



Duke Dispatch

Vol. 17



Salerno artists craft
memories, friendships

Matun elders meet
in security shura

December 2011

Table of Contents

- 3 Commander's Corner
- 3 Voice of the CSM
- 4 Chaplain's word
- 4 Club donates bike
- 5 FOB Salerno Artists
- 7 Thanksgiving
- 9 Matun elders shura
- 11 Warrior's Profile
- 13 Columns



Photos from operations of Task Force Duke taken between Nov. 15- Dec. 15. Top Left: Photo by Sgt. Tobey White, Top Right: Sgt. Tobey White, Middle Left: Maj. Travis Dettmer, Middle Right: Spc. Phillip McTaggart, Bottom Left: Spc. Phillip McTaggart



Staff

Editor-in-chief:
Maj. Travis Dettmer

Contributors:
Sgt. 1st Class Andrew Kretz
Master Sgt. David Burgoon
Staff Sgt. Marvin Kauger
Ken Campbell
Ally Reese

Managing Editor:
Staff Sgt. Ben Navratil

Staff Writers and Photographers
Staff Sgt. John Zumer
Sgt. Tobey White
Spc. Phillip McTaggart

Layout and Design:
Sgt. Tobey White

Inspiration:
Homeward Bound

Looking for the Duke Brigade?
Find us @

 <http://www.knox.army.mil/forscom/3ibct/>

 <http://www.facebook.com/3rdBrigade1stInfantryDivison>

 <https://twitter.com/3rdBCT1ID>

 <http://www.youtube.com/user/TFDukePAO/>



Cover photo- U.S. Army Soldiers of C Troop, 6th Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Task Force Duke fire M249 machine guns on a heavy weapons range outside of Camp Parsa, on Nov. 30. With U.S. forces' assistance, ANA soldiers practice and train on several different weapon systems to familiarize themselves. (Photo by U.S. Army Spc. Phillip McTaggart, Task Force Duke Public Affairs)

Commander's Corner

By Col. Chris Toner
TF Duke Commander

Our Duke Brigade's time in eastern Afghanistan is rapidly coming to an end, coinciding with the calendar year. Our time here has seen significant progress in the way of governance, development, and security, and while it's tempting to look back with a certain sense of nostalgia, I believe the lasting legacy of our accomplishment will come from its impact on the future.

Maybe you've never thought about deployments and the success of a unit in such terms, but in many ways our efforts here can be compared to running a race. We arrived in theater last winter and took the leadership baton from the 3rd Brigade of the 101st Airborne Division. That mantle of leadership will similarly be passed off to our replacements from the 4th Brigade of the 25th Infantry Division. As a commander, I wanted our Duke Brigade to build upon the many accomplishments of our predecessors, which we have done. But as a Soldier committed to the big

picture, I also want our successors to take our accomplishments and methods to an even higher level, because it will positively impact the effort to make Afghanistan more secure, stable and prosperous.

What we accomplished here can't be completely summarized in a short column like this. The Afghan people have seen for the first time in a generation that a better future is possible. We have worked closely with Afghan National Security Forces to rid this nation of the criminals who seek to destabilize it and harm its citizens, while helping facilitate educational and economic opportunities for people who previously had little hope. Perhaps most importantly, we have made significant progress in connecting the people to their legitimate government while emphasizing that Afghans helping Afghans will be the true litmus test for meaningful change.

War being what it is means our considerable successes have not come without sacrifice. Spc. Sean Walsh of the 870th Military Police Company, Calif. Army National Guard, gave his life Nov. 16 in a



rocket attack on Camp Clark. My heart goes to his loved ones, family, and friends who mourn the passing of this brave Soldier. He joins the ranks of the TF Duke fallen who paid the ultimate price in defense of freedom for the Afghan people and for the people of the United States.

As we pass the leadership baton and reflect upon our numerous accomplishments let us move forward knowing the sacrifices and devotion to duty of TF Duke Soldiers will be the most enduring legacy of our time here, inspiring future generations of Afghans and Americans for years to come.

Duty First! 

Voice of the CSM

By CSM Drew Pumarejo
TF Duke Command Sgt. Maj.

