

February 2011



# Lightning News

News from the front for Soldiers, families and friends of HHC, 359th Signal Brigade





# HERE AT BAGRAM...



**Left, Army Sgt. 1st Class John Hembree, project manager for the Future Operations Section of the Joint NetOps Control Center, stands guard outside of the JNCC during a VIP visit in February.**

Photos by Army Capt. Michelle Lunato



**Above, Army 1st Lt. Damon Pipkin, supply and logistics officer, celebrates the end of February and another day closer to redeploying to the United States.**

**Below, Army Col. Chris Kemp, task force commander, and Army Staff Sgt. Eric Pope, Headquarters and Headquarters Company supply noncommissioned officer in charge, take a moment for the camera outside the HHC building.**



**Above, Army Staff Sgt. James Johns, satellite technician at the Joint NetOps Control Center, flashes a smile after a VIP visit in February.**



Right, supply and logistics Soldiers prepare to redeploy to the United States by accomplishing an endless list of tasks, some which require heavy equipment.



Below, Army Spc. Chales Smith, information systems specialist, is caught laughing in formation.



Left, Army Capt. Gervis Carlisle, Headquarters and Headquarters Company commander, takes some notes at the Joint NetOps Control Center before going into a VIP briefing in February.



Left, Army Sgt. Nicholas Lambert, command group driver, builds a number of projects for the 359th Theater Tactical Signal Brigade. Finding a place to work and the supplies to create the projects has always been the challenging part.



# Brigade Highlights:

## Information Assurance and Computer Network Defense Section



Photo Illustration by Army Capt. Michelle Lunato

The Information Assurance and Computer Network Defense (IA/CND) section of the Joint Netops Control Center-Afghanistan (JNCC-A) serves to defend the Combined Joint Operations Area-Afghanistan (CJOA-A) networks against internal and external threats through a risk-balanced approach of employing information assurance controls to maximize confidentiality, integrity, and availability of our warfighting systems. The IA/CND section comprises of military and contractor engineers working together to provide a defense-in-depth security posture consisting network firewalls, web-filtering

proxy servers, and Host Based Security System applications enabling services for approximately 30,000 network users.

By enforcing security policies as designated by the JNCC-A director, brigade commander, and the USFOR-A J6 / Designated Approving Authority (DAA), the IA/CND section successfully defends the CJOA-A networks against 19,000 suspicious cyber events a day and mitigates risks due to unauthorized and malicious use of government systems.

**Air Force Capt. Stan Hashimoto**  
~ IA/CND Director,  
The Lihue, Hawaii native is

currently stationed at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., and working as an IA analyst for the Air Force Operational Test and Evaluation Center. His goal is to keep the bad guys from hacking our networks and to increase his security knowledge base by studying for an upcoming CISSP certification exam. "I appreciate the opportunity of working with great Soldiers, Airmen, and contractors of the brigade and look forward to moving back to sunny beaches and cool frosty beverages after this deployment."

**Army Chief Warrant Officer**

**See IA, page 20**

# Redeployment Is a Process, It Begins at Home - Slowly



Army Capt. Michelle Lunato

Dear friends, families and servicemembers of the 359th TTSB,

He/she is on their way home, what are you feeling? Maybe you are so excited that you innards are jumping out of your skin! Maybe you are so confused that you're not sure which way is up? Maybe you are so bummed or angry that you're not sure which wall to write graffiti on? Maybe you are feeling all of those and maybe you are simply calm as a kitty with a stomach full of fresh milk! Whatever you are feeling there are a couple of things to consider when your Soldier comes home:

**1. It helps to be patient.** Your Soldier may have feelings of confusion or anger, or ex-

citement, or irritableness due to no sleep. Or they may be feeling just plain weird because they haven't seen you for ages and we might feel it's too risky to reach out for a long kiss or a hug. Or, we might feel afraid and think that it's a risk if we don't do those things. Either way, we MIGHT feel a tad bit apprehensive about making the wrong statement or move. Hence, LET LOVE COVER A MULTITUDE OF SINS AND SIMPLY GIVE KINDNESS AND LOVE regardless of how your Soldier behaves.

**2. It helps to not have too many expectations.** Maybe you are expecting at least a big bear hug but without telling you we don't even hug you because we smell like rotten potatoes due to no shower for 48 hours. Maybe you are expecting him/her to come right over to you and love on you and instead he/she sees someone else and gives them a hug first. If it's your man, you can just say to yourself, 'Figures, only a man would do that!' Maybe you are expecting him to help discipline the kids right away and/or take them from you the next day. However, they might have other plans and since you haven't had time to communicate, and they don't get your clues, you might be in for a real

let-down. LOW ON EXPECTATIONS! BE PATIENT.

