

A full-page photograph of a soldier in silhouette, walking away from the camera on a snowy road at night. The road is illuminated by streetlights, and the soldier's boots are visible in the snow. The title 'FREEDOM WATCH' is overlaid in large red letters, with 'AFGHANISTAN' in smaller white letters below it.

# FREEDOM WATCH

AFGHANISTAN

Most dangerous road

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Red Bulls help protect  
Afghanistan border

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Soldier's Medal  
awarded

APRIL 2011



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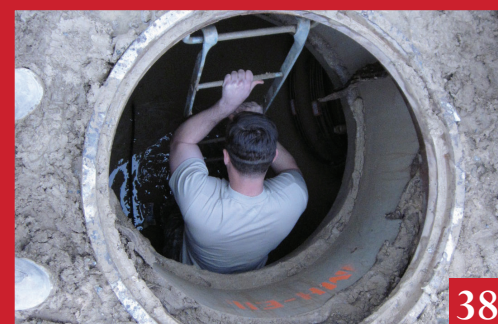
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COMMANDER, 17TH PAD  
EXECUTIVE EDITOR  
CAPT. KENNETH STEWART

MANAGING EDITOR  
STAFF SGT. MICHAEL SPARKS

LAYOUT EDITOR  
SGT. DAVID HOUSE

FIELD REPORTER  
SPC. ADAM L. MATHIS

STAFF WRITER  
SGT. DEREK NELSON

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*Commander, CJTF-101 and  
Regional Command-East  
Maj. Gen. John F. Campbell*

*Public Affairs Director,  
CJTF-101 and  
Regional Command-East  
Lt. Col. Patrick Seiber*

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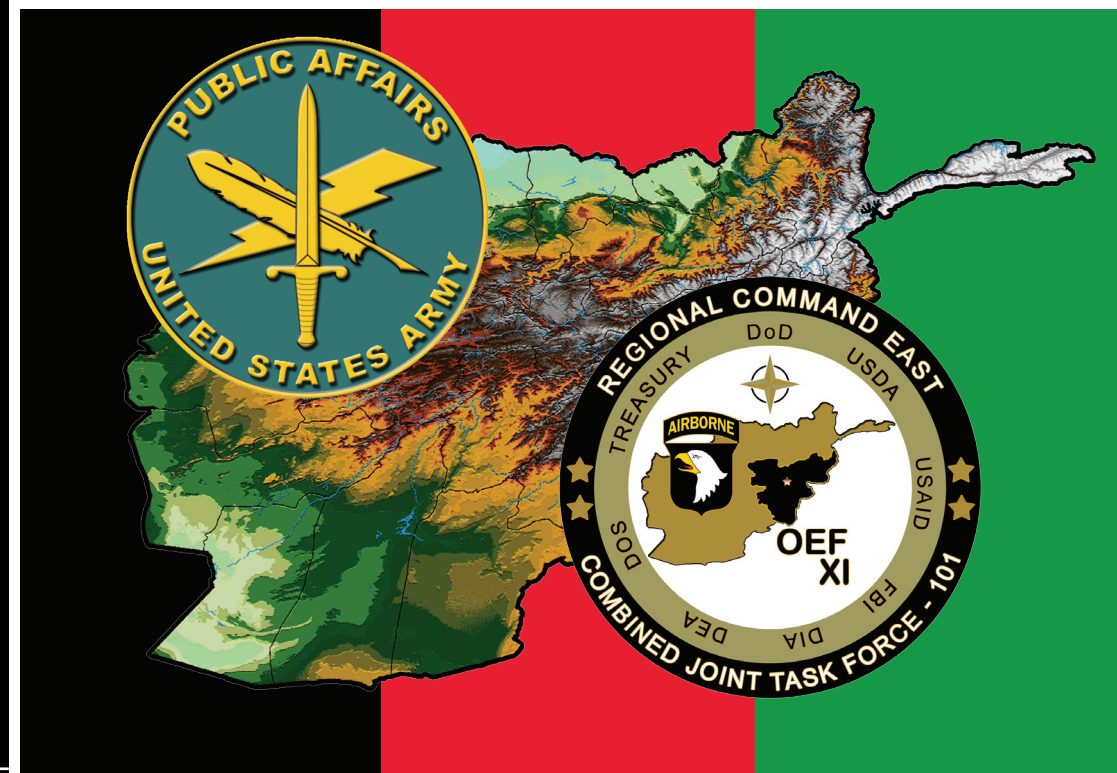
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*(Cover photo)* As the snow falls, U.S. Army Spc. David A. Brooks, a chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear specialist from Virginia Beach, Va., assigned to Forward Support Company G, 2nd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, Task Force Balls, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, provides security during a recent convoy in eastern Afghanistan's Nangarhar Province Feb. 28. The convoy from Jalalabad to Bagram Airfield took more than 12 hours. (Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Mark Burrell, Task Force Bastogne Public Affairs)





A 1430th Engineer Company's horizontal construction vehicle grades the land in preparation for the next step in road repairs. The 1430th Engineers and the 744th Engineer Company, 54th Engineer Battalion, in cooperation with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and Afghan National Security Forces, tear up and rebuild the routes in eastern Afghanistan's Khogyani and Sherzad Districts. (Courtesy photo)

## Soldiers rebuild damaged roads

Story by U.S. Army Spc. Richard Daniels Jr.  
Task Force Bastogne Public Affairs

Engineers attached to 1st Brigade Combat Team, Task Force Bastogne, 101st Airborne Division, in cooperation with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and Afghan National Security Forces began the process of rebuilding damaged roads in the Khogyani and Sherzad districts of Nangarhar Province in early February.

The process begins by tearing up the old surfaces damaged by frequent roadside bombs. The damaged roads made travel to Jalalabad difficult for those living in the area.

The job of tearing up the old road falls to U.S. Army Capt. Jason Rolling of Marquette, Mich., commander of the 1430th Engineer Company. In addition to offloading equipment, his team also looks for and removes command wires or detonation cord that could be attached to old improvised explosive devices.

"That's the intent of this ripping, to get

down deep enough to find these wires, to find this (detonation) cord ... rip it all up ... grade it back out ... and pack it all down," Rolling said.

Horizontal construction engineers with 1430th Eng. Co. and the 744th Engineer Company, 54th Engineer Battalion, perform route-clearance patrols and complete the road repair while security is provided by Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 61st Cavalry Regiment, Task Force Panther, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 101st Abn. Div., also attached to 1st BCT.

That cooperation and combined effort are a big part of the project, according to U.S. Army Lt. Col. William B. Johnson of Bristol, Tenn., Task Force Panther squadron commander.


The approximately \$5 million effort includes six projects spanning the nearly 43 kilometers between the two districts — three asphalt and three cobblestone.

"The local people have already expressed appreciation for the work we're doing," said Johnson. "They are very excited about having a better road that will

hold up in the rainy season, that won't wash out, that'll prevent insurgents from putting bombs in the road, so it's safer for (travelers)."

The Afghan National Police and Afghan National Army will provide security on the road with checkpoints, patrols and continued interaction with the locals.

"In addition, police in the Memla area will continue to do local patrols and provide security in the area when the roadwork is finished and continue to over watch the route while the Afghan contractors come in to do the long-term paving," he continued. "We will rely upon them to provide security for the local Afghan contractors that do the improvements to the route."

"I'm also proud to have such motivated and dedicated Afghan forces to partner with, to take responsibility for their own security in this area and improve things for their own people," said Johnson. "They are a great team, great partners to work with, and I look forward to continuing to work with them." 

## Soldiers' ingenuity keeps airfield clear of ice

Story by U.S. Army Pfc. Michael Syner  
10th Combat Aviation Brigade

Task Force Knighthawk Soldiers' ingenuity was tested at Forward Operating Base Shank in December when it became apparent there was a need to remove ice from the runway.

"We realized we needed something to get rid of ice just before it started to snow," said U.S. Army Spc. Lee Hough, a wheeled-vehicle mechanic with Company E, TF Knighthawk, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, and a native of Rumford, Maine.

While the Soldiers could have waited until the Army provided them with a de-icer, a piece of machinery designed to remove ice quickly, waiting may have impeded missions being conducted at the base.

"If we had waited for the Army to provide one and it didn't make it here on time, then we wouldn't have been able to clear runways as efficiently," said U.S. Army Spc. Robert Benson, also a wheeled-vehicle mechanic with Co. E, and a native of St. Claire, Mo.

The Soldiers and their leaders put their heads together to figure out a feasible design for a homemade de-icer.

"As soon as I found out that we'd have to make it, we brainstormed on what would be the most effective way to make the de-icer," Benson said.

Using parts they could scrounge on the FOB and a maintenance kit, the team was able to create a functioning de-icer out of a water buffalo, a military water trailer.

"The water buffalo is filled with de-icer fluid and gets pressurized from a truck's air system," Benson said. "On the rear of the buffalo is a pipe that was fabricated with 60 drilled holes in the bottom, to disperse the liquid in a 10-foot-wide spray pattern."

Despite their lack of experience, the crew was able complete the project in short order.

"It took a couple days of work," said U.S. Army Spc. Mark Goodroe Jr., a fellow wheel-vehicle mechanic with Co. E, TF Knighthawk, 10th CAB, and a native of Angleton, Texas.

The project brought the entire motor pool platoon together and allowed everyone to contribute.

"It was a good platoon effort," Hough said. "Everyone chipped in with painting and other parts in assembly." 



(Top) A Soldier from Company E, Task Force Knighthawk, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, demonstrates how de-icing fluid flows through the holes of a fabricated pipe before de-icing the runway at Forward Operating Base Shank. Soldiers of Co. E, TF Knighthawk, constructed the de-icer from an Army water trailer this winter to remove ice from the runway at the FOB. (Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Janell Emerson, Task Force Knighthawk)  
(Bottom) The runway at Forward Operating Base Shank is de-iced with a collaboration made with an Army water trailer by Soldiers of Company E, Task Force Knighthawk, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, 10th Mountain Division. (Photo courtesy of David Guarino)





## BASTOGNE SOLDIERS NAVIGATE 'MOST DANGEROUS ROAD IN AFGHANISTAN'

Story and photos by U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Mark Burrell  
Task Force Bastogne Public Affairs

Tortured mountains and skeletal vehicles litter the pock-marked Jalalabad-Kabul highway as it snakes its way along the Kabul Gorge between the Hindu Kush Mountains.

-continued page 6





U.S. Army Sgt. Rickey D. Cupp, a service and recovery sergeant from Albertville, Ala., assigned to Forward Support Company G, 2nd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, Task Force Balls, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, ground guides a wrecker back toward a Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicle with a flat tire during a recent convoy in eastern Afghanistan. The Soldiers traveled on what *The New York Times* dubbed as one of the most dangerous roads in Afghanistan.

As the last leg of the famed Grand Trunk Highway, it is an essential route for caravans heading into Afghanistan's capital city of Kabul.

Late Feb. 28, it was an essential route for Soldiers from Forward Support Company G, 2nd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, Task Force Balls, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, escorting a convoy through the shadow of the mountains.

"I had faith in our guys' ability," said U.S. Army Capt. Jose M. Gamboa, Co. G commander. "The whole unknown of what we were about to go through, you really couldn't describe it to somebody and have them grasp the whole magnitude of what we were facing."

The highway's hairpin turns and sharp drops contrast the natural beauty of the surrounding mountains.

Dubbed the most dangerous road in Afghanistan by *The New York Times*, the tension mounted with the elevation as the convoy pressed on.

Vehicles ignored posted speed limit signs and gravity as snow began to fall, making the roads slippery and even more unpredictable.

"The Afghan driver is a greedy type of driver with everyone jockeying for position as if it were a horse race," added Gamboa, who is from Crestview, Fla. "That type of mentality makes it difficult to drive."

After passing a burned-out vehicle, the convoy rounded the first hairpin turn and it became clear that these Soldiers were in for a long haul.

"You're talking about an operator driving an extremely heavy vehicle in extreme conditions," explained Gamboa.

"Once we got to that first hairpin, we saw the lights up on the mountain, not knowing where the road was or who was up there, not knowing the tightness of the curves... It starts to hit you."

With just about 7 feet to maneuver past gridlocked trucks hugging the side of the mountain, there isn't much room for error.

The cliffs dropped off into complete darkness as the vehicles slowly made their way up the mountainside.

"Most of my guys have multiple deployments. For some of them, it's their first deployment," said Gamboa, "but my guys have seen a lot and experienced a lot in the past 11 months to help them navigate those tight spots."

The Co. G Soldiers' mission was to escort seven Afghan trucks carrying supplies from the realignment of the Pech



U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Kevin J. Stanfield (left), a platoon sergeant from Walkerville, Mich., and U.S. Army Spc. Damian C. Caldino, a food service specialist from Oxnard, Calif., both assigned to Forward Support Company G, 2nd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, Task Force Balls, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, pull security as Jinga trucks pass behind them, during a recent convoy in eastern Afghanistan.

River Valley bases from Jalalabad Airfield back to Bagram Airfield via Kabul.

Just then, the convoy reached a dark tunnel about 300 meters long and the Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicles couldn't go any further. The tunnel was packed with stalled trucks.

"It was the longest tunnel of the route," Gamboa said. "That was the decision point. Our MRAPs are wide and bulky. The Jinga trucks didn't pull all the way to the side, because if they have a high load, then they'll scrape the top of the tunnel."

Taking decisive action, while always mindful of a Taliban ambush, the Soldiers dismounted their MRAPs to coax the sleeping trucks out of hibernation.

"They went to the other side of the tunnel and told them to back up and hug the side of the tunnel," said Gamboa. "Then at the entrance portion, they had pushed them forward."