It may seem hard to believe after 11 eventful months, but our Duke Brigade is going home. Everyone has multiple emotions about that, and naturally so. Whether we think about how we grew personally and professionally while deployed, comrades who paid the ultimate price or what long-awaited Family reunions will be like, it's a chapter in our lives approaching its end. Before we step into the future, however, we've got some important business in the present that needs to be taken care of first.

All of us are looking forward to the chance to unwind. We deserve to, and no one is going to hold it against you as long as you play by the rules and expectations. Just because you served our country in wartime will be no excuse for acting foolishly. Each of us will be expected to obey all laws and brigade directives, especially


those pertaining to alcohol use and operating a motor vehicle. Some may think our leadership team is beating a dead horse with these constant reminders, but we do it for a reason. It's to reinforce the personal conduct standards which society, the Army and our unit expects of Soldiers. If ever in doubt ask yourself if your conduct would make anybody (especially Mom, Dad or your spouse) think less of you.

Some of you may have heard the old urban legends about how the Army has separate standards for garrison and deployment, whether they pertain to grooming, conduct or wear of the uniform. Nothing could be further from the truth. We need to continue maintaining these universal standards as the deployment winds down, not just those we find convenient.

Our Fort Knox community has long supported us. Don't betray that trust by acting foolishly upon our return. We don't get a second chance to make a first



impression, and the 3,000 Soldier-strong Duke Brigade returning home will once again require us to become good neighbors in the community. Finally, realize you aren't the only person to have been changed by the deployment. Spouses and children have adapted to your absence, so integrate yourself slowly and compassionately back into the household routine instead of thinking time stood still while you were away.

No Mission Too Difficult...No Sacrifice Too Great...Duty First! 

Chaplain's Word

By Chaplain (Maj.) Mike Nishimura,
TF Duke Chaplain

It's December, "the most wonderful time of the year" as one of the most popular Christmas songs goes. Though many of us may not be able to celebrate the holidays with our family and friends this year, it still is a wonderful season in many ways.

In spite of the recent controversy surrounding what to call the decorated tree or how to greet customers in stores, it still produces significant feelings of joy and happiness when we think of this season. And yet, it also could be a significantly stressful time of year for some people for many reasons.

Many people are concerned about shopping for that elusive best present and hosting fabulous parties. Others seek those perfect decorations, in and out of their homes, which produce neighbors' envy. You may recall the movie Christmas Vacation, starring Chevy

Chase, which depicts the very humorous nature of this challenge. For some others this may be the first holiday season away from our loved ones and friends which by itself could be a stress-producing experience.


Also, as we approach the end of this year, we can look back and review how we've lived. One of the things I was reminded of this year is how I take some things for granted. Many things I enjoy in life were not readily available or were sometimes completely absent. I realized that I take things for granted because they are not where I usually find them—I missed them. At the same time, I didn't miss some of the things I used to think important or necessary in my life. We did away with some of the things we usually enjoy in life by necessity or by choice. As a result, their perceived significance faded.

We were able to simplify our lives to a degree. I discovered there are things



that are important—non-negotiable. Others are something nice to have but not really necessary when push comes to a shove.

The New Year promises to be one filled with activities and challenges, but with the increased resilience we developed this year, overcoming the obstacles that may lie ahead should be easier to deal with.

I pray for the Lord's blessings upon you as you celebrate this holiday season. Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays! 

Club donates bike to Afghan child

Story and photos by Sgt. Tobey White,
TF Duke, PAO

Most people remember that fateful day as when they received their first bike. For one Afghan boy that day came on Forward Operating Base Salerno when he was given a bike from the Germany-based Kaiserslautern Military Community Cycling club, Nov. 28.

The donated bike was the first one donated as part of a program KMC Cycling started to provide Afghan children with better transportation, said U.S. Army Maj. George Smolinski, a physician out of the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center and individual augmentee to the 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Task Force Duke.

In October, Smolinski, a St. Paul, Minn., native, began coordinating with KMC Cycling on how best to transport and distribute the bikes.

"I was here [in Afghanistan] so we joined forces to make this happen," Smolinski said.

