at Fort Belvoir, Va., and granted him authorization to attend the War College

while concurrently serving as a commander. To his knowledge, Vaccaro is the only Army Reserve officer attending the War College and commanding a unit simultaneously.

Originally scheduled to start his graduate-level courses at the War College in 2009, Vaccaro delayed enrollment for a year to accompany the 143d ESC as it mobilized for deployment as the first-ever ESC in Afghanistan.

"I will take what I have learned in the past 12 months and apply it to my command philosophy and leadership style when I work with the 316th ESC and the battalions under my command," said Vaccaro.

Functioning as the core of Joint Sustainment Command - Afghanistan, the 143d ESC is responsible for receiving units and their accompanying equipment into the area of operations. The 143d ESC supports units in staging areas where they conduct final preparations for their battlefield missions, and assists units with the onward movement of their equipment and supplies forward to their final destination. It also provides units with logistical support in nearly all classes of supplies necessary to sustain U.S. forces while they conduct operations.

"We plan, coordinate, synchronize, monitor, and control operational and strategic level logistics operations for USFOR-A in Afghanistan," said Vaccaro.

"I enjoyed working with the Soldiers of the 143rd ESC, and I am proud to be part of their history," he said.

OPINION

Women already fight in combat

■ **BY SPC. ELISEBET FREEBURG**
Victory Sustained Staff Writer

Because of a long-standing policy provoking heated debate, women are barred from serving in military combat roles, such as positions in artillery or infantry units. But in a war without frontlines, why is this still an issue?

In Afghanistan, other member nations of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force, like France and Canada, allow women in combat.

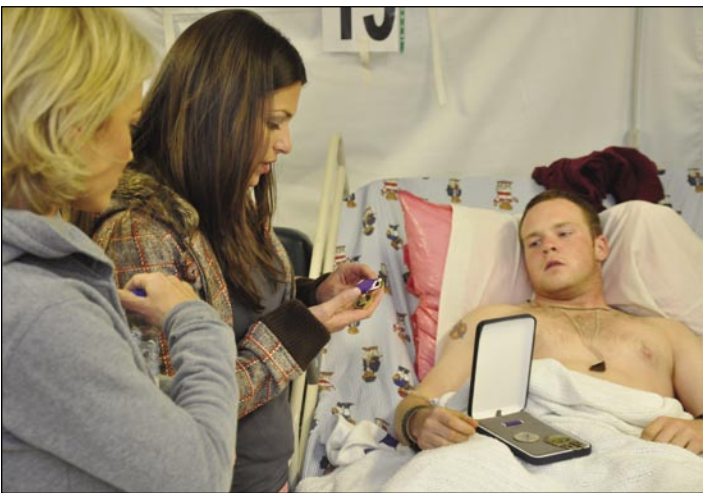
Australia, the largest non-NATO contributor to forces in Afghanistan, is considering a policy to open all military positions to women, including their special forces.

Despite policy, many of the more than 180,000 American women who deployed to Afghanistan or Iraq have *already* served in combat.

In 2007, two female combat medics of the 41st Brigade Combat Team patrolled regularly with Afghan National Army soldiers and received Combat Medic Badges for work under fire.