"A little nerve-wracking isn't it?" said U.S. Army 1st Lt. Todd C. Castles, a platoon leader from Greenwood, S.C. "A lot of these trucks, I don't see how they're going to make it."

With a cacophony of horns, Pashtu, Dari and English, the trucks slowly were repositioned in order to make room for the convoy to squeeze through.

After a precious half hour slipped by, emerging from the tunnel was a small victory.

Yet, the jagged drop and crumbling infrastructure of the road up ahead didn't spell relief for the Soldiers just yet.

"It's OK to be scared but, more or less, it's how you handle it," said Castles. "You can see down the cliff and there's no end in sight... None of the other roads we've traveled are this slim."

Hulking MRAP tires squeaked over the asphalt while skirting the edge of the road.

"Some of the turns are real tough, the terrain is real rough," explained U.S. Army Spc. Tommy J. Porter, a light-wheeled vehicle mechanic from Warren, Mich. "I probably had a couple of inches on either side from smashing into the Jinga trucks."

Porter, driving a heavy expanded mobility tactical truck wrecker, maneuvered one of the heaviest vehicles on the road. Squeezing between the Afghan trucks pushed against the mountain and the deadly fall of the steep cliffs, Porter had a unique perspective.

"When I'm making tight turns, our cab was going over the side of the mountain," said Porter. "Our wrecker has its wheels

behind the cab, so my wheels are actually still on the mountain while my cab is looking over the edge."


Zigzagging back and forth up to about 5,000 feet, the convoy slowly crested the mountain, leaving behind the other vehicles to fend for themselves as the fog descended.

"The weather is pretty cold, pretty crappy, there's snow everywhere," said Castles. "We're moving at 5 mph. Also, we're all pretty tired, 'cause we've been up close to 24 hours. The road sucks, it's muddy with lots of bumps."

After more than 12 hours of driving, the Soldiers finally turned off the highway toward the security of Bagram Airfield.

"I don't even know if there's a word for how tired I am," said Castles over the drone of his MRAP. "You can't really quit, you get to the point where you want to, but you can't until we get inside the FOB. It's a weird feeling."

Safely inside Bagram Airfield, the Soldiers said goodbye to their Afghan trucks and headed for hot chow and sleep.

The very next day, they played cards, napped and did maintenance on their trucks preparing for the long ride back through the most dangerous road in Afghanistan. 



# Red Bulls help protect Afghanistan border

Story and photos by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Ryan C. Matson

Task Force Red Bulls Public Affairs Office

The scene at Torkham Gate in eastern Afghanistan the morning of March 7 was comparable to that of a city at rush hour in the United States.

Dozens of small cars were intermixed in a long line of heavily decorated, colorful Jinga trucks that stretched about a mile from the zero line - the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

In the middle of the traffic, a handful of Soldiers from the Iowa National Guard's 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division, Task Force Red Bulls. The Soldiers, from Company B, 1st Battalion, 133rd Infantry Regiment, were helping the Afghan Border Police, Afghan Customs Police and the National Directorate of Safety, keep order at the gate.

Though the infantry Soldiers may not be participating in the ground-pounding, door-kicking missions they envisioned for the deployment, they appreciate the undertaking.

"I enjoy working with the Afghan forces," said U.S. Army Sgt. Casey Ketelson, an infantry team leader from Osage, Iowa, with Co. B, 1st Bn., 133rd Inf.

He said Soldiers can use the information they collect to catch insurgent traffickers and other wanted persons should they try to sneak through by working closely with NDS, the Afghan intelligence force. The Afghan agencies help the Soldiers identify certain types of vehicles and people that could be harboring illegal or dangerous items.

About 10,000 people and 1,000 to 2,000 vehicles cross the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan daily at Torkham Gate. Everything from trucks loaded with hundreds of chickens, to people carrying dead relatives who wanted to be buried on the other side of the border, travel through the gate.

Co. B's Soldiers help manage the traffic by assisting in various capacities at the gate from security over watch to biometrics collection to vehicle security.

Soldiers help their Afghan counterparts direct vehicles through the checkpoint and randomly select vehicles to be searched to ensure they are not carrying contraband or other dangerous materials into the country.

In addition to watching the vehicles, the Soldiers watch the pedestrians and ensure they don't walk into vehicle traffic.



An Afghan Border Patrol police officer searches a bag in a boy's wheelbarrow on the pedestrian walkway March 7 at Torkham Gate on the Afghanistan border.

"We try to get pedestrians out of the vehicle routes or else they plug up traffic and we can't get much accomplished," said U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Thomas Boge, an infantry squad leader and the day's sergeant of the guard for Co. B, 1st Bn., 133rd Inf., and an Allison, Iowa, native.

Soldiers working with ABP, also monitor the pedestrian walkway, from both overhead observation posts afoot.

U.S. Army Spc. Chris Linssen, an infantryman from Cedar Rapids, Iowa, said Soldiers provided extra security by having an overhead vantage point.

"We'll watch the (pedestrians) coming in for anything that stands out or doesn't look right," Linssen said.

In addition to physical security, biometric information is collected on people transiting the border.

"This is the only job I've ever done here," said U.S. Army Spc. Nathan Valentine. "Other platoons may enter a higher number of people into the system, but we're more selective about the types of people we enter."

He said the Soldiers work closely with their Afghan counterparts when choosing individuals to enter into the system. To aid in security, the Afghan government is implementing a national identification card and fingerprinting system, which is also enforced at the gate.

The Soldiers said their biggest obstacle is dealing with the monotony of the job.

After a week at the gate they switch to another duty, such as forward operating base defense, for a week.

"We try to rotate the Soldiers out between stations to keep them fresh," Ketelson said.

Linssen said people from many countries, not just Afghanistan and Pakistan, cross the gate with a variety of items. He said the line begins forming before the gate is open.

"At 6 a.m. there will be people crowding on the Pakistan side of the border like they're waiting in line at Walmart on Black Friday," Linssen said.

The Soldiers said they have found items on people entering the gate such as hashish, improperly packaged food goods or items on which people haven't paid taxes. When items like those are found, the ACP seizes them.

**About 10,000 people and 1,000 to 2,000 vehicles cross the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan daily at Torkham Gate.**



The Soldiers said they are not fooling themselves to think they are catching all the contraband coming through the gate. After all, the gate is not the only way to enter the country, simply the most convenient. But they said they do know that every piece of contraband or person they do get could potentially mean a life saved somewhere in the country.

Besides the reward of helping to secure the gate, the Soldiers said there are other perks to working at Torkham Gate. For U.S. Army Spc. Michael Stuart, an infantryman from Anamosa, Iowa, it is getting to sample some of the Afghan food sold by the many vendors in the area.

"This is definitely a perk. The food is great here," Stuart said with a smile as he loaded some lamb, rice and a piece of pan bread onto a plate for lunch. 🍽️

(Top) A Soldier with the 34th Infantry Division's 2nd Brigade Combat Team speaks with an Afghanistan truck driver at Torkham Gate.

(Right) U.S. Army Spc. John Meyer, left, from Iowa City, Iowa, and Spc. Chris Linssen, center, from Cedar Rapids, Iowa, both infantrymen with Company B, 1st Battalion, 133rd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division, Task Force Red Bulls, watch the pedestrian walkway with an Afghan Border Police dog handler, right, at Torkham Gate.







U.S. Army Spc. Anthony Collins of Arlington, Texas, explains to the Afghan National Army how to keep a kitchen clean at the American dining facility at Forward Operating Base Lightning.

## Preventive medicine team combats bacteria

Story and photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. Christopher Hummel  
Public Affairs Advisory Team-East

Infectious disease accounts for the largest number of non-combat-related casualties in the Afghan National Army. The 71st Medical Detachment field sanitation team out of Grafenwoehr, Germany, is doing its part to remedy this while teaching at Forward Operating Base Thunder.

U.S. Army Spc. Anthony Collins of Arlington, Texas, a sanitation trainer, works with Afghan soldiers to demonstrate the relationship between sanitary conditions and illness.

“There is just a fundamental difference in hygiene culture that we’re trying to shed light on,” said Collins.

During a three-day course, U.S. and Afghan troops worked together with a train-the-trainer mentality. The 14 Afghan students from the 203rd ANA Corps will be their units’ voice of sanitary reason once training is complete.

The overall goal is to reduce infectious disease casualties, which now sits at more than 1,000 per month, by properly training the ANA with preventative techniques.

U.S. Air Force Maj. Del Lofton of Tacoma, Wash., facilitated the training for the ANA and provided oversight for the training team for the duration of class.

“(This team) has come down to help improve the cleanliness ... of the dining facility, water facilities and also assist with providing knowledge on pest control,” said Lofton. “Non-battle casualties remain high as a result of poor hygiene coupled with

unclean food preparation methods and serving practices.”

Many Afghan soldiers are unaware of the relationship between hand washing, food temperature and disease.

“Overall, preventive medicine and basic sanitary practices will extremely reduce the number of noncombat-related injuries in the 203rd Corps,” said U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Dina Pang, a native of Singapore and the 71st detachment sergeant. “Our hope is to come back and help facilitate future preventive medicine training and help them make these improvements habitual.”

During a tour of the Afghan dining facility, the training team discovered a lack of soap, bleach and other basic materials needed to promote a healthy environment.

“We then took the students to the American dining facility and showed them the difference in cleanliness and sanitation procedures; it really opened their eyes,” said Collins.

Afghan Sgt. Ahmad Khan, one of the students and a Kabul native, highly approved of the training. “This course was very valuable for us and we can now teach our soldiers how to keep clean, which will help improve our society,” said Khan. “Every aspect of training was important to us and to me, specifically. I one day wish to be a doctor and this training is a very good start in that direction.”

Reflecting on her students’ success, sanitation trainer U.S. Army Spc. Maria Gutierrez of Eagle Pass, Texas said, “I honestly thought that because of our cultural barriers that this training was going to be very difficult. I was pleasantly surprised at their eagerness to learn.”

## Med team serves remote base in southern Nuristan

Story by U.S. Army Capt. Adrian Sean Taylor  
Task Force Archer

Tucked away in the southern Hindu Kush Mountains sits small Forward Operating Base Kalagush. Commanded by U.S. Army Capt. Garrett Gingrich, Company C, 1st Battalion, 133rd Infantry Regiment, part of 34th Infantry Division’s 2nd Brigade Combat Team, Task Force Red Bulls, Kalagush is the last U.S.-run forward operating base in Nuristan Province.

“We are a fairly secure base at the moment,” said Gingrich of Waterloo, Iowa. “The winter makes it difficult for the insurgents to move around. We expect the insurgency to increase come spring.”

In order to help reduce that insurgency, Gingrich said they will continue to work with the locals to build a trusting relationship so they understand that Co. C is there to help them.

Along with Co. C, there are other components on the base, including the newest addition, a team from Co. C, 334th Brigade Support Battalion, known as Charlie Med, which is also a part of Task Force Red Bulls.

“The base is made up of our infantry company and platoons from active-duty U.S. Army field artillery and military police units,” Gingrich said. “The provincial reconstruction team that has been serving here is currently on the way out, and they ran the medical clinic on our base. We are very glad to get an element of Charlie Med. Without them it would severely limit our ability to run missions in this area”

Until last month, the five-person medical team was providing level 2 medical services at Camp Phoenix in the capital city of Kabul. The majority of Charlie Med relocated to Bagram Airfield to establish a level 1-plus medical treatment facility and assist the 334th BSB with convoy support and base operations.

“It is always really sad to leave your best friends behind,” said U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Jessica Beswick, senior medic and native of Coralville, Iowa. “There was a little extra anxiety finding out that you are heading to a tiny FOB at the end of the world. We knew little about it except we had heard it had been hit before by insurgents. Our nervousness and anxiety were outweighed by the excitement of taking on a new challenge.”

It was a hard transition for the team at first. They joined a treatment facility made up of medical personnel from the



U.S. Army Capt. Barbara Krugler (center), a physician assistant from Adel, Iowa, and U.S. Army Sgt. Rachel Hecht (left), a combat medic from Merrill, Iowa, prepare to remove burn dressings from a 3-year-old Afghan girl at Forward Operating Base Kalagush. (Photo by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Jessica Beswick, Task Force Archer)

Navy and Air Force run by the Nuristan PRT.

“Our systems were very different,” explained U.S. Army Sgt. Rachel Hecht, a combat medic from Merrill, Iowa. “We had to learn to mesh with the PRT unit and the infantry company. Infantry units are known to be tight-knit organizations. Their medics train and fight alongside of them. It was hard to come in and say ‘here we are, trust us.’”

The main mission of Charlie Med is to run sick-call operations on the base.

“We mainly see U.S. and Afghan Soldiers. We most commonly see young Soldiers with musculoskeletal injuries, due to the heavy equipment they carry while on patrols,” explained U.S. Army Capt. Barbara Krugler, the Charlie Med physician assistant and an Adel, Iowa, resident. “We also see contractors and Afghan day workers. The current medical rules of engagement only allow us to see local (Afghans to save) life, limb and eyesight. This is difficult because we do not want to turn anyone away.”

“A small girl came in with burns over 50 percent of her body,” said Beswick.

“She had been treated locally but was in extreme pain. We removed the dry dressings, treated the burns and redressed her wounds. She fell asleep after and her father said it was the first time she slept in over four days.”

After U.S. Army medics treat local nationals, they refer them to local hospitals for follow-up treatment.

“We have no idea if they will follow up with the local doctors or not,” explained Beswick. “The nearest hospital here is in Kabul. Locals in Nuristan prefer to go to Pakistan and work with Pashtu doctors. We can only hope they continue to get treatment.”