Service members donated used bikes to the program, which were repaired by members of KMC Cycling, Smolinski said. After the bikes had been fixed they were mailed to Afghanistan.

"A lot of the kids are injured and biking is a great physical therapy for them," Smolinski said. "For the young adults the bike will be a great means of transportation and can be used to haul equipment or groceries."

The boy chosen to receive the bike had been a patient of the Combat Support Hospital on FOB Salerno since May, when he was brought in after being in a motor vehicle accident, said U.S. Army Capt. Jeffrey Smith, a nurse with the 352nd Combat Support Hospital and a native of Oakland, Calif.


The boy, affectionately named "Hot Rod" for his propensity to navigate the hospital in his wheelchair then crutches, remained in the hospital for two months while receiving treatments for his legs, Smith said.

"He's become dear to myself and the others over the course of time he's been



Maj. George Smolinski, a physician out of Landstuhl Regional Medical Center and an individual augmentee to 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Task Force Duke and a native of St. Paul, Minn. gave a bike to an Afghan boy on Forward Operating Base Salerno, Afghanistan, Nov. 28.

here," Smith explained. "The hardest thing for him about the bike is he has to keep his leg straight for two more weeks and won't be able to use it until then."

"This is a great first step we've taken here today and we hope to touch the lives of many more Afghani children through this program," said Smolinski. 

U.S. Army Spc. Carlton Fischer, a machinist and welder with the service and recovery shop, 201st Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Task Force Duke, speaks in the chapel at Forward Operating Base Salerno, Nov. 6, after donating a cross he manufactured. Standing at left is U.S. Army Maj. Michael Spikes, a chaplain with the 201st BSB and a native of Spring, Texas, who accepted the gift. Fischer, a native of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., turned his love of design and knowledge of metalwork into manufacturing the cross, which he wanted to leave as a legacy for present and future worshippers.



FOB Salerno Artists

Soldiers craft memories, friendships

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. John Zumer, TF Duke, PAO

Coping with the rigors of deployment can be difficult even under ideal circumstances, not to mention the additional challenges that surface from unexpected events. Two U.S. Army soldiers from the Fort Knox, Ky.-based 201st Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Task Force Duke, however, have discovered that using their creative talents for personal and unit betterment has been a prime example of art imitating life.

U.S. Army Spc. Carlton Fischer, a machinist and welder with the service and recovery shop, 201st BSB, and a native of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., takes much pride in his creations, but it's the people he produces works for that have always motivated him the most.

"I really like making people happy with the stuff I create," said Fischer, who has used his deployment at Forward Operating Base Salerno to complete many iron and steel projects. Three of his completed works include a sign at the installation's combat support hospital, a new cross for the chapel interior and a decorative Big Red One near his unit's flagpole, highlighting its link to the 1st Inf. Div.

Before entering the military, Fischer used his talents to create miniatures and animated characters on big screen Hollywood releases like Nightmare before Christmas, James and the Giant Peach, and Mosquito. Having been in the Army for three years while performing a job he enjoys, Fischer said his biggest joy is in taking an idea from the drawing board and turning it into reality.

His superiors enjoy the fact that Fischer usually knows what needs to be done.

"Having him around makes a leader's job much easier. We don't have to stand around and constantly watch over him," said U.S. Army Sgt. Wayne Bussard, an El Paso, Texas, native and the non commissioned officer in charge for the service and recovery shop.

Unlike Fischer who has used the entire deployment to practice his craft, U.S. Army Capt. Dree Boggs, the support transportation officer for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 201st BSB resumed her sketch drawings as a way of coping with a harrowing event. A Sept. 18 rocket attack that hit the 201st BSB's headquarters on FOB Salerno damaged a large portion of the building, sending shrapnel everywhere but fortunately leaving no serious injuries.

"I really hadn't worked much on my drawings before the at-

tack. It's definitely the most traumatic thing that's happened to me on this deployment," said Boggs, a native of Bossier City, La., who joined the Army in 2006.

Her work inspired by the attack, "Hold On," is an expression of the emotions she felt and how the Soldiers in her section take care of each other. Vine and compressed charcoals were used for the drawing, which took almost 46 hours to complete, said Boggs.