**3. It helps to remember neither of you can read minds!**

I love to read my wife's mind. I know without a shadow of a doubt that she is thinking that it would be so grand and wonderful for her hubby to go to Home Depot with a blank check and get whatever his little itty bitty heart desires! NOT! She also thinks that I'm thinking wouldn't it be nice to have the freezer stocked with ice cream; NOT! As you listen to your Soldier, paraphrase back some of the things your Soldier is saying when they get back that first week so that they know you are really trying to hear them and understand them.

**4. Focus on what you can control** and don't focus on their behavior and words because they are things that you often have little to no control over.

If you get all tangled up in anger, talk of the D word, looking to binge on something to take away the pain (ice cream is all I know!), then please don't hesitate to call me at 706-228-3015.

God bless you as you reunite with your loved one!

*Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Gary Williams*



# Training Continues Even at War



Photos by Army Capt. Michelle Lunato

**Above, Army Sgt. 1st Class Brent Hamill, plans and operations sergeant, evaluates the target of Spc. Michael Bush, information systems technician of the Enterprise section at the Joint NetOps Control Center. Left, Army Col. Chris Kemp, task force commander, ensures his weapon is clear before firing in the next phase of qualification.**







Above, Army Sgt. Luis Arias, senior information systems sergeant at the Joint NetOps Control Center adjusts his M16 rifle while qualifying at the Bagram Airfield range in February. Below, Army Warrant Officer Clarence P. Toland, network engineer at the Joint NetOps Control Center, takes a little breather from the restraint of his armored vest.



Below left, Army Capt. Anthony Hillmon, battle captain at the Joint NetOps Control Center, loads magazines at the range. Below right, Army Chief Warrant Officer 2 Philip Burns, information systems technician, takes a break.



Top and right, Soldiers fire their pistols while in different positions as part of the qualification phases at the range.





# Promotions



Army Capt. Michelle Lunato

Above, Army Pfc. Jerminthia Smith, command group assistant, is promoted to specialist by her battle buddy, Army Spc. Darcelyn Kimbro, human resources specialist. Right, Army Maj. Jane Tamboli, communications integrator at Forward Operating Base Gardez, is all smiles after being promoted to lieutenant colonel.



Courtesy Photo

## Tips for Handling Conflicts:

After a long separation, it's common to have tensions and disagreements as you get reconnected.

Arguments can make it hard to talk to your partner about deployments. It's important to discuss problems in a way that builds up the relationship instead of tearing it down. Here are some ideas for handling conflicts with a family members:

**Plan ahead.** Schedule time to discuss the problem. This gives both of you time to think about what to say. Find a time when you can talk without distractions.

**Identify your goal.** If your goal is to "win" the argument, your relationship will suffer. Seek an outcome that will satisfy you both. This usually requires compromises from both partners.

**"I" Statements.** When you bring up an issue, don't blame the other person. Blame makes people defensive. Instead, use I statements, telling the other person how you feel. Instead of saying, "you never listen to me," say, "I feel frustrated when you read the newspaper while I'm talking." Instead of saying "That's ridiculous!" say, "I don't understand what you mean. Can you explain it again?"

**Stick to one topic.** Bring up a specific issue that happened. Tell the other person exactly what happened and why it bothered you. Focus on resolving the issue, instead of bringing up other things. Avoid saying "always or never." Instead of saying "You always nag me!" say, "Sometimes I need a few minutes to unwind after work."

See **CONFLICT**, page 18

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# ***Brigade Commander:***

## ***Don't Count the Days ~ Make the Days Count***



Army Capt. Michelle Lunato

Dear Task  
Force Thunder  
Team and  
Families,

Now that we  
are in our finally  
stretch of the  
deployment, we  
can see the light  
at the end of the

tunnel. It has been a long deployment  
for all of us.

Whether you are part of the Army,  
Air Force, Marines, a Department of  
Defense Civilian, our contracted force  
or our families back home, your efforts  
have been invaluable.

Each of you, whether in Afghani-  
stan or on the home front, has played a  
critical role in supporting our country's  
efforts in assisting our Afghan partners  
in building a better place for them to  
live. Have no doubt in your minds, a  
large part of the success and history we  
have written is credited to you as indi-  
viduals and as part of the larger team. I  
do not say it enough, but thank you for  
your continued focused efforts.