The Charlie Med team, serving in Kalagush, finished their transfer with the Nuristan PRT recently and established a level 1 medical treatment facility. They also established good relationships with the contractors, day workers and local shop keepers surrounding the base.

Like Gingrich and the infantrymen of Co. C, 1st Bn., 133rd Inf. Regt., Charlie Med is preparing for the challenges they will face when spring comes to the Hindu Kush.



# Afghan forces resupply troops with food, ammo



Story and photos by U.S. Army Spc. Richard Daniels Jr.  
Task Force Bastogne Public Affairs

Afghan Soldiers from Zone 1, with assistance from their International Security Assistance Force partners in eastern Afghanistan's Nangarhar Province, held their second resupply mission for Barg-e Matal at Forward Operating Base Fenty March 10.

The combined forces loaded the Afghan National Army aerial vehicles with crucial supplies, which included food and ammunition, needed for the ANA to keep fighting insurgents along the Pakistan border.

"We got together today with our foreign advisers to supply about 9,000 kilograms of food to Barg-e Matal and Naray through our Afghan Air Force personnel," said Col. Mohammad Zahir Sadati, Afghan Border Police Zone 1 representative.

Since Soldiers from the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, Task Force Bastogne, cleared Barg-e Matal of insurgents nearly six months ago, it has remained an Afghan National Police post. Previously, the post was primarily resupplied by ISAF due to the threat in the area.

"ISAF units and Afghan Air Force units are working together to complete a resupply and troop rotation," said U.S. Army Capt. Joyce A. Loudon, brigade provost marshal with 1st BCT. "Shortly hereafter, as the Afghan Air Force gains



more confidence in their abilities, they'll take on the mission themselves along with the Ministry of Interior."

Sadati said the resupply mission depends on the need of the Soldiers and occurs every month or two through Jalalabad Airfield.

"This is a major combined operation for them with a total of six Mi-17s (helicopters) and four Mi-35s helicopters also supported by our own (AH-64) Apache (helicopters)," said Loudon.

"Each step forward, especially when we start doing more operational-type missions with them, is a boost of confidence for them," said U.S. Army Col. Jim Sturgeon of Lorensbergs, Ind., chief of the

International Joint Command Air Operations Control Center. "This is a good first step."

**(Top)** An Afghan National Security Force Mi-17 Afghan helicopter hovers for a landing at Forward Operating Base Fenty to load supplies for Afghan troops stationed at Barg-e Matal and Naray March 10. **(Above)** (from left to right) U.S. Army Pfc. Ashley N. Bell of Clarksville, Tenn., an administration specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 728th Military Police Battalion; U.S. Air Force Capt. Drew Walters of Alamosa, Colo., a pilot advisor with 438th Air Expeditionary Advisory Squadron; and U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Paula G. Jennings of Corpus Christi, Texas, a detachment sergeant with HHD, 728th MP Bn.; use teamwork to load ammo onto an Afghan helicopter to resupply Afghan troops located in Kunar Province along the eastern Afghanistan border March 10.



## ANA assumes responsibility of FOB Blessing

Story and photo by U.S. Army Capt. Jonathan J. Springer  
Task Force Bulldog Public Affairs

The Afghan National Army took a major step toward responsibility for their country's security when it assumed control of Forward Operating Base Blessing in eastern Afghanistan's Kunar Province March 4.

Afghan soldiers now safeguard the Pech River Valley near the border with Pakistan — historically one of Kunar Province's most volatile areas. Although FOB Blessing is not the first base transferred to the Afghan National Army, it is the largest in Regional Command-East transferred to date.

During a brief ceremony, U.S. Army Soldiers from Company C, 1st Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, lowered an American flag while U.S. Army and Afghan National Army soldiers from the 2nd Kandak, 2nd Brigade, 201st Corps looked on. The Afghan flag remained raised throughout the ceremony. U.S. and Afghan soldiers have lived together at Blessing for the past three years.

U.S. Army Lt. Col. Joseph A. Ryan, commander of 1st Bn., 327th Inf. and commander of FOB Blessing for the past 10 months, from Pearl River, N.Y., praised the Afghan soldiers and their leadership.

"The soldiers of the 2nd Kandak are our brothers. We've fought alongside them for the last 10 months and they've proven they are ready to assume this great responsibility," said Ryan. "On behalf of Soldiers from five U.S. Army Infantry Battalions who previously served in the Pech River Valley, and servicemen from the U.S. Marines, Navy and Air Force, I am proud to officially transfer command of Forward Operating Base Blessing to the Afghan National Army."

ANA Command Sgt. Maj. Mohammed Afzal, the Afghan battalion's top enlisted soldier, also expressed confidence in the ability of his soldiers to defend and hold Blessing.

"We are more than ready to take over this area," Afzal said. "I'm proud to know that we've reached this point and are taking over the security responsibilities. We have trained and fought for this day and finally it has come."

The final U.S. flag to fly over FOB Blessing and a marble plaque commemorating U.S. Army Sgt. Jay Blessing, killed in action Nov. 14, 2003, in the Pech Valley and for whom the FOB was named, will remain with the 1st Bn., 327th Inf. as they return to Fort Campbell, Ky., this spring.

**(Above)** Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, and Afghan National Army soldiers, stand in formation during a transfer of authority ceremony at Forward Operating Base Blessing.



# High ground gives Soldiers advantage over Taliban



Minutes before a gunfight, Afghan National Army soldiers from 4th Combat Service Support Kandak and Soldiers assigned to Company B, 2nd Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, Task Force No Slack, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, push toward a ridge during a 12-hour patrol in Chowkay District's Dewegal Valley March 13. Taliban fighters set up an ambush on the farthest left hilltop.

Story and photos by U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Mark Burrell  
Task Force Bastogne Public Affairs

They knew where the enemy was March 13, and they had a plan. The Taliban had been attacking them from what was considered a safe haven because of the terrain.

The Soldiers from Company B, 2nd Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, Task Force No Slack, of the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, needed to break the Taliban of their habit.

"The insurgents use the same fighting positions their grandfathers used with the Mujahadeen against the Soviets, so they're creatures of habit," said U.S. Army Capt. Ryan A. McLaughlin, Co. B. commander, TF No Slack. "And they stick with what works."

The plan, he explained, wasn't going to be easy, and enemy contact was imminent.

In Chowkay District's Dewegal Valley in eastern Afghanistan's Kunar Province, insurgents use the rugged terrain for cover while mortaring Combat Outpost Fortress and orchestrating their attacks on International Security Assistance Force and civilians alike.

U.S. forces developed a strategy to counter the attacks.

The plan included sending one element as far into the valley as possible with armored vehicles while another element climbed

more than six rugged kilometers from the other side of the valley — doing all this while under suspicious eyes in the unforgiving terrain of the Hindu Kush Mountains.

"Unfortunately, we're bound by roads and elevation based on what equipment we have to carry," said McLaughlin, a native of Tuscaloosa, Ala. "Whether we mean to or not, we've become creatures of habit, too."

As the sun crested the mountains from Pakistan, McLaughlin's troops crested a treacherous 1,200-foot ascent.

"Hurry up! Come on!" yelled U.S. Army Sgt. Benjamin G. Olivarez, a squad leader from Kingsville, Texas.

The heavy burden of body armor, ammo, weapons, and food and water had the Soldiers breathing hard. Some had already vomited whatever breakfast they had eaten in the pre-dawn hours. That was just the first climb of the day.

"It's lots of ups and downs, the terrain isn't a simple walk," said Olivarez during a short break to drink water and choke down an energy bar. "Sometimes you're down on all fours trying to make it up."

As Olivarez and his team lurched forward against oppressive mountains and the weight of their gear, the other maneuver element was facing their own struggles.

After dismounting his vehicle, U.S. Army Sgt. George S. Rueda, a weapons squad leader from Co. B., TF No Slack, and a native of Norwalk, Calif., started a climb of his own.

"It was very steep," explained Rueda. "A lot of rocks were slipping underneath you and there's really no cover. It kind of gave us a sense of motivation to get up the mountain."

Once there, his team found an abandoned Taliban fighting position. Rueda said he thought the three-walled position was a perfect spot to provide support for the rest of his unit.

That's when PKM machine gun fire started.

"First, the initial burst came in and separated me and an assistant gunner," said Rueda. "We low-crawled to each other and, as soon as we poked our heads up to return fire, they shot a rocket-propelled grenade at us that went over our heads at three or four meters. It landed about 10 meters behind us. That's when we opened up on them."

Later, Rueda realized, the Taliban had them zeroed in because they used the fighting position before, but it was still the best choice for cover. If his troops had been anywhere else, they could have sustained heavy casualties.

On Rueda's arms are inked names of fallen brethren from previous deployments. This wasn't his first mountain in Afghanistan, and this wasn't his first firefight.

"I felt kind of vulnerable because rounds were actually landing inside our position, which was a pretty well-built fighting position," he said. "I was pretty surprised none of us got hit because rounds were landing inches from us. After we returned fire, I felt confident, I felt good. It was an even fight after that initial burst."

On the other side of the mountain, the Soldiers heard the echoes of gunfire, picked up their heads and quickened the pace.

"We're just trying to keep a heavy pace to try to stay ahead of the enemy," said Olivarez.

So far, the plan was working.

After another kilometer or two, Olivarez was about to reach the highest ascent of the day, but it was difficult to tell.

"Every time you look up, you think it's the top, but there's always something higher," said Olivarez. "I'd say it's the 13th or 14th mountain we've climbed this tour, but this one is rough."

Except for a few rock piles and sparse trees, there was very little cover as they reached an opening just below the peak.

Now it was Olivarez's turn to direct his team into action just as AK-47 machine gun fire ripped up the ground around them.

"I just came out into the open, but then ran straight to cover," Olivarez said. "I ran as fast as I could and started laying down rounds so the rest of the guys could get there. The enemy was 100 to 150 meters in front of us. (Rounds were) whizzing and cracking all around us."

An orchestra of various types of machine guns played a symphony on the walls of the Dewegal Valley.

"The engagement we had was unique because we were fighting them at eye-level and they don't like doing that," said McLaughlin.

The pace and persistence of the troops had paid off. The insurgents were surprised at how high McLaughlin's troops were.

"That's one of the only engagements we've had that has been within 500 meters," said McLaughlin.

He explained that the Taliban are at a disadvantage when they get too close to the heavily armed and well-supported ISAF troops.

This is the closest McLaughlin and his troops have been to the enemy in 10 months of fighting. They took advantage of it.

Artillery shells and machine gun rounds saturated the area. The insurgents quickly disappeared.

Olivarez continued urging his team forward. They had been on the move for more than six hours. Everyone was tired but moved with more purpose.



After about six hours into a 12-hour joint combat patrol in the Hindu Kush Mountains, intravenous fluids flow into U.S. Army Pfc. Garrett J. Hartman, an infantryman from Needmore, Penn., assigned to Company B, 2nd Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, Task Force No Slack, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, in Chowkay District's Dewegal Valley March 13. The weather was uncharacteristically warm for March.

The Soldiers pressed on to their objective, a little town called Barbar. Afghan National Army soldiers from Artillery Company, 4th Combat Service Support Kandak, took the lead and set to work searching the village.

"We spoke to the people whose houses we searched, and it's very important to be nice to those people," said ANA 1st Lt. Ahmadullah Safi, a platoon leader from Jalalabad. "I spoke to the elder and told them that they have been giving food and shelter to insurgents. He said, 'No, we are shepherds and farmers.'"

Safi was suspicious and thoroughly searched his house.

"I don't believe him because he puts on a mask when we visit and says he's fine. But, behind the scenes, he's working with the bad guys," said Safi.

After completing the searches, the soldiers continued down and up another valley before reaching the final descent.

Intelligence reports were filtering in about insurgents in position to attack the troops as they exited the area after more than 12 hours on the move.

"Right now, I don't think they can see us, but they know generally where we are," said McLaughlin. "They're probably a little pissed. This is definitely their place, because we've never been here. This is an easily influenced insurgent area."

The sun was setting as the line of troops left the valley accompanied by hellfire missiles and then artillery rounds. Exhausted, they returned to their base under the cover of darkness.

The next day, insurgents sent volleys of mortars at COP Fortress.

"This is indicative that we struck a nerve about yesterday," explained McLaughlin. "This is their version of a counteroffensive."

Yet, the point of the mission was clear.

"The message we're sending to them is that we're not scared to go into those areas. We're changing it up a little bit. It's showing these people we can climb and get to the same fighting positions that the Taliban has made for themselves," said Rueda. "It was good to get out there and take the fight to the enemy, which I'm always happy about doing." 🇺🇸



# Warrior Watch

U.S. Army Pfc.

## Luke I. Schlueter

Story and photo by U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Mark Burrell  
Task Force Bastogne Public Affairs

Wearing black-rimmed ballistic glasses, U.S. Army Pfc. Luke I. Schlueter puts down his blue marker. His hands, stained with ink and caked with dirt, pick up his body armor and helmet before leaving the dimly lit plywood building on top of Observation Post Mustang.

The wind whips and the air is crisp on the 6,500-foot tall mountain in the Kunar Province. Schlueter pulls on his gloves and adjusts his fleece jacket underneath before settling down to look through various sets of binoculars and scopes at the draws, spurs and ridges surrounding the small observation post.

For the last nine months in eastern Afghanistan, pulling guard has been Schlueter's job as a cavalry scout assigned to Troop C, 1st Squadron, 32nd Cavalry Regiment, Task Force Bandit, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division.

"I do my job 'cause it's my job, but my hobby is art," said Schlueter. "Taking a blank piece of paper and making something out of it is just a way of reminding me why I'm here and what's going on."

