

Swamp Fox Facts

- Thirty-six Swamp Fox Soldiers have earned the Military Outstanding Volunteer Award.
- Task Force Swamp Fox has completed more than Seventy-Six percent of its deployment in Afghanistan.
- Operation Outreach Afghanistan has received more than \$60,000 in humanitarian aid from back home.
- Task Force Swamp Fox had 12 IRR (Individual Ready Reserve) Soldiers receive awards in September. Three received Army Commendation Medals, Six received Army Achievement Medals and three received Certificates of Achievements.

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FALL KICK-OFF EDITION!



Marion's Men

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NSE - A Key to IJC's Success in AFG

Story by Capt. Chris G. Neeley, USA

America's wars have always included a joint military service component charged with fulfilling the operational, logistical and man-power demands required by the mission. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are no exception.

Today's warrior on the ground includes personnel from the Marine Corps, Air Force, Navy, Coast Guard and Army. Throw in Reservists and Guardsmen and you have one of the most culturally diverse fighting forces working hand in hand on the field of battle.

In early March Task Force Swamp Fox (TFSF) was charged with standing up and managing the National Support Element (NSE) for the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Joint Command (IJC) at North Kabul International Airport (NKIA). The new NSE for IJC would serve as a central hub for 1,600 joint service



Six of the ten members of the National Support Element from left to right: Army SSG Randal Gaskins, Army SSG Lamar Johnson, Army MAJ Stephen Brazelton, Marine CPL Sonny Montes, Army SPC Erbert Morale.

members working at NKIA. TFSF would be responsible for handling all issues related to

their pay and leave, performance awards, billeting, postal services, maintenance, cleaning, construction, food services, temporary duty assignments and supply needs like ammunition and Army Direct Ordering (ADO) of uniforms.

Task Force Swamp Fox (TFSF) has five Soldiers together with five other service members from the Navy, Air Force and Marines whose primary mission is providing administrative support services to every joint warrior stationed at NKIA.

That's a lot of responsibility for a team of just ten people with no prior joint service experience.

Maj. Steve Brazelton, the Battalion adjutant and a member of the NSE team at NKIA, said the

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Col. Lindsey Graham Visits SC Troops

Story by Capt. Chris G. Neeley, PA0, USA

U.S. Senator (S.C.) and Air Force Reserve Col. Lindsey Graham visited South Carolina Guardsmen stationed at Camp Phoenix August 13. Col. Graham was in Afghanistan on two weeks annual training orders with Joint Task Force 435 based in Kabul.

Col. Graham thanked the Soldiers for their service in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

"I am proud of you. And our citizens back home are proud of you. Your hard work and dedication to the mission in Afghanistan is making a difference. You are helping to put the Afghan people on a self-sustainable path to peace and prosperity," Graham said.

Maj. Marion Bulwinkle, executive officer, 1-178th Field Artillery Battalion, welcomed the Colonel to Camp Phoenix and surprised him with a Battalion t-shirt with the Swamp Fox crest on



Maj. Marion Bulwinkle (right) and CSM Samuel McKenzie (left) introduces Air Force Col. Lindsey Graham (center) to 150 S.C. Soldiers stationed at Camp Phoenix.

it.

"Col. Graham, we are honored to have you visit us here at Camp Phoenix. It means so much to our Troops. As a small token of our appreciation we would like to present you with our Battalion t-shirt. You can wear it when you PT and think of us," said Bulwinkle.

Col. Graham spent more than 2 hours visiting with the more than 150 South Carolina Guardsmen stationed at Camp Phoenix. He also took time out for photos with the Troops. He is the first South Carolina elected official to visit Soldiers from Task Force Swamp Fox this year.



Army Capt. Bill Hill (left) talks with Air Force Col. Lindsey Graham (right) during a breakfast meet and greet event at Camp Phoenix.



1/178 FA BN Public Affairs

Editor:

CPT Chris G. Neeley, PAO

1/178 Field Artillery BN, SCARNG

Camp Phoenix

APO, AE 09320

Questions or Comments?

chris.g.neeley@us.army.mil

The Commander's View...

Salaam Aleikum (Peace be with you),

The song SEPTEMBER by Earth Wind & Fire is one of my all time favorite tunes. As I recently listened to this song while on a run, it reminded me of home and all the great things that take place in the month of September. A few of the great things that take place in September include: the beginning of a new school year for our children; Labor Day holiday weekend; the start of football season (high school, college, NFL); the beginning of deer hunting of season; and up until a few years ago—the Darlington 500 NASCAR race.