As we prepare to go home, I ask all  
of you to think SAFETY. There is a lot  
to be done in the last few weeks here in  
country and back at home as you pre-  
pare to receive us. TF team – Please,

complete all those last minute projects  
and urgent tasks that will pop up.

Prepare to hand over a well-orga-  
nized section and plan to your replace-  
ments. Give them all you wish you had  
received upon arriving here.

Families – Please, prepare for our  
arrival by studying reintegration chal-  
lenges and be prepared to assist us upon  
our arrival. Be able to express how  
things may have changed, and if there  
are adjustments to our roles prior to de-  
ployment.

I am extremely proud of each and  
every one of you. There have been a  
number of accomplishments here that  
will be hard for our replacements to rep-  
licate. A very high bar has been set, and  
I couldn't be more proud.

Yes, there have been stumbles  
along the way but that is part of every  
worthwhile effort in life. What matters  
is we have learned from those mistakes  
and still accomplished the tasks we set  
out to complete. *Overall, as a team, we  
have been extremely successful and con-  
tributed greatly in support of Operation  
Enduring Freedom.*

With redeployment literally around  
the corner, I ask you to hang in there,  
and finish strong. Don't count the days,  
but make the days count.

Privileged to serve each and every  
one of you,

*Col. Chris Kemp*  
359th TTSB Commander



# Celebrating March Birthdays



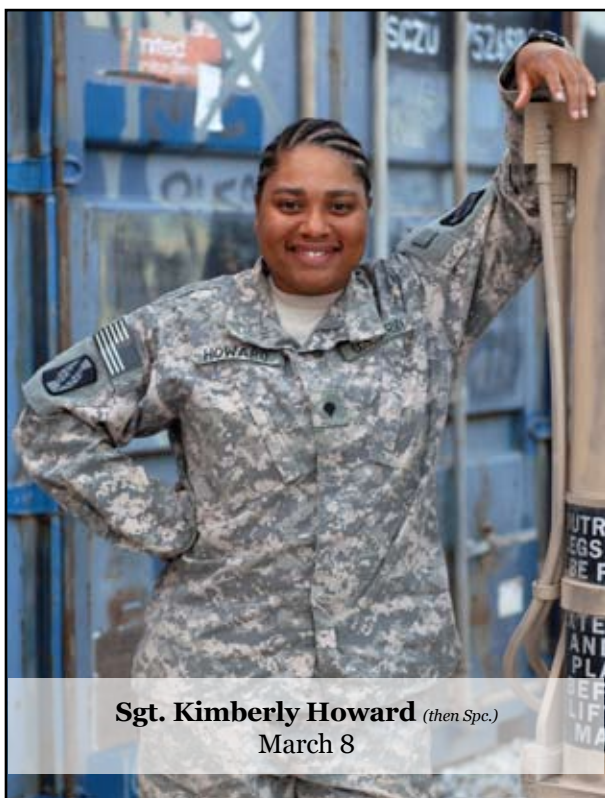
**Maj. Benjamin Stevens**  
March 14



**Spc. Mardriquez Gantt**  
March 23



**Spc. Courtney Simmons**  
March 1



**Sgt. Kimberly Howard** (then Spc.)  
March 8

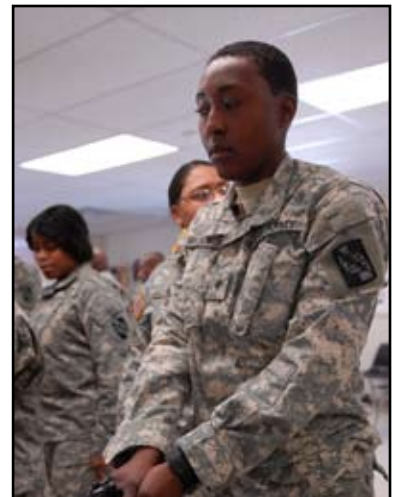


**Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas David**  
March 13





**Master Sgt. Denis Lugo**  
March 8



**Spec. Courtesia Wilson**  
March 25



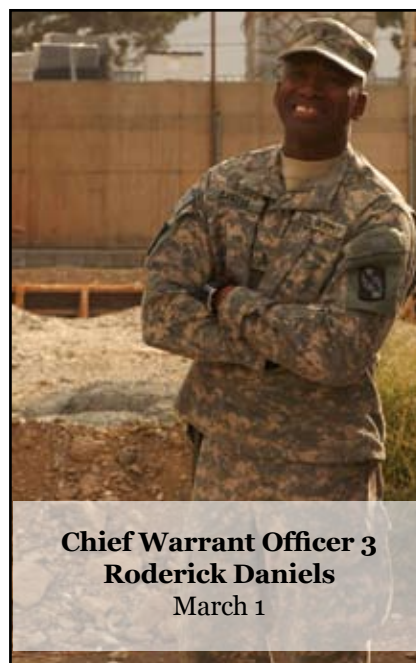
**Spec. Kimika Blakely**  
March 24



**Lt. Col. Robert Drummer**  
March 17



**Capt. Hampton Culp**  
March 20



**Chief Warrant Officer 3  
Roderick Daniels**  
March 1



**Spec. Candid Surry**  
March 26



# Soldier, Father Gives Back To Community

**By Army Capt. Michelle Lunato**

Every year, more than 21 million babies worldwide are born prematurely or with a serious birth defect. And more than four million of those children will die before their fifth birthday.

For some deployed servicemembers, these numbers are unacceptable, and instead of using their free time in Afghanistan to relax, they are finding a way to help reduce those statistics from overseas.

The rate of premature infants is not just a deplorable number; it is personal, said Charlotte, N.C. resident Army Capt. Roderick A. Vinson, project manager for the future operations section of the Joint NetOps Control Center, which is commanded by the 359th Theater Tactical Signal Brigade. "I have twin boys who were born premature and spent five to six weeks in the hospital." At birth, his boys weighed only 2.9 and 3.1 pounds. "It was a very stressful time for my wife while I was deployed," said Vinson.