Since the age of 6 growing up in Okinawa, Japan, Schlueter has used art as a way to express himself. His mom would buy him coloring books but complain that he wouldn't color in them; instead he'd trace the outlines.

While living at the top of Afghanistan, he has plenty of outlines to trace now.

"You got all these mountains," said Schlueter. "Especially the clouds and everything that are here, it's crazy. Where I'm from in Nebraska, it's all flat. I mean, you get to see clouds and stuff but not like it is here. It's ... it's ... it's ridiculous."

Schlueter, from Bellevue, Neb., draws everything from mountains to people to animals to surrealistic landscapes to whatever his buddies ask of him.

"When people see something they want to draw and get something off their mind, that's usually when I come into play," said Schlueter. "They say, 'Hey Schlueter, draw this,' and it gives them a laugh."

Since following his older cousin and sister into the Army, he put his talents to use at sometimes odd times.

"I was in basic training, and the night before you get out when everybody's cleaning and everything, I got told to paint the barracks — all three floors," Schlueter said. "I painted everything. And then I painted the squadron rock, which the squadron sergeant major gave me a coin for, because he was really impressed with it."

In the tactical operations center at OP Mustang, Schlueter has been working on another piece.

The past few days he has been hunkered close to a large eagle he's drawing around his unit's crest. Past unit emblems adorn the TOC walls providing a welcomed respite to the utilitarian maps, charts and electronic wires.

"It's nice to work on a piece that's going to be around for a while," said Schlueter. His squadron's blue and red logo covers nearly half of a TOC wall.

He added that Soldiers' esprit de corps could also be affected on their hilltop living quarters because of his efforts.

"I've been told the reason why Walmart's blue is because it helps people who are shopping be more relaxed. So yeah, I guess it makes people have better morale," said Schlueter with a laugh.

From humble beginnings as a child "ruining" coloring books in Japan, Schlueter has come a long way. Now he uses his hobby to help bring a little more color to Army green. 🐼



# Once-retired pilot awarded Distinguished Flying Cross

Story and photo by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. John Zumer  
Task Force Duke Public Affairs

He could have remained on the sidelines, with no one holding it against him. After eight years away and with enough years served to have settled into retirement, U.S. Army Chief Warrant Officer 4 Tory R. Myers chose to return to active duty.

Two years later he's on the verge of walking into retirement again, not only with distinguished awards but also with the thanks of his fellow Soldiers.

Myers, an AH-64D Apache helicopter pilot serving with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment, Task Force Viper, was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal with "V" Device during a ceremony held at Forward Operating Base Salerno in Khowst Province March 8.

U.S. Army Maj. Gen John F. Campbell, commander of Combined Joint Task Force - 101 and Regional Command-East, presented the awards honoring Myers for his actions during a complex attack on Combat Outpost Margah in Paktika Province Oct. 30.

"It definitely makes an impression, having (Maj.) Gen. Campbell here for the ceremony," said Myers, a native of Hollywood, Ala.

"Whenever we can recognize true heroes like Chief Myers, it's really, really special," said Campbell.

Myers, part of the quick reaction force on standby at FOB Salerno that evening, flew through adverse weather conditions to reach COP Margah. He provided precision fire that helped repel more than 300 insurgents attacking the COP.

"They probably would have taken over the COP," said U.S. Army Capt. David Schulz of Los Angeles, commander of Company F, 2nd Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, Task Force Currahee, who attended the ceremony.

The ceremony afforded Myers the opportunity to meet a few of the Soldiers who had been on the ground at COP Margah the night of the attack.

"His actions greatly influenced the outcome," said Schulz, detailing how weather conditions were red, or extremely severe, when Myers and his air weapons team were called.

Myers insisted on undertaking the mission, and through single-ship refueling



U.S. Army Chief Warrant Officer 4 Tory R. Myers (left), an AH-64D Apache helicopter pilot serving with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment, Task Force Viper, receives the Distinguished Flying Cross from U.S. Army Maj. Gen John F. Campbell, commander of Combined Joint Task Force - 101 and Regional Command-East, at Forward Operating Base Salerno March 8.

was able to remain overhead at COP Margah for close to six hours performing security operations.

U.S. Army 1st Lt. Matthew Van Arsdale, fire support officer for Co. F, 2nd Bn., 506th Inf.m, and native of Harmony, Pa., was the commander on the ground that night until Schulz and the QRF arrived. Van Arsdale helped coordinate artillery and mortar strikes along with the defense of the towers.

While Myers was quick to deflect credit from himself during his comments, Van Arsdale, who also attended the ceremony, was more than willing to add his version.

"Chief Myers' willingness to fly through that 'red' air changed the outcome of the fire fight," he said.

After the ceremony, Campbell thanked Myers and all the Soldiers once again for their continued service in conditions around that continue to test the physical and mental limits of service members. It's that service, according to Campbell, which has been prominently noticed in many quarters in Washington and around the world.

"What you've been doing throughout the area is pretty unique and making a big difference," said Campbell.

As the ceremony wound down, Myers was more than willing to just fade again into the background, out of the public eye, and return to his job. Still, the question will likely continue to be asked.

After having retired once, why did he come back?

"I came back for a combat tour," said Myers.

He got his wish, and the Soldiers from COP Margah remain grateful he was around when they needed him most.

Now, Myers is not only counting down the days to the end of his deployment, but is looking to draw the curtain on his military career and will retire again in March 2012 after 22 years of service.

And despite being credited with saving the lives of many Americans through his gallant service under trying conditions, he's not one to steal the spotlight from his fellow Soldiers.

"Everyone standing here could have just as easily gotten this award," he said.

# Soldier's Medal awarded for house-fire rescue

Story by U.S. Army Sgt. Grant Matthes  
Regional Command-East Public Affairs

U.S. Army Spc. James D. Story was awarded the Soldier's Medal during a ceremony at Bagram Airfield Feb. 24 for heroic actions he took last spring.

At the time of the incident, Story, a native of Wytheville, Va., was an automated field artillery tactical data specialist with the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, N.C.

"I am very honored to receive this award," said Story. "I would do it again if I came across another situation like that."

Story was with his cousin while running an errand for his mother when he saw a fire off a highway in Bedford, Va.

"At first I thought it was a bonfire, but when we got closer, I saw that it wasn't," said Story. He said they quickly realized it was a house on fire.

Story and his cousin rushed to house, woke its three residents and evacuated them. "It took about five minutes to get them out of the house," he said.

Story is currently deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom with Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 3rd Battalion, 321st Field Artillery Regiment, 18th Fires Brigade, 82nd Abn. Div.

U.S. Army Maj. Gen. James L. Huggins, 82nd Airborne Division commander and native of Savannah, Ga., was in Afghanistan for a pre-deployment site survey and presented the award to Story during his stay.

"It is who we are and that, to me, means more than a medal, a citation or anything else," said Huggins. "... The fact that we have a Soldier in our ranks who really does live the Army values ... really is the epitome of professionalism."

The Soldier's Medal is a military award of the U.S. Army and was introduced by a law



U.S. Army Maj. Gen. James L. Huggins, 82nd Airborne Division commander, pins a Soldier's Medal on U.S. Army Spc. James D. Story, an automated field artillery tactical data specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 3rd Battalion, 321st Field Artillery Regiment, 18th Fires Brigade, 82nd Abn. Div., at Bagram Airfield Feb. 24. Story received the medal for saving the lives of three people from a house fire in Bedford, Va., in spring of 2010. (Photo by U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Michael Reynolds, Regional Command-East Public Affairs)

passed by U.S. Congress on July 2, 1926.

According to Army Regulation 600-8-22, the Soldier's Medal is awarded to any person of the armed forces of the United States or of a

friendly foreign nation who, while serving in any capacity with the Army of the United States, distinguished himself or herself by heroism not involving actual conflict with an enemy.

"If this single act doesn't demonstrate that we have those Army values, that the warrior ethos is deeply engraved, then I don't know what else to do," Huggins said.





U.S. Army Warrant Officer 4 Kenneth Brodhead, an instructor pilot in Company C Dustoff, Task Force Phoenix, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, TF Falcon, 10th Mountain Division, lands a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter Feb. 15 after obtaining 5,000 flight hours. Brodhead, a native of Homestead, Fla., has been in the Army for more than 24 years with 10 of them as an instructor pilot.

## 10th CAB pilot reaches 5,000 flight hours

Story and photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Amanda Jo Brown  
Task Force Phoenix

U.S. Army Chief Warrant Officer 4 Kenneth Brodhead, an instructor pilot, reached the 5,000 flight hour milestone Feb. 15 while flying a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter with Company C Dustoff, Task Force Phoenix, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, Task Force Falcon, 10th Mountain Division.

Brodhead, from Homestead, Fla., was drawn to aviation at a young age. He remembers the excitement of watching a helicopter land at his school when he was in third grade.

"I thought that the helicopter was the most amazing contraption ever conceived," he said.

Some of Brodhead's earliest memories involving aircraft are those of watching his grandfather, a World War II P-38 Lightning pilot, building aircraft and flying with him.

Though he joined the Army as a tuba player, after eight years Brodhead decided to pursue his dream of flying helicopters.

In 1995, Brodhead became a warrant officer in pursuit of flying rotary wing aircraft for the Army.

In 2007, Brodhead landed his helicopter at his child's school.

"I had a great time," he said with a smile. "I would bet one or more kids at that school were inspired to someday fly helicopters from that visit."

U.S. Army Chief Warrant Officer 3 Allan Mace, maintenance test pilot in Co. C Dustoff, TF Phoenix, 10th CAB, TF Falcon,

has known Brodhead since their 2007 deployment to Bagram. He characterizes Brodhead as a man who stays calm, is exact and patient.

"When someone asks me about Kenny, about his personality, his experience, and his accomplishments, I can only think of one thing: unique," said Mace, a native of Sacramento, Calif. "At first glance, you see a hardened aviator who probably would not stand for a lot of nonsense, who could be uncompromising and only focused on the mission. I would honestly submit he's far from that tough exterior. His teaching style not only increased the unit's ability to become mission focused, he also allowed junior and senior aviators alike to think and act beyond the confines of their box."

Sixteen years after joining the warrant officer corps, Brodhead reached the flying milestone of 5,000 flight hours. Brodhead, who never turns down the opportunity to fly, is serving on his third aviation deployment, all with the 10th CAB. He plans to retire upon the unit's return from Afghanistan.

Brodhead reflects on his time spent in the air with great enthusiasm.

"Every hour was flown as a member of a team, and I have been lucky enough to fly with hundreds of pilots, crew chiefs and medics over the past 16 years," said Brodhead. "I have seen so many wonderful things from the cockpit of helicopters such as volcanoes in Hawaii, the Alps of Germany, the Grand Canyon, downtown Los Angeles, and the incredible panorama of Afghanistan."

He asserted he is just doing what was once done for him — passing along knowledge.

"I am just a link in the perpetual chain of experience," he explained. "I have simply passed on that which was given to me from those who taught me. My pilots in this company are smart and skilled, and I will be able to retire with confidence, knowing that they will prepare the next generation of pilots, continuing that chain."

He said he has learned a lot over his 16 years as a pilot from how to approach Soldiers when giving instruction to knowing his own personal limitations.

"Teaching adults can be real tricky," said Brodhead. "An effective instructor pilot needs to be, among other things, a bit of a practical psychologist. Every person learns differently. I learned what I can and cannot expect from myself. I also learned that, though the world can sometimes be ugly up close, it is always beautiful when you step back a few hundred feet."

Brodhead said he is proud to know he has passed along information that helped less-experienced pilots overcome challenging situations, perform better and grow as aviators.

Brodhead said he plans to continue sharing knowledge as an elementary teacher after retirement, adding that his most memorable experiences as an Army pilot involve children.

"I have flown sick or injured children to hospitals in California, Iraq and Afghanistan," said Brodhead. "I am exceptionally sensitive when it comes to children. My own twin boys are alive today in part because a medevac crew was there to take my wife to a major medical center 180 miles away from the remote installation we called home."

"To me, all children are pure and wonderful and I will go to great lengths to help a child. At my age, I see the Soldiers we transport as kids. I always think as a dad and it pleases me that we are doing this service (as a medevac crew) for the dads back home."

Brodhead is a Soldier who loves to fly — claiming each day is as exciting as the very first. Mace acknowledged Brodhead's enthusiasm for his profession.



U.S. Army Warrant Officer 4 Kenneth Brodhead, a helicopter instructor pilot in Company C Dustoff, Task Force Phoenix, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade/TF Falcon, enjoys a cupcake made by Soldiers in his unit after obtaining 5,000 flight hours Feb. 15. Brodhead, a native of Homestead, Fla., has been in the Army for more than 24 years — 10 of which have been as an instructor pilot.

"With a touch of sarcasm and a twist of humor, people look beyond the superficial shell of the seasoned aviator and learn and love to fly just as he does," said Mace. "It is this love of flying that has allowed him to fly more than 5,000 hours, equating to over 208 days sitting in one position, manipulating his mechanical beast, commanding it to do his will. It's the passion and sense of freedom that has allowed him to strive beyond what most aviators only wish they could accomplish in their career."