This September is also significant because it marks the 9th anniversary since our great nation was attacked by Islamic terrorists. Having previously served in Afghanistan on 9-11-2007, I can tell you that it brings the events of that horrific day into a new level of clarity. When I reflect back on the events of that day in 2001, I could not have begun to comprehend the impact that event would have not only on my life but the lives of countless thousands of our fellow Americans. As we approach 9-11-2010, I would ask you to pause, REMEMBER, and say a special prayer not only for our Soldiers but for all Americans whose lives have been and are impacted by this tragedy.

This September is also important because it



Lt. Col. Ed McInnis (center) presents Col. Jeffrey Kramer (right), senior Army National Guard advisor, United States Forces-Afghanistan, a signed Baltimore Orioles flag that was flown over Camp Phoenix, Kabul, Afghanistan. The flag was signed by Task Force Swamp Fox Soldiers stationed at Camp Phoenix.

marks our 7th month of deployment, which means we are now within the 90 day window for re-deployment. We are in the process of solidifying our re-deployment plans and post mobilization reintegration events. Our Family Readiness Groups will be conducting reunification briefings in October for our families back in South Carolina. I highly encourage our family members to attend this critical event as it will provide you much insight

into what to expect as your Soldier returns from deployment. These events will equip you with the knowledge, tools and resources that are available to you and will greatly facilitate the reintegration process. In the event you are not notified by your FRG leader of the dates, times, and locations of these briefing, please feel free to contact the Full time support staff at your local armory.

In closing, I want to tell you that our Soldiers continue to serve with great pride and distinction. Rarely does a week pass that I am not overwhelmed and amazed by all the great things they are accomplishing across Afghanistan. Thank you for your continued prayers and support. True & Tried!

LTC E.M. McInnis



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Follow the Soldiers of Task Force Swamp Fox on the [Marion's Men Facebook](#) page. It's a great way to keep in touch with your favorite Soldier and stay up to date on the latest news from Afghanistan. Join us today!

The Leader's Book by CSM McKenzie

Greetings,

Our Soldiers stationed in Kabul and down range with the Provincial Reconstruction Teams continue to realize great success as we wind down the mission in Afghanistan. They have impressed me with their can-do attitude and high level of sustained morale. They are doing an outstanding job.

As we close out the last remaining months of the deployment, our Soldiers are looking forward to their return home and reuniting with their family and friends. Everyone in the Swamp Fox family is ready for a life of normalcy.

Fortunately, with the changing of the season from Summer to Fall comes some of life's events that remind us of reality. There's the start of school for our children, the beginning of foot-



CSM McKenzie talks with IRR Soldiers before presenting them with end of tour awards.

ball season, Labor Day and holiday's like Veterans Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas. Pretty soon we will all be able to share in those events together with those we love and miss.

But we can't allow the events of the coming months to distract us from the work that is left

to be completed here in Afghanistan. Now is not the time to become distracted and complacent.

My advice to our Soldiers and their families is to keep your eyes and mind focused on the goal — the finish line. A deployment is a grind. It's a marathon, not a sprint. We can all see the finish line, but we can't afford to get tripped up as we finish the last lap. There's too much riding on this race.

True and Tried,
CSM McKenzie

Church Chat with the Chaplain...

Greetings,

As I think about Fall, I especially think about kids returning to school and all that goes along with that. It is vitally important that we invest time in our children while they are young. These investments will reap great benefits in the future. Too often, we as parents just let things ride along while our kids are in school, and don't really engage with what's going on there. As your kids go back, let me make a few suggestions from my years of working with children and teens:

1. Know what they are being taught. Take a look at their textbooks. Read their reading literature. Take a look at their homework. You need to know what your children are being taught because it may not always be in line with what you're teaching them.

2. Keep an eye on their moods and attitudes. Your kids may still be experiencing some effects from their Daddy's being deployed. Speak with their teachers and let them know what's going on.

3. Go to everything your school offers for parents. My brother is a teacher and he told me that you can divide any class into three groups of kids: the low achievers, whose parents are not involved at all; the medium achievers, whose parent's a minimally involved; and the high achievers, whose parents are very involved. The rate of parent involvement is directly proportional to how well the kids do. How do you want your kids to do?

4. Show up at other times as well. Sometime over the next few months, show up randomly at your child's school and have lunch with them. They'll love it.

For you Bads still here, ask your kids every time you talk to them how their school is going and what they're learning. Be involved with what they're doing, and when you get home, prepare to show up!

God bless you as you involve yourself in your children's lives.

God bless you,
CH Josh White



Chaplain Josh White plays the guitar at the new contemporary service at Camp Phoenix.



Spec. Geoffrey Doyle (left) was promoted to Sergeant by 1st Sgt. Jimmy Murray (right) Aug. 9, 2010.