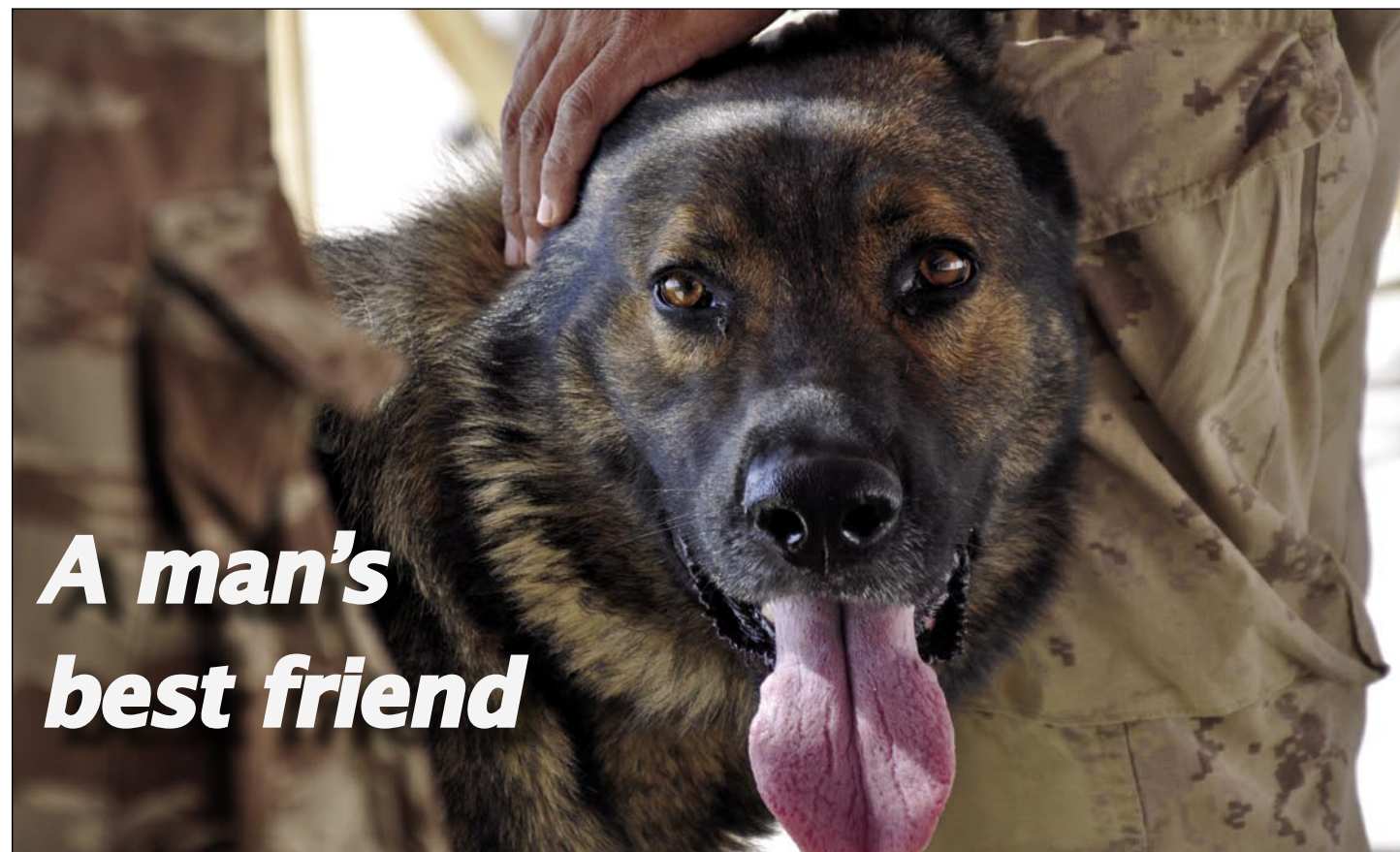
Marine Lance Cpl. Christina Humphrey received a Navy-Marine Corps Achievement Medal (with Combat "V" for valor device) in 2005 for her actions during a firefight while serving as a personnel searcher at an entry control point in Iraq.

See *Combat*, page 6



Celebrities Kelly Carlson and DeAnna Pappas examine a Purple Heart Medal belonging to wounded Soldier Sgt. Scott Mackay; a Stratford, Conn. fire team leader from Bravo Company, 5th Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division; Oct. 13 at the Role III coalition hospital at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan. Carlson and Pappas, along with Greg Germann, D.W. Moffett and Vanessa Branch, visited troops at multiple locations across Afghanistan for more than a week as part of a United Service Organizations Ambassadors of Hollywood tour.

Spc. Elisebet Freeburg | Victory Sustained



A man's best friend

Spc. Elisebet Freeburg | Victory Sustained

Along with his handler, a coalition military working dog attends an Oct. 16 dedication ceremony for the newly-built war dog memorial at the Kandahar Airfield boardwalk. The memorial was built in honor of U.S. and coalition canines killed in the line of duty.

Troops, civilians honor working dogs

■ **BY SPC. ELISEBET FREEBURG**
Victory Sustained Staff Writer

U.S. and coalition servicemembers, civilians, military working dog handlers and their dogs met together in a ceremony Oct. 16 to unveil the war dog memorial built at the KAF boardwalk in honor of military working dogs killed here in the line of duty.