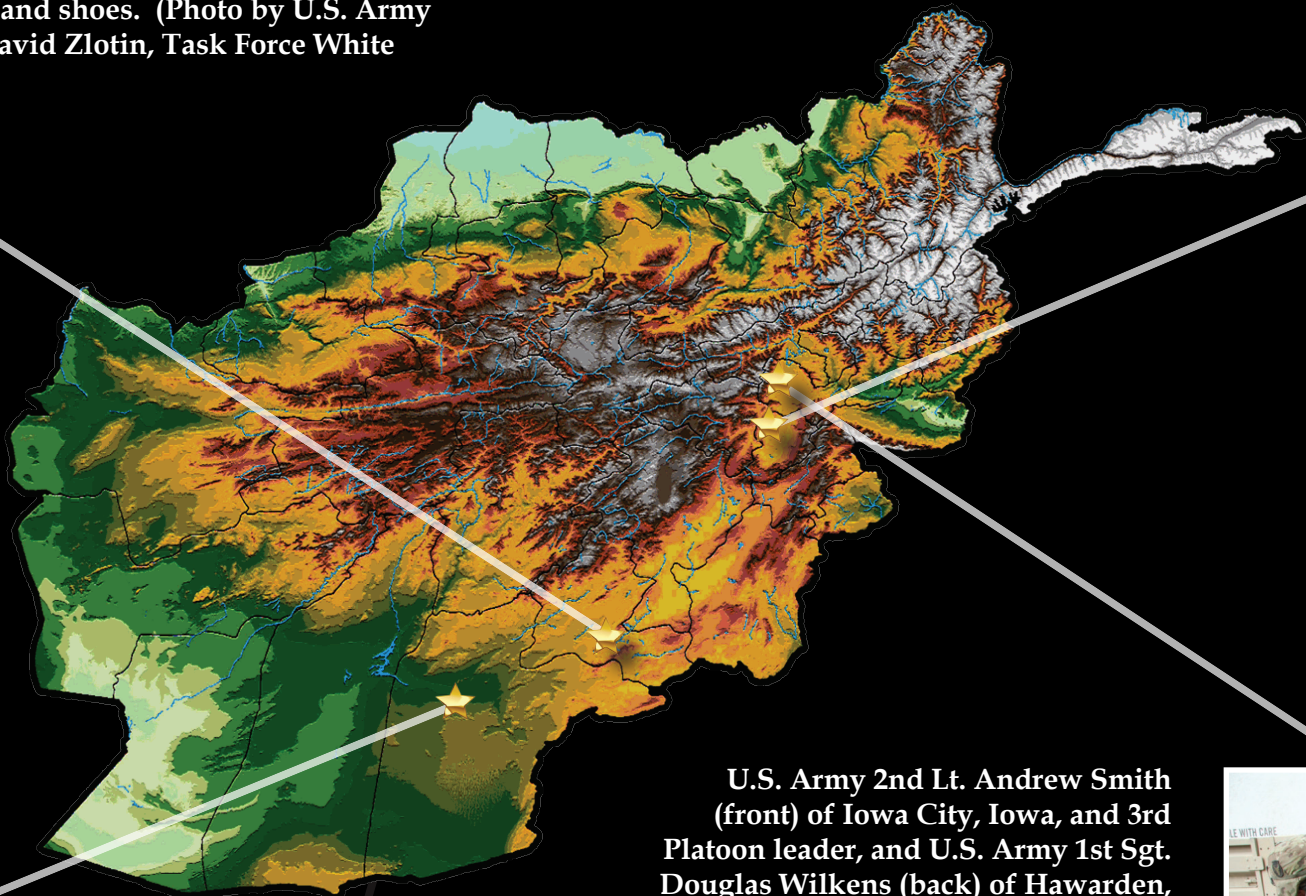
# Goodwill across Afghanistan:



Afghan citizens receive humanitarian aid from an Afghan National Army soldier in Dehe Khoda Ydad. U.S. Army and Polish soldiers from Forward Operating Base Ghazni and ANA soldiers delivered the supplies donated by a number of charity organizations in the United States and Poland. The soldiers distributed more than 50 boxes filled with sleeping bags, blankets, winter clothes, school supplies, radios and shoes. (Photo by U.S. Army Spc. David Zlotin, Task Force White Eagle)

# ISAF and ANSF Reach Out

A young Afghan girl holds a lamb born March 5 from one of the original sheep studied by the Kentucky Agribusiness Development Team II members during the second part of a sheep parasite project in Khenj District. (Photo by U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Amber Ashcraft, Panjshir Provincial Reconstruction Team Public Affairs)



A U.S. Air Force pararescue jumper with Special Operations Task Force - South performs a medical assessment on a young girl during an operation to hinder insurgent activity in Zharay District in Kandahar Province. The girl was brought to U.S. forces by her father, who voiced concerned for the girl's health and wellbeing. (Photo by U.S. Army Spc. Daniel P. Shook, Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force - Afghanistan Media Operations Center)

U.S. Army 2nd Lt. Andrew Smith (front) of Iowa City, Iowa, and 3rd Platoon leader, and U.S. Army 1st Sgt. Douglas Wilkens (back) of Hawarden, Iowa, unit first sergeant, both of Troop B, 1st Squadron, 113th Cavalry Regiment, Task Force Redhorse, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division, Task Force Red Bulls, give backpacks to young Afghan girls of the Bagram Girls' School during a humanitarian assistance delivery March 1. Soldiers of Troop B donated 500 backpacks and 250 radios to the girls school five days before the start of a new school year. (Photo by U.S. Army Spc. Kristina L. Gupton, Task Force Red Bulls Public Affairs)





# Stateside shoe drive benefits Afghans

Story and photos by U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Christopher Hummel  
17th Public Affairs Detachment

Service members of Forward Operating Base Lightning recently delivered shoes to a group of Afghans at the Paktya Regional Medical Center.

The drive was the brainchild of U.S. Army Capt. Kenneth Stewart, 17th Public Affairs Detachment commander and resident of Yakima, Wash., who witnessed children walking around barefoot.

"I contacted the local mosque back home and organized a donation list, hoping to put shoes on the feet of these children" he said. "I am blown away at the response by our American Muslims and their friends."

Since February, "Stewart's Soles" received nine boxes of shoes. Stewart expects six more boxes to arrive within the month.

U.S. Air Force Maj. Suzette Barber of Mountain Home, Idaho, helped Stewart find suitable recipients for the shoes: housekeepers of the Paktya Regional Medical Center where she worked.

"These people are very much in need. They make \$70 a month," said Afghan Army Col. Sultan Gul Totakhil, director of the medical center. "To these folks, money has to be spent on food and rent and healthcare."

Stewart shared Totakhil's sentiments; giving the shoes to the housekeepers was the obvious choice.

"These guys see things like shoes as a luxury item and not a necessity, most American's can't imagine being that poor," Stewart said. "It's such a blessing to be able to give to these hard workers and their children."

The center's housekeepers weren't the only recipients. Participants paid a special visit to 9-year-old patient Hanzadeen Kiyamadeen, who was recently admitted due to complications of an infection in his throat.

After receiving shoes, toys and other gifts, Hanzadeen managed a drowsy whisper, "Tashakur," which is Dari for thank you.

(Top) Afghan Col. Sultan Gul Totakhil and other organizers of the charitable giveaway give shoes to a housekeeper of the Paktya Medical Center. (Below) U.S. Army Capt. Kenneth Stewart, 17th Public Affairs Detachment commander, fits 9-year-old Hanzadeen Kiyamadeen for shoes March 13, after U.S. military members organized a stateside shoe drive called "Stewart's Soles".



# Panjshir residents attend PRT's construction workshop

Story and photos by U.S. Air Force 2nd Lt. Ashleigh Peck  
Panjshir Provincial Reconstruction Team Public Affairs

Panjshir Provincial Reconstruction Team engineers conducted its first hands-on construction workshop for 13 locally owned construction companies March 8.

"After hearing about our construction workshop on the radio station the night before, locals from nine different construction companies showed up an hour early in anticipation that they might be able to join the training and help build a relationship with the Panjshir Provincial Reconstruction Team," said U.S. Air Force 2nd Lt. Phil Compton, PRT engineer and Doty, Wash., native.

The PRT engineering team began preparing for the construction workshop in January with hopes of mitigating the most common construction errors they have seen in the province.

Compton said the workshop was designed with four ideas in mind: lay out the PRT's expectations for the upcoming construction season, help contractors close the gap between engineers and project managers and the local unskilled laborers, create a common reference point for deficiencies discussions, and to allow PRT engineers and contractors to collaborate and network in a consequence-free environment.

The workshop included classroom instruction and hands-on application, including a lesson on working with concrete.



(Above) Panjshir Provincial Reconstruction Team's hands-on construction workshop attendees lay concrete in a ring beam during the "practical" portion of the workshop. The concrete will be broken later on to show the different results of using improper techniques compared to methods taught during the workshop (Below) During Panjshir Provincial Reconstruction Team's construction workshop March 8, attendees prepare to test a batch of concrete for its workability and water content before the concrete is to be used.

"Everyone here knows these are the basic principles for properly mixing concrete; however, we have seen these mistakes on every project that we monitor in the province," said Scott Davis, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers construction representative with Panjshir PRT and an Omaha, Neb., native, to the contractors during the class.

"Having this kind of workshop is very useful for construction engineers," said Haji Ghulam Nabi Yaqoobi, director of Yaqoobi Construction and Road Construction Co.,

through an interpreter. "It allows us to develop our experience and skills and will help to improve construction in Panjshir Province."

Overall, Compton said he believes the first two days were a success.

"The contractors were able to perform some hands-on labor, become familiar with the PRT's expectations for rebar and concrete working, and do some collaboration and networking with each other," he said.







A young Afghan girl attends Paktika Women's Day at the Sharana Hospital March 8. Women of all ages attended the event hosted by Paktika Director of Women's Affairs Dr. Bibi Hawa. The provincial governor and sub-governor, as well as the chairman of the provincial council, all men, gave speeches addressing the importance of women and their rights. (Photo by U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Ashley N. AVECILLA, Paktika Provincial Reconstruction Team Public Affairs)

## Paktika hosts international women's day event

Story by U.S. Air Force 1st Lt. Emily Chilson  
Paktika Provincial Reconstruction Team Public Affairs

More than 70 women from Paktika Province gathered at the Sharana Hospital March 8 to celebrate International Women's Day at an event sponsored by Paktika Director of Women's Affairs, Dr. Bibi Hawa.

Many women traveled more than 30 miles of rough terrain between Orgun and Sharan districts to attend Paktika Women's Day in Sharana, the province's capital city.

"The director has to have that talent to get people to come," Hawa said. "The women were very happy to come and felt safe gathering for this event."

Hawa decorated the conference room with colorful lights and banners featuring photos of Paktika's women, poetry and inspirational words describing women: Women are mothers, the kindest creatures on the Earth.

Women of all ages, wearing the traditional Muslim burqa, filled the room with bright colors and chatter as they waited for the event to begin.

While male participation may not be expected at a Women's Day event, the provincial governor, subgovernor and chairman of the provincial council were the first to speak, sharing words of encouragement with the women.

Although Paktika Gov. Moheebullah Samim was in Kabul and unable to attend the event in person, he phoned in through the public address system to voice his support for women's rights. While in Kabul, Samim signed a petition against violence on women.

Hawa and Deanna Sahibzai, a provincial council member, also spoke to the women.

"I give respect to women," Sahibzai said. "A woman is not less than a man."

Following the speeches, the men were dismissed and the DoWA handed dresses, scarves, hairbrushes and other essentials to the women. Once each woman received her gifts, lunch was served.

When asked what she liked best about the event, Nijin, a 20-year-old Afghan woman currently enrolled in the midwifery school, said she liked that female members of coalition forces were there to support them.

"This is better than last year because a lot of people didn't come," Nijin explained. "I like everything this year, the whole celebration!"

U.S. Navy Lt. j.g. Tamora Holland, female engagement team leader for Paktika Provincial Reconstruction Team who calls Pittsburgh home, said she was impressed with the male leadership of Paktika for speaking at the event.

"They were very passionate," Holland said. "A lot of women don't realize their leadership supports their rights."


It has been five months since Hawa took the position as DoWA on Paktika's provincial government. She has been working hand in hand with Paktika PRT's FET to get women's affairs up and running. The previous DoWA was kidnapped by Taliban who threatened to take her life if she continued her work with women's affairs in Paktika.

As people finished eating and conversations died down, many women congratulated Hawa on a successful Paktika Women's Day.

U.S. Army Maj. Arnym Pedraza, Paktika PRT FET member from Cagua, Puerto Rico, told the DoWA, "The first time we met you, we said we would support you 100 percent. This is part of it."

"Women's affairs is a sweet challenge," Pedraza added. "You must stand for human rights as women."

Paktika's female literacy rate is currently no more than 2 percent, and most women are not allowed to leave the home. One female who attended Paktika Women's Day said she wanted to speak out against the domestic abuse many women are still suffering in Paktika.

Hawa hopes to improve the lives of Paktika's women through programs like Quran and tailoring classes, as well as improving education for women throughout the various districts of Paktika. 

## Afghan women celebrate women's rights

Story and photos by U.S. Army Spc. Tobey White  
Task Force Duke Public Affairs

The women, clad head to toe in light blue burkas provided a stark contrast to the female Soldiers in multi-cam uniforms attending a shura at the civil military operations center in Khowst City March 8.

More than 270 women gathered to celebrate International Women's Day, sponsored by the Director of Women's Affairs in Khowst City. It was a day to celebrate being a woman and to discuss changes needed to increase women's rights.

Women from various U.S. Army units, including the 3-19th Agribusiness Development Team, the 870th Military Police Company, and the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, were invited to attend the event.

"It was the first time coalition forces had been invited to attend the International Women's Day in Khowst Province," said U.S. Army Maj. Rosemary Reed, 95th Civil Affairs, Khost Provincial Reconstruction Team, and a resident of Tacoma, Wash. "It is a sign that they have an increased trust and interest in working with us and may continue to do this in the future."

In a country where women's rights often take a backseat, it is especially important for key leaders from the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and Khowst Province to meet and address women's issues and concerns openly and publicly, said Reed.