The twin boys, who are now 4-year-olds, are doing fine and in-the-clear, he said. "Now, you would never know they were premature. They are little monsters," Vinson explained with a laugh.

With his family safely growing, Vinson decided it was time to give thanks to the organization that provided such a priceless gift. "[My boys] benefited from the advances in technology in treating premature babies, thanks to the effort of The March of Dimes."

Vinson's plan to give back to the organization included coordinating an event to raise awareness and funds for March of Dimes/March for Babies at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. The March 4 event was held at the Green Bean Coffee Shop and included music, games, and information about the March of Dimes' efforts. Deployed servicemembers informed coffee patrons, while civilian contractors collected donations.

Though the Bagram March of Dimes' event varied from some the events in the states, it had the same goal, and the participants reflected the multi-national effort at Bagram. Everyone from French Soldiers to U.S. servicemembers to Polish Special Forces were out in support. The deployed environment doesn't seem to hamper people's desire to support a cause, and events like this, also give people a tie back to life at home, said a base Morale, Welfare and Recreation employee.

Vinson's wife, Keshia, who has participated in prior March of Dimes' events in the states, said it is really extraordinary for

**See GIVING, page 19**



# VALENTINE'S DAY PRAYER BREAKFAST To Embrace Love - It must be understood



Photos by Army Capt. Michelle Lunato

Above, Task Force Thunder Chaplain Army Lt. Col. Gary Williams leads the prayer at the Valentine's Day Prayer Breakfast at the Dragon dining facility. Below, Air Force Lt. Col. James Loux, engineering and installation team commander, follows along with the prayer breakfast reading with other Task Force Thunder servicemembers and contractors.



Above, Jessica Puglisi, a Human Terrain analyst, leads the song at the Valentine's Day Prayer Breakfast. The topic of the sermon covered what was love and how can it be shown and given.





# More Signs of Redeployment

## Air Force Team Rotates, Advanced Party Leaves



Photos by Army Capt. Michelle Lunato

Above, the Air Force team shows off their excitement with the VTC manager, Ahmad Chidiac, about redeploying home. Below, the 359th Theater Tactical Signal Brigade advance party was also honored at the Air Force's redeployment celebration as they were leaving a few days later.



Above, Army Col. Chris Kemp, task force commander, tells the crowd at the redeployment ceremony how much the Air Force team contributed to the signal mission in Afghanistan, and just how much their efforts made a difference in the writing of history.





Right, Air Force Maj. Vincent Smits, officer in charge of the NetOps section at the Joint NetOps Control Center, reacts to Army Lt. Col. John H. Phillips', plans and operations officer in charge and JNCC director, farewell send off to the Air Force team at the redeployment ceremony. Below, Air Force Capt. Laura Dalton, NetOps battle captain at the JNCC, accepts her 'Selective Hearing Impairment' Award with a smile.