Maj. Donna DeBonis, the 993rd Medical Detachment officer in charge of the veterinary treatment facility, planned the memorial while working with the War Dog Support Group, a program designed for handlers who have lost a dog.

"The dogs are completely dependent upon the handler," said Maj. Donna DeBonis. "They are like children. In turn, they obvi-

ously protect the handler."

While counseling the group, Capt. Dmitri V. Kostyunin, 143d Expeditionary Sustainment Command chaplain, emphasized the importance of doing something positive to cope with a loss, so the handlers agreed on the memorial.

After the death of a dog, many handlers experience not only grief for their loss but guilt for putting their dog in harm's way, said DeBonis.

"The dogs look for [improvised explosive devices], mines and weapons caches, so they typically go on patrols to assist in that capacity," said DeBonis.

DeBonis designed the memorial based on the fallen warrior memorial adjacent to the site,

after receiving site permission and memorial dimensions from the Commander, Kandahar Airfield (COMKAF), the NATO-organized base commander.

Employees of the U.S. Army Medical Department Museum in San Antonio, Texas, donated the bas-relief depicting a dog handler and dog with the American flag waving above their heads.

"People volunteered for no other reason than they wanted to help on behalf of the working dogs," said DeBonis.

Civilian volunteers from the Canadian Forces Contractor Augmentation Program poured and mixed concrete for the slab as well as constructing and adding an acrylic case after the cer-

emony to enable the bas-relief to withstand the environmental elements.

"It's something tangible that [volunteers have] worked on, and when they leave, they leave something positive behind," said DeBonis.

Capt. William Kneemiller, 649th Regional Support Group chaplain, Col. Stanley Puckett, Joint Sustainment Command-Afghanistan chaplain, and DeBonis all spoke at the dedication ceremony.

Dangers the dogs face are primarily from explosions, snipers and enemy fire in gun battles. Handlers claim insurgents place a bounty on the heads of handlers and their dogs, said DeBonis.

Canines receive donated cooling vests

■ **BY SPC. ELISEBET FREEBURG**
Victory Sustained Staff Writer

In October, numerous U.S. military working dogs received special cooling vests and pads to combat heat exhaustion which killed several dogs in Afghanistan in 2009.

Maj. Donna DeBonis, the 993rd Medical Detachment officer in charge of the veterinary treatment facility here, spearheaded the project, while the Humane Society International purchased the 25 vests and 75 pads at a decreased price by the supplying company.

For a canine, critical temperature is 105

degrees Fahrenheit and above, said DeBonis. She has personally recorded temperatures at more than 130 degrees Fahrenheit on KAF's tarmac-covered flight line.

"Dogs can't cool off like we do," said DeBonis. "They can't sweat."

Dogs lower their temperature by panting, which increases the air flow through their respiratory system.

The adjustable cooling vests can be recharged by submerging in ice when a refrigerator is not available and last for hours. The vests are manufactured to absorb heat building up in the dog, making breathing

easier and cooling vital organs.

The cooling pads provide similar effects and the manufacturer claims the pads maintain a canine's optimal body temperature for at least four hours in weather more than 110 degrees Fahrenheit. DeBonis expects handlers to use the pads for dogs to lie on in the backs of vehicles during convoys and mounted patrols.

FedEx provided free shipping for the cooling vests and pads to Afghanistan.

In a similar project, the Humane Society of the United States purchased cooling vests in 2003 for donation to U.S. Marine



Spc. Elisebet Freeburg | Victory Sustained

The new Mine Resistant Ambush Protected All-Terrain Vehicle (M-ATV), built specifically for the mountainous Afghan terrain, parks next to the larger MaxxPro Dash. The first M-ATVs designated for Southern Afghanistan arrived here Oct. 22 by air transport.

New M-ATV arrives at KAF

■ **BY SPC. ELISEBET FREEBURG**
Victory Sustained Staff Writer

The first Mine Resistant Ambush Protected All-Terrain Vehicles (M-ATV) designated for Southern Afghanistan arrived here Oct. 22 by air transport.