Events included speeches from Khowst Provincial Gov. Abdul Jabbar Naeemi and key female leaders in the community. It also included poetry readings from several high school students and a song by several local girls celebrating the contributions their mothers make to society.

"Our government is trying to do better for women and we are trying to bring equality to women," said Naeemi.

He praised the strength of Afghan women in the face of war and the loss of loved ones. Naeemi also promised to try to improve their legal rights.

One issue he addressed is the practice of families giving girls under the age of 18 to old men for marriage.

"We will work to solve these issues until our grandkids do not have to pick up a weapon for fighting but can go to school for education," Naeemi said.

He told the women about a five-year plan to build schools and parks, and to increase women's education.



U.S. Army Lt. Col. Pam Moody of Indianapolis, 319th Agricultural Development Team, hands out pencils to Afghan women at the International Women's Day events held in Khowst City March 8. The women were surveyed about living conditions in their towns and villages during the event. Approximately 270 women attended the event held to celebrate women's rights and to discuss changes needed to benefit women in Afghanistan.

In addition, Naeemi reminded the women that a child's education starts at home.


It is a mother's job to understand how to raise a child and is important to instill in the child manners and respect for women from the beginning, he said.

"This is a woman's problem. Women raise men," said Hakmina, a female provincial council member. "You have to teach a man how to live, and you need to teach him how to respect his mother."

The presence of the governor at the International Women's Day event showed

that he was supportive of addressing those concerns and issues involving women, Reed said.

Coalition forces along with GIROA officials presented certificates of appreciation to women who had gone above and beyond for women's rights.

"It was nice to be part of something that is helping build the infrastructure of Afghanistan, especially since it's helping women come up in society," said U.S. Army Sgt. Julissa Matute Velasquez, a 870th MP team leader and a resident of San Jose, Calif. 



# W Safety Watch

## Heat injuries

Story by U.S. Army Ron McKimmy, CJTF-101 Safety

You may think heat-injury prevention is a strange thing to talk about while there is snow still on the mountains. But before you know it, we will be in the middle of summer. Failure to deal with the effects of heat can degrade your combat effectiveness and put you at risk of serious injury.

During the warmer months in Afghanistan, it can get pretty warm. For those of us who remember the heat in Iraq and Kuwait, “Drink water” was the favorite order of the day. It still applies here. As the temperature rises, so does the occurrence of heat injuries. Heat injuries are one of the most common forms of injuries and they are totally preventable.

### What is a heat injury?

Heat injuries occur when your body temperature rises above normal, or when your body is no longer able to regulate heat loss. There are several forms of heat injury which are usually caused by exercise participation in extreme heat or a lack of fluid intake (dehydration).

Each type of heat condition becomes progressively more serious and is generally defined in three stages.

- Heat cramps: This is the first stage of a heat injury. It’s the mildest form of heat injury in which your body simply suffers from a lack of fluid.
- Heat exhaustion (exercise-associated collapse): This is the next step beyond dehydration. If not treated immediately, serious injury and even death can result.
- Heat stroke: This is the worst stage of a heat injury. Without proper medical attention a victim can die within minutes.

When exercising in conditions where the environmental temperature exceeds the body temperature, sweating is the primary method for cooling the body.

In the dry heat conditions of Afghanistan, this method works well. However, as humidity (the amount of moisture in the air) increases, the rate of evaporation is much lower as the air is already saturated with water vapor. This greatly decreases the beneficial effects of sweat production. Physical activity and exercise in these warm and humid conditions should be avoided if possible.

The environmental temperatures are only part of the equation; heat produced by the body while exercising is the other. This is due to an increase in the body’s metabolic rate and muscle activity. Service members can acclimatize their bodies to perform in hot conditions over time and once acclimatized to training in hot weather, the body initiates the sweating response earlier, increases the amount of sweat and dilutes the sweat produced so it contains less sodium.

### How to prevent heat injury

- Conduct physical training or exercise in the morning or evenings if possible. Avoid exercising outside in the middle of the day when the sun is at its strongest. Go to the gym if you can.
- Drink water regularly during and after exercise to avoid dehydration; waiting until you feel thirsty may be too late.
- Do not begin a serious physical training program until your body has a chance to acclimatize to the environment. The amount of time this takes is dependent on the individual, so there is no set timeline.
- Dress appropriately for the activity. Only wear what is needed for the weather conditions.
- Don’t try to sweat yourself thinner by wearing extra clothing for a physical fitness test weigh-in. This can be very dangerous.
- Give your body more time to recover between activities in hot weather.
- Use the buddy system. If you or someone else starts to recognize the symptoms of a heat injury, stop the activity and find a place to cool off and drink water. If available, consume a sports drink containing electrolytes.
- Avoid caffeine, alcohol and sugary drinks like soda, cola and energy drinks.
- Lastly, use common sense and don’t ignore the warning signs.

### Dehydration

A lack of fluid intake is a key factor in many heat injuries. The importance of fluid consumption during exercise or physical activities is heightened when performing in heat because it is important to drink to replace what is lost when you sweat. Inadequate hydration before, during or after activity in high temperatures can be the major contributory factor toward heat injury.

The color of your urine is another sign that is often overlooked. It’s simple to check and is a very reliable indicator of your body’s level of hydration. When your body is depleted of fluid and dehydrated, your urine becomes very dark in color. In severe cases it can be a dark brown color. However, when your body is fully hydrated, your urine is a very light color, even clear.

### Hyponatremia

However, the reverse can be true and it is possible to take on too much liquid and sending the body into fluid overload.

This occurs occasionally during ultra-endurance events or physical activities, when large amounts of plain water are consumed.

Although it is rare, it does occur.

### What causes heat injuries?

There are a number of contributing factors that increase your chances of suffering a heat injury. Some of them are obvious, like high temperatures. Others are less obvious. Here is a list of factors to be aware of when training, working and exercising in the heat:

- high temperatures
- high humidity
- sun exposure
- excessive activity and exertion
- coffee and alcohol
- medications, especially diuretics
- illness, especially vomiting and diarrhea

### What are the signs and symptoms?

There are plenty of warning signs that will notify you and others around you that dehydration is setting in. The major problem is that most people tend to ignore them until it’s too late. Catch these signs early enough and you won’t have any problems; but ignore them, and you’ll pay dearly.

The following signs and symptoms have been arranged to begin with the mildest warning signs first. By the time you start to suffer the signs from half way down the list, you’re in big trouble.

Remember: catch heat injuries early by looking out for the warning signs at the top of the list.

- thirst
- headache
- nausea
- cramps
- dizziness
- weak, no energy
- confusion
- hot, dry skin
- weak, but rapid heart rate
- low blood pressure
- rapid breathing
- unconsciousness

### How do you treat heat injuries?

Generally speaking, the treatment for dehydration, heat exhaustion and heat stroke are very similar. However, whenever dealing with a victim of heat stroke, the person must be referred to qualified medical assistance. Remember, heat stroke is life threatening. Immediately call a medical professional for help in those situations.


### A few guidelines for treating heat injuries:

- Have the person lie or sit down in a cool, shaded area with good air circulation.
- Elevate the feet.
- Start to replace both fluid and salt loss. Give both water and a sports drink if available.
- Loosen any clothing and remove any equipment, helmet and gear.
- Saturate clothing in cool water and wrap patient in a wet sheet or towel.
- Use fans or other cooling devices to help reduce body temperature.
- If available, immerse in cool (not cold) water (tub, pool, river, lake, etc.).

If the individual is suffering from any of the serious warning signs like confusion, a weak, rapid heart rate or becomes unconscious, seek medical help immediately. They may tell you they are fine, but their body will say different.

It all starts with prevention.

As with all heat injuries, it’s far better to prevent them from occurring than to treat them after it becomes too late. Failing to recognize the symptoms is even more important with heat injuries because, if you identify the problem too late, you may not get a second chance.

Safety starts with you.  
Mission first, safety always. 

## Water Consumption Table

Heat Category	WBGT Index, °F	Easy Work	Moderate Work	Hard Work
		Water Intake (Quart/Hour)	Water Intake (Quart/Hour)	Water Intake (Quart/Hour)
1	78° - 81.9°	½	¾	¾
2	82° - 84.9°	½	¾	1
3	85° - 87.9°	¾	¾	1
4	88° - 89.9°	¾	¾	1
5	> 90°	1	1	1
Body Armor = +5°		Easy Work – walking on a hard surface at less than 2 mph with less than a 30 pound load, weapon maintenance, marksmanship training; drill and ceremony	Moderate Work – patrolling, walking in the sand at 2.5 mph with no load, calisthenics; patrolling; individual movement techniques (ie high/low crawl)	Hard Work – walking in the sand at 2.5 MPH with a load, field assaults
MOPP 4 = +10°				
Rest - sitting or standing in the shade if possible				
The fluid replacement volumes will sustain performance and hydration for at least <b>4 HOURS</b> of work in the specified heat category. Fluid needs can vary based on individual differences and exposure to full sun or full shade.				
<b>CAUTION:</b> Hourly fluid intake should not exceed 1.5 quarts. Daily fluid intake should not exceed 12 quarts.				



# Story Snapshots



## Thanks

Secretary of Defense Robert Gates shakes hands with U.S. Army Spc. Gregory Miller of Ogden, Utah, after presenting him with the Purple Heart Medal March 7 at the Heath N. Craig Joint Theater Hospital at Bagram Airfield. Miller, a member of 744th Engineer Company, 54th Eng. Battalion, a U.S. Army Reserve unit from Ogden, Utah, also received a Combat Action Badge. (Photo by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot, Task Force Falcon)

## Joint effort

Members of 1st Coy, 1st Kandak, Afghan National Army, prepare to dismount and establish blocking positions around an objective to prevent escaping insurgents during an operation to search for improvised explosive device materials in Paktya Province Feb. 20. The ANA partnered with Afghan Uniformed Police, and 3rd Platoon, 615th Military Police Company; and Company D, 1st Battalion, 168th Infantry Regiment, Task Force Lethal. (Photo by U.S. Army 1st Lt. Nicholas Rasmussen, Task Force Lethal)



## Catch

U.S. Army 1st Lt. Rico Piatelli, Nangarhar Provincial Reconstruction Team infantry platoon leader from Danvers, Mass., plays catch with Afghan kids during a mission to Zangoui village March 7. (Photo by U.S. Army 1st Lt Casey Osborne PRT Nangarhar Public Affairs)





## On tour

*U.S. Army Maj. Robert Paul (center), a Sioux Falls, S.D., native with the Cooperative Medical Assistance team, and his team tour the Panjshir Beverage Industry Ltd. water bottling plant's new equipment in Khenj District. (Photo by U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Amber Ashcraft, Panjshir Provincial Reconstruction Team Public Affairs)*



## Hand built

*U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Michael Anderson, Nangarhar Provincial Reconstruction Team commander from Dallas, watches two of the 30 employees at the rickshaw factory in eastern Afghanistan attach an engine onto its frame March 2. (Photo by U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Scottie T. McCord, Nangarhar Provincial Reconstruction Team Public Affairs)*



## In pursuit

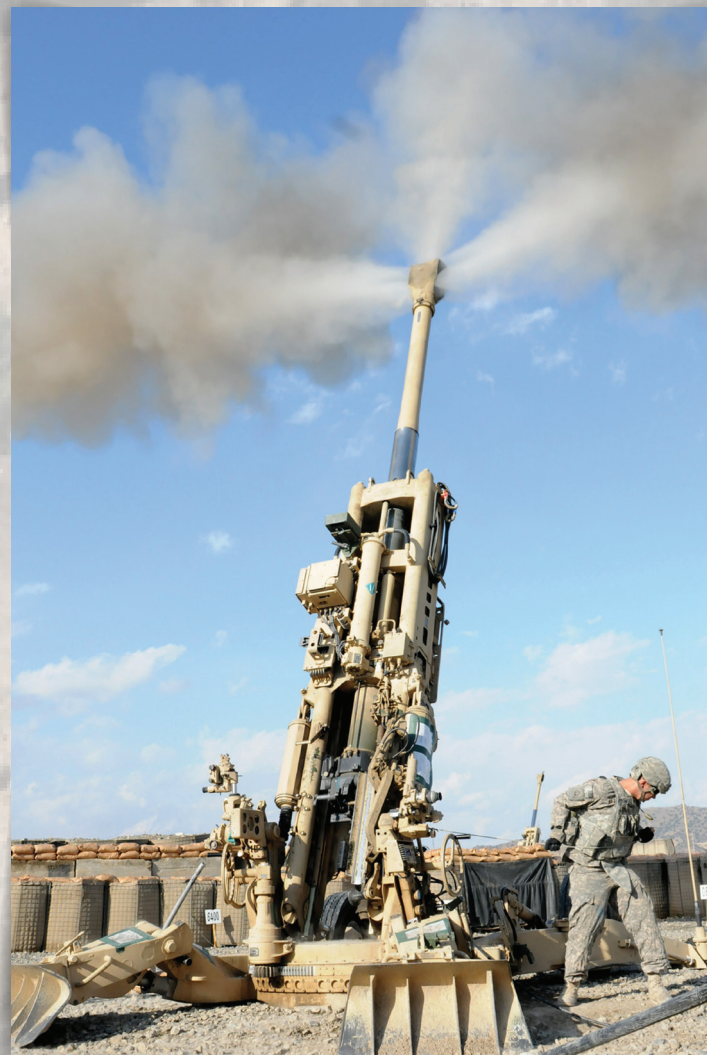
*Ghazni Provincial Reconstruction Team members take a little time off to enjoy the sunshine and snow with a game of street hockey Feb. 14. U.S. Army Spc. Ross Dalton from Yarmouth, Mass., (center in red) takes the ball out with U.S. Army Spcs. Marcelo Gomes (left) and Benjamin Cote, both from Sudbery, Mass., in pursuit. All are from 1st Platoon, Company D, 1st Battalion, 181st Infantry Regiment, of the Massachusetts National Guard headquartered in Hudson, Mass. (Photo by U.S. Air force Chief Master Sgt. Julie Brummund, Ghazni Provincial Reconstruction Team)*