Right, Air Force Senior Master Sgt. Carl Thompson, engineering noncommissioned officer in charge, speaks to the crowd on behalf of the Air Force team.

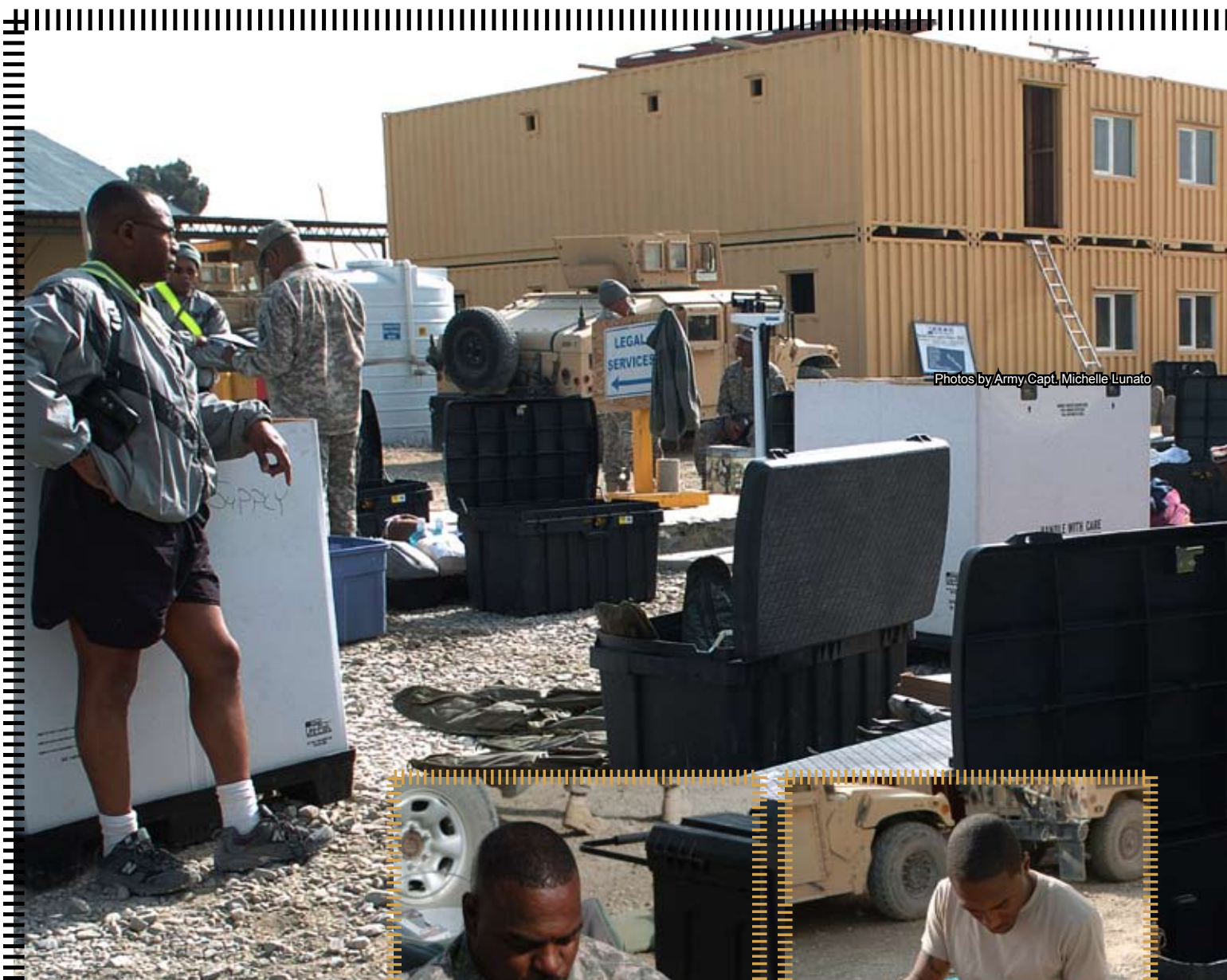


Left, Air Force Capt. Stan Hashimoto, information assurance and computer network defense officer in charge, and 1st Lt. Matthew Takanen, Enterprise deputy officer in charge, both of the JNCC, play a fierce game of foosball prior to the redeployment ceremony.





# While Waiting for Customs...



Photos by Army Capt. Michelle Lunato

Above, Soldiers with the 359th Theater Tactical Signal Brigade, lay out all their belongings for the customs Soldiers to inspect prior to them being shipped home.