With a bachelor of fine arts degree in studio art and design from Louisiana Tech University, she likes to use measurement and comparison ratios in her drawings, obtained through photos of her subjects taken after receiving her inspiration.

The subjects of "Hold On" were U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Jorge Ruiz Chang and U.S. Army Spc. Gabrielle Shriner, who suffered a concussion from the rocket attack.

After the attack, Boggs and Ruiz Chang escorted Shriner to the FOB Salerno combat support hospital for treatment, prompting a follow-up visit to the traumatic brain injury clinic. It was between those two locations that Shriner was unable to continue under her own power. Ruiz Chang reached to carry her the rest of the way, providing the inspiration for Boggs' drawing.

The original drawing is promised to Ruiz Chang, while Boggs plans to keep a scanned copy for herself.



U.S. Army Capt. Dree Boggs, the support transportation officer for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 201st Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Task Force Duke, holds her drawing, "Hold On," at Forward Operating Base Salerno, Nov. 22. A native of Bossier City, La., Boggs is one of several artists at the installation using their creative talents to help pass the time and to enrich the lives of fellow Soldiers. The drawing was inspired by a rocket attack at the installation, and how the Soldiers in her section take care of each other.



"Hold On"

Artist: Captain Dree Boggs Chang and Spc. Gabrielle Shriner

Inspiration: Rocket attack on BSB headquarters on Sept. 18 and the actions of two Soldiers afterwards

Materials: Vine and compressed charcoals

Hours to complete: 46 hours

Models: Staff Sgt. Ruiz

Boggs says the incident has motivated her to continue her drawings, possibly focusing on a series of hands. The therapeutic effects drawing offers is further incentive to continue honing the skills she had put on the back burner.

"After the attack I would get antsy. It felt really good to work on something that meant this much to me," said Boggs.

Their labors of love may have gone unpublicized if not for the discerning eye of U.S. Army Maj. Michael Spikes, the 201st BSB chaplain and a native of Spring, Texas, who maintains an office near the two Soldiers. He thinks the ultimate value of having such talented personnel like Fischer and Boggs lies not in their completed works, but in the inspiration and lessons for coping with a deployment they provide for others.

"A Soldier can vent his or her frustrations and stress and turn it into a tangible thing of beauty. We all have a spark of creativity in us, sometimes it just needs to be fanned a little in order to produce a source of light and warmth," said Spikes.

That warmth produced, said Fischer, often leaves benefits and good feelings beyond those felt by the artist, as with his cross for the chapel.

"It's something for the next unit to enjoy as well. I just feel very lucky to be in a shop that allows me to do this," he said.

Thanksgiving in Afghanistan

Upper Left: Soldiers from Company D, 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Task Force Duke, unload a shipment of ice cream delivered by helicopter to Combat Outpost Narizah Nov. 24, to add to an already planned Thanksgiving feast. Narizah was the first stop on a tour of all of TF Duke's COPs in Khowst Province by U.S. Army Col. Chris Toner from Topeka, Kan., commander of TF Duke.

Bottom Left: U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Daniel Allyn, commanding general of Regional Command – East and 1st Cavalry Division, speaks to Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 6th Artillery Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Task Force Duke, at Forward Operating Base Salerno Nov. 24. Allyn was visiting the base as part of a Thanksgiving tour of the battlefield, and awarded medals and badges to several Soldiers.



Center: Soldiers of Company A, 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Task Force Duke, are served Thanksgiving dinner by brigade and battalion leadership at Combat Outpost Chergataw Nov. 24.

Immediate Left: Soldiers from Company B, 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Task Force Duke, enjoy Thanksgiving dinner at Combat Outpost Sabari Nov. 24. Leaders from their battalion and brigade travelled all over TF Duke's area of operations in Khowst, visiting the most outlying COPs to share the Thanksgiving holiday with the troops stationed there.