Pfc. Josiah Johnson (right) was promoted to Specialist by 1st Sgt. Jeffrey Pace (left) Aug. 2, 2010.



Sgt. 1st Class Chuck Tirpak (left) congratulates his son, Charles Tirpak (right), after promoting him to sergeant Aug. 20, 2010.



Spec. Randy Grooms (left) was promoted to Sergeant by Capt. Chris Plummer (right) Aug. 9, 2010.



1st Sgt. Jeffrey Pace (left) promotes Edwin R. Potts to the rank of sergeant Aug. 20, 2010.



1st Sgt. Jeffrey Pace (left) promotes Favian Gutierrez to the rank of sergeant Aug. 20, 2010.



Maj. Robert Spafford (left) promotes Cory J. Owens to the rank of sergeant Aug. 20, 2010.



Capt. Chris Plummer (right) promotes Spec. Ricardo Cazares, III (left) to sergeant, Aug. 6, 2010.

Moving On Up!



Scenes from the PRT's



Kapisa Province — Members of Provincial Reconstruction Team Kapisa from South Carolina provide security during a meeting between the Surobi district sub-governor and PRT representatives.



Kapisa Province — U.S. Army Spec. Russell Altman, South Carolina Army National Guard, Provincial Reconstruction Team Kapisa, enjoys the view from the gunners hatch of his Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle while traveling through the Surobi district of Afghanistan.



Kapisa Province — U.S. Army Sfc. Carl Whetsel, South Carolina Army National Guard, Provincial Reconstruction Team Kapisa, and French army Capt. Franz Najean discuss convoy operations prior to departure from Forward Operating Base Tora in the Surobi district of Afghanistan.



U.S. Army Sgt. Derick Eaddy, South Carolina Army National Guard, Provincial Reconstruction Team Kapisa, teaches a handshake to a young Afghan boy during a mission to inspect a newly completed bridge in the Surobi district of Afghanistan.

Soldiers of the Month



Staff Sgt. James Thomason (left) of Anderson, S.C., 1-178th Field Artillery Battalion, South Carolina Army National Guard, was named the non-commissioned officer of the month by **Command Sgt. Maj. Samuel McKenzie (right)** during a ceremony, Aug. 9, at Camp Phoenix, Kabul, Afghanistan. Thomason is serving a one year deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.



Pfc. Rennardo McDaniel (left) of Orangeburg, S.C., 1-178th Field Artillery Battalion, South Carolina Army National Guard, was named Soldier of the month by **Command Sgt. Maj. Samuel McKenzie (right)** during a ceremony, Aug. 9, at Camp Phoenix, Kabul, Afghanistan. McDaniel is serving a one year tour in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

NSE continued...



Staff Sgt. Lamar Johnson (right) assists Navy personnel stationed at North Kabul International Airport.

transition from a full Army force to a joint fighting force wasn't easy. But he said the experience at NSE has been very rewarding and career enhancing.

"The environment at NSE was completely new to us when we first arrived back in March. Everyone over here comes from a different branch and brings to the table a different set of military traditions, customs and regulations. They all speak a different language per se. I believe our guys on the NSE team wouldn't change a thing. This experience has broadened their horizon and made them better war fighters. They now understand what a

joint war is all about," said Brazelton.

Maj. Marion Bulwinkle, the Executive Officer for TFSF, was charged with leading the NSE group through the initial stages until his commander, a Navy Commander arrived in-country. He said the hurdles were many in the beginning. However, the results are impressive.

"We encountered many struggles in the early stages. We stood up an organization that didn't exist back in March. But at the end of the day our small team of ten personnel have already processed 900 awards for our joint warriors, managed more than \$400,000 in temporary duty and travel, managed the construction of a NSE office building with integrated living quarters and provided more than \$26 million in war-fighter support in just six months," said Bulwinkle.

Handling the administrative needs of Soldiers, Airmen, Marines and Sailors is not the sexy stuff you typically hear about during a war. However, according to Maj. Bulwinkle, their task is integral to the overall success of coalition forces in Afghanistan.

"Our job has not been glamorous. But I believe our



Staff Sgt. Randal Gaskins perform an inventory of military awards with Maj. Steve Brazelton.

success on the ground in Afghanistan hinges on the joint war-fighter being able to focus on the mission at hand and not on their personnel matters," said Bulwinkle. If they're not fed, if they don't have housing and if their laundry is not clean, then they won't be successful at performing their jobs. That's where we come in. Our small team has provided a huge lift to the ISAF Joint Command operation in Afghanistan. We help them realize success in the field."

Photos from the Field