Photos by Army Capt. Michelle Lunato

Right, Army Chief Warrant Officer 2 Jovar McKellar, network management technician, keeps occupied with his phone. Far right, Army Spc. Michael Bush, information systems technician, reads the latest military news.







Right, Army Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Wallen, plans and operations sergeant, takes a little nap and soaks up a bit of sun. Middle right, Army Sgt. Jacob Riffe, intel analyst, shows off his results from hours at the gym.



Above, Army Chief Warrant Officer 2 Cynthia Thomas, enterprise system administrator, and Army Spc. Jessica Jones, mechanic, practice their smiles for their families.





# Off Work, On the Court

## Task Force Thunder Shows They Still Have Game



Left, Army Spc. Mardriquez Gantt, enterprise technician, works the court as part of the Task Force Thunder Basketball Team. Soldiers and Airmen from the task force made up a team and played other task force teams at the Bagram Airfield gym as part of the Morale, Recreation and Welfare program.

Army Capt. Michelle Lunato

### CONFLICT, from page 8

*Stay calm:* When you get upset, you're less likely to think clearly, and you're more likely to say things that don't help the situation. Stay calm, and you'll be better able to solve the problem.

To stay calm, take breaks during the discussion. Practice relaxing by counting to 10, breathing slowly, or taking a brief walk to relieve tension. Be sure to tell your partner if you need a short break from the conversation so it doesn't seem like you're walking away.

*No "below the belt" shots.* Shouting, name-calling, foul language, threats, and sarcasm usually make arguments worse and make it harder to find common ground.

### Safety Tidbits: Did you know?

- There are more Soldier deaths each year from personal vehicles (sedans being the lead vehicle) than any other accidental cause.
- SUV/truck/van accident fatalities nearly tripled during the hours of 6 p.m. to midnight-more than any other time period of the day.
- Motorcycle accident fatalities continue to be among the leading cause of Soldier fatalities.
- Upon redeployment, excessive use of alcohol can be a warning sign of distress, increase the risk of accidents and decrease the opportunity to communicate with family.
- It may take a week or two for your Soldier to adjust back to the time zone in the states. And with the family keyed up for the homecoming, everyone's sleep may be off. Realize the need for sleep and the possible unintended consequences of everyone running on fumes.
- When traveling, use TRiPS, a free web-based planning tool, to help examine and reduce the risk for your family.

*For more information on how to keep your family and Soldier safe, go to <https://crc.army.mil>.*



## GIVING, cont'd from pg 12

the families and Soldiers to be able to combine efforts, even with thousands of miles between them. "Even while they are deployed, called to answer one of the toughest jobs in America, they are finding a way to support a great organization that supports our communities."

To make this happen, Vinson recruited unit comrades and Greek "brothers and sisters," both in and outside of Afghanistan, to help out. His first step was to reach out to Alpha Kappa Alpha sister, LaRonda Scott, for information and support. Scott, who is the Eastern Carolina Division director for the March of Dimes, said her team has such heartfelt thanks to the deployed troops who want to lend a hand. "We are absolutely thrilled and honored that the servicemembers want to be involved in the March for Babies."

However, working with people abroad is not a new idea to the March of Dimes, said Scott. "Since 1998, we have partnered with local organizations in 33 developing countries on four continents to improve the health and care of babies through professional education, public awareness and strengthening parent organizations."

For Keshia, the organization's mission reflects her own motivation to stay regularly involved. "Participating in this event allows me to share my personal experience and bring awareness that for the average woman, many deliver full-term normal healthy babies, but everyone is not so fortunate."

The organization spon-

sors research focused on better understanding, and eventually, preventing, birth defects, premature birth, and infant mortality, said Kamin Brennan, March for Babies director. "The March of Dimes is addressing the above problems from all angles: from funding life-saving research to getting laws signed that will im-



Army Capt. Michelle Lunato

**Army Capt. Roderick Vinson, project manager for the future operations section of the JNCC, thanks the first person to donate at the March of Dimes event he coordinated at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. St. Louis, Mo. resident Army Spc. Bryan Neil, a plans and operations specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Battery of the 101st Airborne Division, said it was important to him to donate since he was born premature, and it was only right to give back.**

prove health care for women and babies. We educate to empower moms-to-be, and are there to support families affected by premature birth."