After months of government testing, the Department of Defense awarded a contract June 2009, to Oshkosh Corporation to supply an initial order valued at \$1.05 billion for more than 2,000 M-ATVs.

"This is a very different environment than Iraq, so as we came in and continued to fight the fight in Afghanistan, we realized it requires a little bit different equipment or modification than what we have," said Lt. Col. Richard Haggerty, the Regional Command-South deputy director for Acquisitions, Logistics and Technology.

With an independent suspension system designed for off-road mobility, the M-ATV is built specifically to navigate Afghanistan's rugged landscape.

"The M-ATV really answers some of the challenges of the terrain, high altitudes and the real unevenness of a lot of the terrain out there," said Haggerty.

The M-ATV seats four passengers and one gunner, and

features an armor system with a "V" shaped hull engineered to protect occupants from enemy attack.

"It looks like a modified, huge, heavy-duty Jeep," said Anthony Deluca, the Kandahar site lead for the MRAP program. "It's got

very good suspension systems, and everyone raves about how well it functions in the field."

While some original MRAP vehicles may weigh nearly 60,000 lbs., the M-ATV weighs approximately 25,000 lbs. including standard equipment and fuel.

"We're trying to get the Soldier exactly what he needs to be successful in the battlefield," said Haggerty.

These initial eight vehicles will be used to train drivers and mechanics from units selected to receive M-ATVs.



Spc. Elisebet Freeburg | Victory Sustained

The new Mine Resistant Ambush Protected All-Terrain Vehicle (M-ATV), built specifically for the mountainous Afghan terrain, parks on the Kandahar Airfield flightline. The first M-ATVs designated for Southern Afghanistan arrived here Oct. 22 by air transport. These initial eight vehicles will be used to train drivers and mechanics from units selected to receive M-ATVs.



Reflections by the Chaplain

■ BY MASTER SGT. WARD GROS

Chaplain Assistant NCOIC

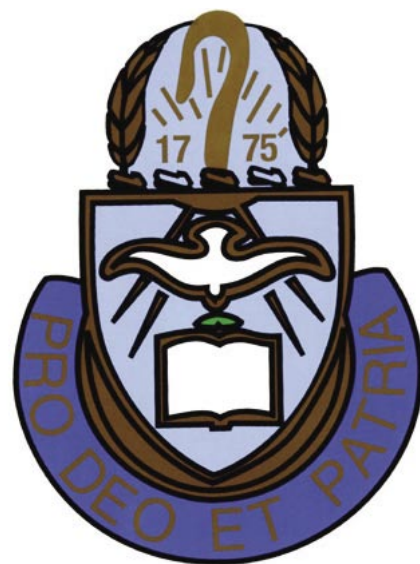
As many of us begin counting down the days before going home, others begin counting down the number of worship services they have left. When we first arrived here, Kandahar was a smaller place. The 143rd JSC-A brought a diverse group with deep faith and church experience who began filling the chairs across services.

We fell into the programs and activities that our worship communities had in place and waited until those before us completed their missions both in uniform and in church. Those before us tilled the soil for us to bear fruit from their labor. As Christmas approaches and we begin to prepare for the celebration of the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, let us lift our brothers and sisters up to take the leadership positions that we have held since our predecessors left. Consider letting those who will carry the faith long after we've left Afghanistan to lead your worship communities into the Advent Season.

Many of us have compared our experiences to what it must have felt like to be in the early Church where congregations started with a few small seeds of faith. With prayer and effort we have seen our worship communities grow. Just as the Bible states in Ecclesiastes 11:6, "Plant your seed in the morning and keep busy all afternoon for you don't know if profit will come from one activity or another - or maybe both." As we have

deepened our relationship with God, we have seen love for Him and His Word build relationships within and among our worship communities at Kandahar.

Just as Jesus prepared His apostles for the day He would sit at the right hand of God the Father, just as the apostles prepared the disciples, we are now called to prepare those who will lead our worship communities once we go home. Watching others take charge can be rewarding and trying at times, but remember that at all times it is not us or those who follow after us who are in charge, but God who is truly in charge. Each of His chosen has different gifts, strengths, and talents. Others may do things differently, don't focus on the differences, but continue to lift one another up for all the glory does not belong to us, all the glory belongs to God. The growth of the worship communities at Kandahar are testament to His glory. During our time here, we have seen congregations grow from less than one hundred to nearly four hundred while others that did not exist before now are going strong. These worship communities have nurtured the faithful just as Jesus preached in Matthew 13:23, "The seed that fell on good soil represents those who truly hear and understand God's word and produce a harvest of thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times as much as had been planted." There is no denying that souls are growing in God's Word and faith is growing in Kandahar. Surely as our communities here continue without us, they are firmly rooted in strong foundations



and will continue to grow.