## Inspection

*Staff Sgt. Steven Smith, a joint airdrop inspector assigned to the 451st Air Expeditionary Wing, Kandahar Airfield, inspects the retriever pulley attached to bundled cargo to ensure it is loaded correctly and will therefore deploy correctly. (Photo by U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Willard E. Grande II)*







## Firepower

U.S. Army Spc. Michael Payne of Herndon, Va., an assistant gunner with Company A, 3rd Battalion, 321st Field Artillery Regiment, 18th Fires Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division, fires the XM982 "Excalibur" round at Forward Operating Base Salerno March 8. It was the first time the unit had fired the Excalibur in the four months they had been in Afghanistan. (Photo by U.S. Army Spc. Tobey White, Task Force Duke Public Affairs)

## Recognition

David Webber, of Greenville, S.C., Fluor Health, Safety and Environmental director, recognized U.S. Army Capt. Mark Remy, of Borrego Springs, Calif., CJTF-101 Safety, for his innovative Ammunition Amnesty Program that lead to the renovation of the existing amnesty boxes which reduced and eliminated hazards on Bagram. (Photo by U.S. Army Capt. Ron McKimmy Jr., CJTF-101 Safety)



## A hand up

British soldiers from 2nd Company, 1st Battalion, Irish Guards help each other climb up the side of a canal during an operation near the village of Pasab, Afghanistan, March 5. Taking the less popular routes in the area of operations makes it less likely for the unit to encounter improvised explosive devices, but also makes things difficult for the British soldiers who have to maneuver over and through the various obstacles on these routes. (Photo by U.S. Marine Lance Cpl. Jeremy Fasci, Regional Command Southwest Public Affairs)



## Bridge in progress

Members of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Provincial Reconstruction Team Zabul, inspect the progress and quality of a bridge construction site in the Zabul province of Afghanistan. The bridge was being built by local Afghan workers. The PRT consists of members from the Air Force, Army and civilian agencies. (Photo by U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Adrian Cadiz, U.S. Air Forces Central Public Affairs)



# 10th CAB Soldiers enable communications

Story by U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class J.R. Williams  
10th Combat Aviation Brigade

Modern communication seems to work like magic for the end user. The press of a power button, the click of a mouse, or the strike of a key and messages send or receive in an instant. Even in areas as austere as Afghanistan, instant communication exists, in part, due to the Soldiers who run the cables.

At Bagram Airfield, the freshly developed east side boasts state-of-the-art communications technology, thanks to a collaborative effort of communications Soldiers from the 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, 10th Mountain Division.

"It starts with an idea, a plan, and a lot of manual labor," said U.S. Army Maj.

Scott Herzog, brigade communications officer in charge.

According to Herzog, who hails from Auburn Hills, Mich., the idea began with Soldiers learning to splice fiber optics cable.

"Fiber cable is made of glass, so you have to know what you're doing in order to run lines from the main fiber," he explained. "From there, you splice from the main cable, to connectors, to switches, to ports."

Picture the human circulatory system: arteries carry the main flow of blood to veins, veins carry blood to the capillaries, capillaries then divide and bring the parts of the blood needed in the body.

The cable lines also work in a similar fashion.

"When you splice into the main line, you connect to a switch," Herzog said. "The switch converts glass cable to copper wire. The wire sends messages to specific ports. Your computer plugs into a port and that's how you get your information."

The plan for the east side involves wiring a total of 33 buildings. Of those 33, 18 now possess instant communications with the remaining 15 still in progress.

However, the most daunting portion of the plan meant running the main fiber cables through manhole systems.

"Since the manhole systems only went so far, we were looking at digging two trenches, splicing into the main cable for wiring, running wires into the buildings, wiring the buildings and establishing ports," said U.S. Army Capt. David Edwards, Task Force Phoenix communications OIC.

Edwards asserted that a project of this magnitude occurs with the assistance of communications Soldiers, lending their skills and experience. The Dallas native credited the collaboration of the different shops for the overall success.

"We had the brigade (communications officer), himself, out in the bad weather with us, climbing down into cold, muddy water to run cable," Edwards emphasized. "You know, that really says something; it means a lot."

While Herzog's team from brigade headquarters assisted with the manual labor, Edwards said U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Jason Maldonado's team from Task Force Mountain Eagle took on the brunt of it.

"They really had an interesting time," said Edwards while laughing.

Since the winter months in Bagram bring cold, wet weather, running the cables meant climbing down into cold, wet manholes. In at least one case, the water in the manhole came up to the Soldiers' chests.

"We ran two lines of fiber cable through three manholes, which were all about a half mile apart from each other," said Maldonado, who hails from Toa Baja, Puerto Rico.

"It was not an ideal situation," Maldonado concedes.

**(Left)** U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Reginald Abram, Task Force Phoenix noncommissioned officer in charge of communications, runs a half-mile length of fiber cable through a trench to a building on Bagram Airfield's east side Feb. 3. The San Diego, Calif., native battled the elements, to include knee-deep mud, while completing the project. (Photo by U.S. Army Capt. David Edwards, Task Force Phoenix)



U.S. Army Spc. Raheem Stewart, Task Force Phoenix, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, automations specialist, carefully steps along the rafters of the building his team helped wire for communications at Bagram Airfield. (Photo by U.S. Army Capt. David Edwards, Task Force Phoenix)

In four days, the team waded through cold water and mud to run the cables through the manhole systems, dig two half-mile-long trenches, cover the lines in the trenches and run the wires into the building. Once indoors, the work proved just as harrowing at moments.

"We had to run wires throughout the building, so we had to walk along the rafters in the ceilings sometimes to make that happen," Maldonado explained. "So, if you don't step in the right spot, you risk falling right through the ceiling."

Wiring a single building includes running the lines inside and terminating the ends to add connections to run to the switch.

In this case, Maldonado's four-man team ran 375 lines to ports, put on the faceplates, terminated the ends, tested the lines and then labeled the ports.

U.S. Army Spc. Danny Griffin, a cable system installer from Knoxville, Tenn., and member of Maldonado's team, put the meticulous work into perspective. "My motivation is to just get it done; getting to the next mission."

"Definitely a lot of work goes into it," Griffin stressed. "At the start, when you

think about everything that needs to happen, it seems mind-boggling. So you just have to keep working and get it done."

Ultimately, it took the team 10 days to complete the project – 11 days shy of their original projection of three weeks.

"The reason we finished this project so early, and why it meant so much is because the whole S6 community came together. We had my shop, Staff Sgt. Maldonado's team, and even the Soldiers at brigade all pulling together," Edwards said.

With a good system in place, the teams expect to finish wiring the east side buildings by the end of the deployment, just in time for the incoming units to enjoy the magic of full spectrum communications.

"Just remember," Herzog reminded, "every time you pick up a phone, receive an e-mail ... or check out Facebook, the S6 has touched your life."

**(Right)** U.S. Army Warrant Officer 1 James Ellington, a network management technician for 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, climbs down into a manhole system to help run a half-mile-long fiber cable to buildings in Bagram Airfield's east side Feb. 3. The Orlando, Fla., native was one of many communications Soldiers from the 10th CAB who joined together to complete the project. (Photo by U.S. Army Capt. David Edwards, Task Force Phoenix)





# Commentary: A story that hits home; Soldiers, AUP remember fallen Afghan brethren

Story and photos by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Ryan C. Matson  
Task Force Red Bulls Public Affairs

I am a military journalist, on my second deployment to the Middle East: one to Iraq, this one to Afghanistan. When I go on missions, I usually try to stay in the background. That is because I'm an extra. I'm the camera guy. Unless I've trained with the unit and have a role in the mission beyond taking pictures and writing their story, I don't want the Soldiers preoccupied with me or doing things differently, it's not safe for them.

But Feb. 25 was one of the rare times I've broken my rule and did something more than just take pictures and ask questions. I went to the Alingar District Center, basically an Afghan police station, and became involved. I gave a grieving father pictures of his son. The father is, and the son was, an Afghan Uniform Police officer.

On Jan. 25, my friend AUP Lt. Mohammed Hussain, lost his son, Farid Ahmad Malang, and three other AUP officers, Abas Basram, Shafiq and Kandahar Gul, when a massive 200-pound improvised explosive device detonated completely decimating their up-armored humvee.

The officers were on a proactive patrol through their area of operations near the town of Tigalam.

"The officers who died in the IED bomb were the best officers in the Alingar District Center serving and protecting their people," Hussein told me.

He was not crying, but his eyes were full of sorrow, and his voice was different than during previous talks I had with him. It was evident he was still fighting on a daily basis the emotional pain from losing his son.

"My son especially was a brave man. He was like my arm. All the time when we went on patrols, he was trying to protect me. He would never let me take out an IED we'd find, he was the only one who would. He was everything."

This incident hit home to me for a lot of reasons. First of all, in the United States, in Tennessee, I'm a police officer.

Secondly, I saw Hussain and Malang graduate the police academy, the first one held here on a provincial level, Nov. 4, 2010. I saw all four of the officers raise their certificates above their heads and proclaim, "I work for Afghanistan!" in front of the province's government and military officials.

It reminded me of why I wanted to join the police force when I left active-duty service in 2006. It was the first story I covered when I deployed to Afghanistan, and Hussain was the first person I interviewed. I was lucky to talk to him several times since then.

"The first time I saw you and the other Americans, I was glad," Hussain told me as we sat down to talk about his son and the other officers killed, "because I had found some new friends."

This year, I would be writing about what people are doing rather than handling the situations myself as an officer. But seeing the Afghan officers graduate still made me feel a sense of camaraderie with them, or at least a respect for the profession they had chosen to undertake.

There are a lot of differences between doing the job here in Afghanistan and rolling around in a squad car back home but, in the end, police work comes down to serving and protecting the public.



Afghan Uniform Police Farid Ahmad Malang, a squad leader, is shown with his son Jan. 15 at the Alingar District Center. Ten days later, Malang and three other AUP officers from the Alingar District Center were killed when an improvised explosive device detonated near the village of Tigalam.

At home, quite often police work is about talking to people and solving problems. The method of solving a problem may be as simple as listening to a person talk, offering some advice or a number of a service to call, or it may mean carting someone to jail.

You still get guns, drugs, chase people, all the stuff you wanted to do when you joined, but an average day for an officer on patrol comes down to talking to people and solving their wide array of problems. We usually don't have to worry, thankfully, about bombs blowing up our cruisers, or people shooting at us from mountainsides with automatic weapons or grenade launchers.

The insurgency has always reminded me of a bad street gang. The concepts are the same: they intimidate the people into not talking to authorities and doing what they want done. They terrorize innocent people. The same disdain I feel for people doing those deeds back home is the disdain these officers felt for their enemy here.

The incident also forced me to think of what would have happened had this happened in the United States. Without a doubt, not everybody loves the police back home.

However, most people have some level of respect and support for those who try to maintain order and protect the safety of others.

When an officer is killed in the United States, officers come from near and far to their memorials. A convoy of police vehicles with flashing lights may last for miles. The world seems to stop for that moment. The streets are lined with civilians on the route, too. And even though it is under tragic circumstances, I think officers can feel the appreciation the public has for what they do.

There will be no parade for the four officers killed here, but their service and dedication is still remembered by the Afghan and American officers who worked with them.

The 64th Military Police Company's 3rd Platoon out of Fort Hood, Texas, worked and fought side by side with the four fallen officers, going on countless missions and patrols with them during the past year. They agreed with Hussain: the four officers killed were the best and brightest of the Alingar DC.

"They really were dedicated to the security of this place," said U.S. Army Sgt. Denver Missel, one of the team leaders in 3rd Plt. from Argyle, Minn. "(They were) hardworking, and they were cheery."

U.S. Army Sgt. Alberto Iglesias, another team leader with 3rd Plt. from South Plainfield, N.J., remembers Malang as being especially cheerful and enthusiastic – always the first one to run and greet his unit's Soldiers each time they visited.

"We called him Walika," Iglesias recalled. "It means 'come here,' but it became his name. As soon as we pulled in the gate he'd start yelling, 'Walika,' so that became his greeting."

"Two days before they died, I gave him one of my knives because he would find IEDs and dig them out himself. I told him, 'If you're going to be doing that, at least use this, use something decent.' He was always the first one to approach and the first to help, whether it was helping one of the mechanics we brought up to work on a vehicle – he was a squad leader and took care of their vehicles – or whatever we were doing."

"He was a great guy," said U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Joe Contreras, one of the platoon's squad leaders from San Antonio, Texas. "He was involved in everything."

"They were all also always ready to go out and fight, they were all very, very brave," said U.S. Army Sgt. Adam Friday, a team leader from Dover, Del.

Thirty days later, the photographs I gave Hussain of his son with his grandson still visibly shook the 17-year veteran officer. He was pleased to have pictures to remember him by, but he said thinking back on his son's memory will remain happy and still a bit painful all at once.


Hussain had nine sons, and three of them followed his chosen profession as an officer. Malang, obviously, was one, and he has another son working at the DC.

A third son works as an Afghan Civil Order of Police officer in Kabul, and has expressed interest in coming to Alingar to work with his father as Malang had. Though he can never replace Malang, in the Afghan culture, when one's son or brother dies, it is often a call to service for another family member to continue their legacy.