After having seen these efforts first hand, Vinson said he can't imagine not supporting this cause, regardless of where he is. "I do not believe people fully appreciate how special children

are, and the struggles people have to not only have them but to keep them healthy. March of Dimes helps to provide this special gift to parents."

Protecting those treasured gifts is our way of providing community service, said fellow supporter and Greek brother, S. Howard Hunt, network operations senior configuration manager at the JNCC, 359th TTSB. And when you're deployed, the base is your community, one that you must still support, he said. "This is our community, and we need to support it in every way possible."

For Soldiers who are already fighting the war on terrorism, aiding in the battle to help future generations just makes sense, said Army Spc. Courtesia Wilson, supply specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 359th TTSB. "Although we are making sacrifices by risking our lives to make a difference for our country, it all ties in with taking a moment to raise money so that we can make a difference in babies' lives forever as well."

*For more information on the March of Dimes, go to [www.marchofdimes.com](http://www.marchofdimes.com).*

*To donate to a United Effort for Babies, go to <http://www.marchforbabies.org/> ravinson Captain Vinson and his wife plan on participating in the April 30 March of Dimes event in Charlotte, N.C. to continue to raise funds for March of Dimes/March for Babies.*

*To find a March of Dimes event near you, go to [www.marchforbabies.org](http://www.marchforbabies.org).*





Army Capt. Michelle Lunato

Army Sgt. Shauna Phillips, human resources sergeant; Sgt. Melissa Gray, enterprise technician; and Spc. Christine Awkward, human resources specialist; enjoy the moment at the Joint NetOps Control Center after a VIP visit in February - another day closer to home.

## IA, from page 4

**2 Philip Burns** ~ *information systems technician*, The Massachusetts resident enjoys technology/security, home projects and repair, spending time in New Hampshire with family, and physical fitness/biking-home gym with speed bag, heavy bag, treadmill, weights, pull-up bar, good music system and a kitty litter box. Burns' family includes: his wife, Linda; two daughters, Jessica and Diana, and a son, Christopher.

**Army Master Sgt. Carolyn Suazo** ~ *noncommissioned officer in charge*, "I've been in the military for 23 years (and counting) and have been fortunate enough to do a lot of traveling during my career (HAWAII, Korea, Germany, Thailand, The Philippines, American Samoa, Palau, Australia and now, Afghanistan). I'm married to my wonderful husband, Steve, and I have an 18-year-old son whom I'm VERY proud of, whose a freshman in college right now.

I've been in communications my whole career: 31M, 31D, 31R, 25W5M, 25E5S9. I've had the privilege of being the 820th's first sergeant prior to coming here with the brigade, and have even been able to see my 820th Soldiers come into Theater. I've meet a lot of strong leaders and I've made a few lifelong friends (maybe 1 or 2). My interests and hobbies include: diving, surfing, camping, fishing, and working on home projects. GO BILLS!! (Yes, I'm a die hard Buffalo Bills fan, too!)"

**Air Force Tech. Sgt. Gary Maldonado** ~ *vulnerability alert lead*, Maldonado has been serving in the Air Force for 16 years. His wife, Melinda, is also in the military, and together, they have two children, Elizabeth, 8, and David, 6. "#1 Houston Texans fan and extremely good looking," he added.

**Air Force Tech. Sgt. Brad Schafer** ~ *Blue Coat engineer*, The 16-year veteran says he joined the Air Force, "because

I wasn't ready for college." His wife has also served for 19 years. Their daughter Makayla is 12. "My goal here was to complete at least two college classes and study for E-7 promotion...so far on schedule. Texans suck, GO BEARS!"

**Air Force Senior Airman Moises Hernandez** ~ *security officer*, Hernandez says he is looking forward to his hobbies of games, researching technology, and off roading with loud music when he redeploys. His wife, Monica Morales, and two children, Gabriel Hernandez and Alexys Hernandez, await his return.

**Mr. David Klunk** ~ *network defense Bluecoat Proxy engineer*, Th retired Navy E-6 resides in Jacksonville, Fla., where he currently works for DRS technologies. He will be deployed to Afghanistan for six months. Klunk has two sons, Mitchell, 13, and Kyle, 17. "I enjoy playing drums, scuba diving, working on cars and drag racing.



# Recognized by Top Leaders...



Left, Army Spc. Christine Awkward, human resource specialist, is recognized by Army Maj. Gen. Timothy P. McHale, deputy commanding general-support, U.S. Forces Afghanistan, for all her hard work and progress over the deployment.