As we pack our duffle bags, mail home our tough boxes, and look forward to starting our New Year back home, let us continue in faith. Let us pray for those who continue here without us. May God, give them the strength to continue lifting one another up. And may He also give us direction so that we may continue our journey of faith that we have strengthened during our time here in Afghanistan. Let us journey in the Spirit, in the same Spirit of the last verse of the Gospel of Mark 16:20 which proclaims, "And the disciples went everywhere and preached, and the Lord worked through them, confirming what they said by many miraculous signs." The work at the Chapel here at Kandahar is truly a miraculous sign. May we continue to see God's work at hand wherever we may be.

Combat Continued from page 3

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Lori Hill provided suppressive fire for troops on the ground while successfully piloting her Kiowa helicopter in Iraq, 2006, even after the helicopter was hit by a rocket-propelled grenade and received heavy machine gun fire.

Military policewoman Sgt. Leigh Ann Hester received a Silver Star medal 2005 for successfully leading her team through an ambush and counterattacking the enemy while stationed in Iraq.

Women in our own Joint Sustainment Command-Afghanistan have regularly pulled convoy security throughout 2009.

In fact, from the beginning of the Global War on Terrorism to Sept. 5, 2009, there were 122 American female servicemembers killed in action and 643 wounded (Defense Manpower Data Center statistics). Obviously, women *are* in combat.

A weak argument sometimes presented is the difficulty of providing separate living condi-

tions in smaller combat units. First of all, how difficult is it to raise another tent? Second, in some locations and units, women already live in the same tents as men, with nothing but flimsy partitions providing privacy.

Statistics suggest that women are more likely to be sexually assaulted when captured than men. More than 1,500,000 male servicemembers have deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom (some have deployed multiple times). Although numbers on missing troops or those presumed captured may not be definitive, five Soldiers are confirmed to have died while captured (Defense Manpower Data Center). Even if combat roles are opened, the odds of a female servicemember being captured by the enemy are very low. In 2008, an estimated 89,000 women reported being raped in the U.S. If people are concerned about sexual assault, perhaps they should focus on the home front!

Scandals from Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo show that even some Americans have not been above using sexual assault,

abuse or molestation to psychologically break male prisoners. Unless we want to believe our enemies have higher morals than we have, why should we think they would only assault their women prisoners?

The capture and recovery of now Brig. Gen. Rhonda Cornum, a flight surgeon whose helicopter was shot down during the Persian Gulf War, is an interesting case. Years later, she admitted to having been sexually assaulted by her captors. She also claimed that while being held captive, being sexually assaulted was one of the least things on her mind.

One advocate of the ban stated that the strongest woman is equal to the weakest man, but some women do have the physical and emotional strength needed to serve in an infantry unit. Army Air Assault school, a rigorous mentally and physically challenging course, maintains the same standards for both sexes, and women successfully complete the course. Qualified women should be allowed the opportunity to serve in combat.

If you have seen the movie

"G.I. Jane," you might remember the scene where Viggo Mortensen's character beats up Demi Moore's, and her fellow Soldiers—all males—cannot handle seeing it. That is the point. Men, and probably the American public, do not want to see mothers, sisters and daughters die. But until we allow it to happen and desensitize ourselves to it—just as we have desensitized ourselves to the deaths of our fathers, brothers and sons—this mentality will prevail.

The debate over the ban will most likely prolong even after combat roles finally open for women. As the policy debate continues, I maintain that the physical and emotional ability to successfully serve in combat should depend on the woman in question, just as it depends on the individual man.

Give women the same physical standards as the men to qualify for these combat positions, and let them try if they so choose. Women already die in Afghanistan and Iraq for their country. Until qualified women are allowed to serve in combat officially, how will we truly know the impact, good or bad?