Meanwhile, Hussain still puts on his uniform and leads the other officers at the Alingar DC on patrols and training, just as he did for 17 years before his son was killed. And, though he is grieving, he still presses on with the mission and motivates those around him.

"It's unforgettable for me," Hussain said. "My son was always trying to protect me. He would give some of his salary back to me. He loved working with the coalition forces and had a lot of friends in the MPs. I try to motivate the other AUP to work like my son and the other officers who were killed did in their honor."

Somehow, when I sat down to write this, I couldn't just do the typical news story: who, what, when, where. People read words, they read headlines, they get information or satisfy a curiosity, and then they forget.

But these officers should not be forgotten. Both the Afghan Uniform Police officers and the American military police officers will tell you, they embodied the standard of what an officer here should be. 



Soldiers from the 64th Military Police Company, 720th Military Police Battalion, walk out of the village of Kachur, Afghanistan, with Alingar District Afghan Uniformed Police and citizens of the village Jan. 15. Ten days later, four AUP officers from the Alingar District Center were killed when an improvised explosive device detonated near the village of Tigalam, completely destroying their up-armored humvee.



# W Unit atch

## Bagram Area Office Afghanistan Engineer District - North U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

### Mission:

The corps delivers timely, quality infrastructure and services in support of the integrated Afghan and coalition forces' counterinsurgency operations aimed at protecting the population and defeating insurgent forces. We provide sustainable development projects for the Afghan people that employ the populace, build skilled human capital, and promote the stability of Afghanistan.

### History:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers can trace its roots back as far as 1775 when Gen. George Washington appointed the army's first chief engineer. In 1779, the Continental Congress created a separate Corps of Engineers to build fortifications for use in the Revolutionary War. The Corps of Engineers, as it is known today, was formally created by Thomas Jefferson in 1838. Today, USACE is the world's largest public engineering, design and construction management agency with 34,000 employees who manage a wide range of public works across the globe. The Corps of Engineers first entered Operation Enduring Freedom in 2002 with the Afghanistan area office in Kabul to manage the construction of Afghan National Army facilities. USACE currently has two districts, eight area offices, 25 resident offices, personnel imbedded in 27 provincial reconstruction teams, and a workload of \$11 billion for fiscal years 2010 to 2012 for such projects as ANA Bases, Afghan National Police stations, universities and critical infrastructure systems such as roads, bridges and power.

### Why we are the best:

The Bagram Area Office is executing a \$600 million construction program that includes the ongoing development of Bagram Airfield, a massive Afghanistan National Security Forces program, and construction of a backbone of infrastructure in Parwan, Bamyán, Kapisa, Panjsher, Wardak and Kabul provinces.

This is truly a joint unit, composed of one U.S. Army engineer, five U.S. Air Force engineers, and a volunteer force of 67 civilian engineers. The Bagram office has five subordinate resident offices that coordinate with a vast array of customers inside Bagram and across its six provinces to deliver mission enabling facilities and infrastructure.

The airfield resident office recently completed the \$10 million Helo Hangar for the 10th Combat Aviation Brigade. There are also several projects nearing completion: the \$13 million C-130 hanger for the 455th Air Expeditionary Wing along with ongoing passenger and cargo handling terminals, extensive airfield pavements construction, and a state-of-the-art \$37 million bulk fuel systems project.

On behalf of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division, Task Force Red Bulls, and Bagram base operations, the infrastructure resident office recently completed a wastewater treatment plant, 6 kilometers of wastewater systems, and 5 kilometers of fire protection system to support the population at Bagram.

The on-base resident office delivered 10 dormitories to house 1,500 troops operating out of Bagram. The recently completed \$9 million Grady Dining Facility has been a huge morale booster for east-side residents. The office is also constructing a \$24 million warehousing complex for Army Materiel Command.

The area reconstruction resident office executes an average of 30 outside-the-wire project inspections every month to oversee coalition and ANSF enabling infrastructure on behalf of three different brigade-level battle space owners. For TF Red Bulls in Panjshir and Parwan, the office is executing a \$20 million ANA base at Red Hill, two ANP stations, 50 kilometers of roadway, a key facility for the Parwan Institute of Higher Learning, and recently completed seven ANP district headquarters facilities. For Task Force Lafayette in Kapisa Province and Surobi District, we are working on a \$54 million ANA brigade base, a \$27 million ANA kandak base, 45 kilometers of Main Supply Route Vermont, and three ANP facilities. For 4th Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, Task Force Patriot, in Bamyán and Wardak, the office is delivering three ANP facilities as well as Bamyán University.

Along with this massive construction portfolio, the entire area office takes great pride in our partnership with Afghan engineers and companies to develop the capacity for a sustainable future for Afghanistan. We work with 34 Afghan-owned companies and employ 14 Afghans in our ranks to develop construction managers that can lead Afghanistan into the future. 🇦🇫

# W Nutrition atch

## Go for Green in the dining facilities

Story by U.S. Army Major Renee E. Cole, PhD, RD, LD.

Last month we talked about adding color to half of your plate through fruits and vegetables to reduce empty calories. In this article we'll discuss another way color is incorporated to help the warfighter make healthier choices in the dining facility. A program known as "Go for Green" was implemented in many of the DFACs throughout Afghanistan and is based upon a color-coded labeling system to allow for quick assessment of the nutritional value of the foods served.

Foods on the serving lines are labeled with color-coded nutrient cards, similar to that of a stop light, with green, yellow and red foods. Foods labeled green provide the biggest bang for the nutrition buck. They are high performance foods that can positively impact a warfighter's performance. The green foods are typically less processed, contain lower fat or added sugar, and are typically high in beneficial nutrients like vitamins, minerals and fiber.

The foods labeled red inhibit performance and can negatively impact a warfighter's performance since they are higher in fat or added sugar, lower in those beneficial nutrients, and provide empty calories making weight management more challenging.

See the 'Go for Green' determination chart to see how foods are divided into the three categories. The goal is to choose mostly green and yellow labeled foods and avoid those labeled red. Of course, I'm a big advocate of including all foods in moderation, so a good rule of thumb is no more than two red foods in a day.

The DFAC staff works with the theater-registered dietitian to develop the color-coded nutrient cards that you'll find on the serving lines. Nutrient information is received from the vendor for those foods purchased. The dietitian and DFAC staff wade through every item on the rotating menu to determine whether the food fits into the green, yellow or red category.

The process is continually evolving as food products change, new recipes are developed, and more up-to-date nutrient information is provided. Occasionally you'll find a food item erroneously labeled green that should be red, or vice versa, but overall this is a quick and efficient method for the DFAC patrons to make healthier dining choices.

Next time you're in the DFAC, stop and take a look to see if your facility uses the "Go for Green" program. This simple concept of identifying various foods as green, yellow, or red, will also help you learn what foods are healthier options if you pay attention to the common characteristics.

For example, green-labeled, healthier meat options are a leaner cut, have fat trimmed off, or are prepared without added fats. Fish and poultry are typically a healthier option than pork or beef, unless they are breaded and fried. Chicken breast (white meat) is leaner than legs/thighs (dark meat) and the majority of the fat is contained in the skin, thus removing the skin improves the quality.

Meats that are broiled, baked, grilled, or roasted are healthier options. Shellfish generally have higher cholesterol level but can still be part of your dinner plate. Any dish with a white, cream








or cheese sauce, are breaded, and/or are fried will naturally contain more fat, decreasing the nutritional value and causing them shift to the red category.

As mentioned last month, awareness is half the battle. When you start paying attention to the food choices you're making, you can then assess your current habits and decide how to make improvements.

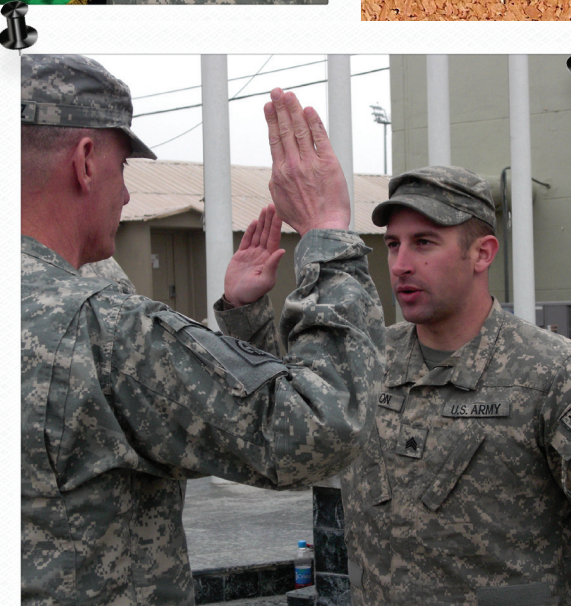
It is too easy to start by looking for the green- and yellow-labeled foods in the DFAC.

What is limited thought involvement today can transition to increase awareness for healthier options tomorrow! 🇺🇸

### Go for Green program criteria

Eat Often	Eat Occasionally	Eat Rarely
<b>Entrée Single Item</b> <300 calories <10 g fat 	<b>Entrée Single Item</b> 300-500 kcal 10-15 g fat	<b>Entrée Single Item:</b> >500 calories >15 g fat
<b>Full Dishes:</b> <500 calories <18 g fat 	<b>Full Dishes:</b> 500-700 kcal 18-25 g fat	<b>Full Dishes:</b> >700 calories >25 g fat
<b>Starchy Sides:</b> <200 calories Higher fiber options 	<b>Starchy Sides:</b> 200-300 kcal	<b>Starchy Sides:</b> >200 calories
<b>Vegetable:</b> <100 calories 	<b>Vegetable:</b> 100-200 kcal	<b>Vegetable:</b> >200 calories
<b>Dessert:</b> Low calories / low fat / low sugar options 	<b>Dessert:</b> Reduced kcal / reduced fat option	<b>Dessert:</b> Full fat options
<b>Beverage:</b> Water / calorie free / reduced calorie options 	<b>Beverage:</b> 100% fruit juice / sports drinks	<b>Beverage:</b> Juice less than 100% fruit / energy drink / Kool-Aid
<b>Dairy:</b> Skim or 1% fat 	<b>Dairy:</b> 2% fat	<b>Dairy:</b> Whole fat





**CJTF-101**  
**Command**  
**Retention NCO**  
CSM Scott C.  
Schroeder

## Oath of Reenlistment

I do solemnly swear to support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the orders of the President of the United States and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to regulations and the Uniform Code of Military Justice.  
So help me God.



***See What's Happening  
in the Army Retention Corner!***

**MOS Administrative Retention Review  
(MAR2) Program**

- 1 May 2011 – Army-wide Implementation
- MAR2 replaces the MOS/Medical Retention Board (MMRB)
- MAR2 enhances the Army's ability to maintain a quality force by ensuring Soldiers are physically qualified to perform their PMOS in a worldwide deployed environment or field condition
- MAR2 provides Commanders a process to identify Soldiers who have medical limitations and require an **administrative review** to determine if the Soldier meets his/her MOS standards
- MAR2 Process begins once Installation/Post Retention Office obtains P3/P4 profile from Patient Administration Division (PAD)
- Tracking and Reporting
  - MAR2 utilizes an automated workflow process within MEDPROS to track a Soldier's status from start to end
- HRC provide unit with 1 of 3 MAR2 Decisions
  - Retain in MOS
  - Reclassify to new MOS
  - Refer to Medical Evaluation Board (MEB)
- For additional information on MAR2 sample packets and training slides, visit [www.us.army.mil/suite/files/26019966](http://www.us.army.mil/suite/files/26019966). Additionally, a recorded overview for Soldiers and Leaders is available via Defense Connect Online (DCO). The overview can be located by searching for "MAR2 Overview - Regular Army" in the Meeting/Recording search box on DCO.



# Mailing something home?

A few things to keep in mind to make the process quick and painless.

- Have your box ready for inspection.
- Be sure your container, box or footlocker is in good shape with old markings blacked out.
- Items may not be larger than 108 inches in combined size (length+width+depth).
- Items may not weigh more than **70 pounds**.
- Have your address label and customs form already filled out, be sure include a copy of the address label inside the package.
- No checks or credit cards, only cash or the Eagle Cash Card is accepted for payment.

Some items that **cannot** be mailed include:

- Alcohol of any kind
- Plants, plants products, sand or soil
- Live or dead animals
- Live poisonous insects (camel spiders)
- Cigarette lighters
- Weapons (pistols, rifles, replicas, toy guns)
- Weapon parts (magazines, barrels, bolts, receivers, stocks)
- Ammunition (live or spent, including brass)
- Exploded and unexploded ordnance (mines, grenades, fragments thereof)
- Switchblades or knives with a blade longer than 6 inches
- Military equipment (TA-50, radios, any chemical defense equipment, compasses)
- No War trophies

For more information, please contact your unit mail clerk, a postal customer service representative or call DSN 318-431-3023.

# NATIONAL GUARD AND ARMY RESERVE AFFAIRS

**Guard:**

**army.nationalguard@  
afghan.swa.army.mil**

**DSN**

**318-431-4249**

**Reserve:**

**army.reserve@  
afghan.swa.army.mil**

**DSN**

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# 94.1 FM AFGHANISTAN

To make a request, call DSN 318-431-3339 or email [afnbagram@gmail.com](mailto:afnbagram@gmail.com)



# the final Watch

*Ground is broken on the Route Highlife road-improvement project during a groundbreaking ceremony at the Kluakrez District Center in Kandahar Province. The road runs 20 miles and connects the district center to Kandahar City. The ceremony marks the beginning of improvement to a five-mile stretch of the road. (Photo by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Jeremy D. Crisp, Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force - Afghanistan Media Operations Center)*