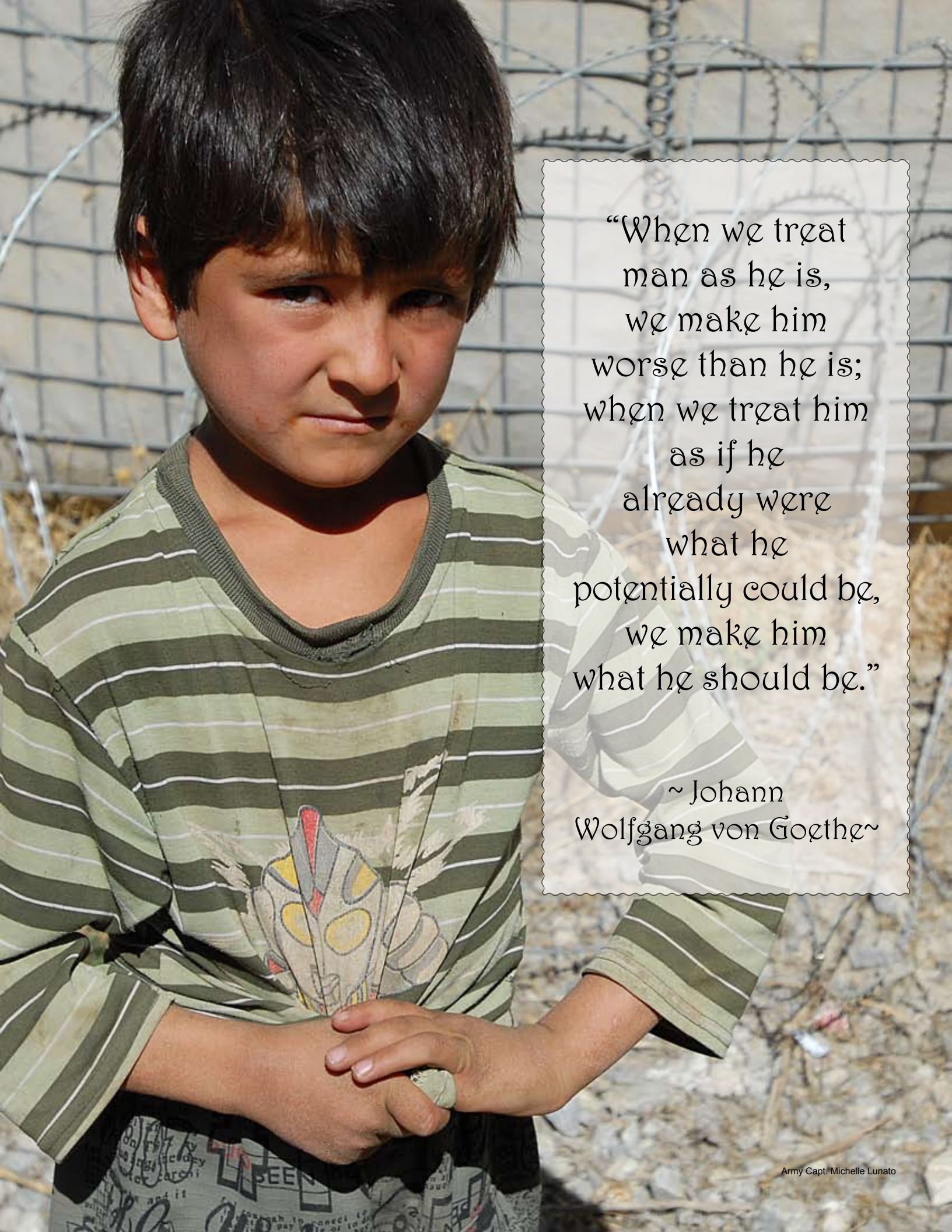
Right, Army Spc. Courtney Simmons, supply specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, meets Army Maj. Gen. Jennifer L. Napier, the NETCOM commander, during her visit to Bagram Airfield.



Left, Army Staff Sgt. Benjamin Outley, personnel noncommissioned officer in charge, greets the NETCOM command sergeant major, Command Sgt. Maj. Gerald W. Williams, during his tour of the Task Force Thunder headquarters at Bagram Airfield.

Photos by Army Capt. Michelle Lunato





“When we treat  
man as he is,  
we make him  
worse than he is;  
when we treat him  
as if he  
already were  
what he  
potentially could be,  
we make him  
what he should be.”

~ Johann  
Wolfgang von Goethe ~