Lower Right: U.S. Army Lt. Col. Dennis Atkins, executive officer for the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Task Force Duke, and native of Elkview, W.V., along with U.S. Army Lt. Col. Jesse Pearson of Chicago, commander of 1st Battalion, 26th Inf. Regiment, 3rd BCT, 1st Inf. Div. delivers Thanksgiving dinner to Soldiers manning the towers at Combat Outpost Chergataw Nov. 24. Chergataw is one of the smallest and most austere outposts in TF Duke's area of operation, so a full Thanksgiving feast delivered by helicopter was a major shift from the normal fare they partake in on a daily basis.



Photos by Maj. Travis Dettmer



Photo by Spc. John Martinez



Matun elders make voices heard in security shura

Story and photos by Maj. Travis Dettmer, TF Duke, PAO

In an accomplishment nearly 11 months in the making, the leaders of the 1st Battalion, 6th Field Artillery Regiment, Task Force Centaur, were finally able to see the first Matun district elder security shura come to fruition Nov. 20.

The event was held on Forward Operating Base Salerno because of its central location and preexisting security measures.

TF Centaur, a Fort Knox, Ky.-based unit belonging to the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Task Force Duke, worked closely with the elders to make the shura a reality. Previous efforts had been complicated by the unstable security situation that had plagued the area for years.

U.S. Army Capt. Chet Craw, com-

mander of Battery B, 1st Battalion, 6th FA Regiment, attributed the long process of making the shura a reality to the previous security conditions in the area that witnessed regular indirect fire and improvised explosive device threats.

"With the [security] increases of the last...three to four months ... the elders have pushed for the shura and we finally have gotten it together," said the Jackson, Mich., native, explaining that this was the initial security shura for the Matun tribe which occupies the areas to the west, south and east of FOB Salerno.

"Extending the [Afghan police] presence to some of the areas they don't get to on a regular basis, and with the mayor's office...a focus on small-scale projects, wells, dams, schools, and irrigation projects," were some of the topics he said

would probably be discussed at the shura.

Brig. Gen. Sardar Mohammed Zazi, Khowst provincial police chief, who opened the event, was the senior representative present for the Afghan National Security Forces, while the Khowst governor's office sent a representative in the absence of Gov. Abdul Jamar Naeemi, who was attending a Loya Jirga in Kabul.

"The government and ANSF forces in the area are committed to working toward security for the people," said Zazi in his opening comments. He also asked for the hands of all the Matun elders to join his in taking the steps necessary for peace. "The people are tired of fighting, [they] are tired

Elders greet each other while an Afghan Uniform Policeman sits nearby just before the start of the Matun Elders Security Shura held on Nov. 20 at Forward Operating Base Salerno.



of blood- it is time to take this step and bring the message of peace," he said.

While those topics were discussed during the forum, participants also used the opportunity to break their silence on other issues heavy on their minds.

One middle-aged looking elder clad in a whitish-grey jammay with complementing turban voiced his concerns that government talks of peace don't go far enough.

"We cannot just bring peace with talks. We are committed to peace, we need peace," said the impassioned elder. "We are here with you and we request that our [government] bring peace with both words and actions. We should have a mediator that is acceptable to both sides - the Taliban and the government - to work towards the peace process," said the elder.

Another similarly dressed elder offered praise to Zazi for increased security in the area.

"Compared to other provinces, security is better here," this elder said, referring to Khowst Province. "We don't have the same issues that some provinces have. Compared to other districts in Khowst, Matun is even safer than most," he said, recognizing the improved security situation.

Zazi said this event is an important step toward the future of security in Matun and Khowst province.

"Today's meeting with the Matun elders was a significant event and this will be an important thing for the future," said the police chief, who added he was hopeful for additional meetings in the future.

U.S. Army Lt. Col. James Vizzard, commander of TF Centaur, said the long-anticipated event went very well.

"I feel pretty positive about it," said the native of Alexandria, Va. "Here was an opportunity for them to say what they thought in front of a representative from the governor's office, in front of the provincial police chief, and have them sit and listen and pay attention. I think Brig. Gen. Zazi understands that and will respond."

With TF Centaur's replacements due to arrive within the next few weeks the shura was timely. Vizzard said he's confident this was the catalyst the Matun elders needed as his unit prepares to transition responsibility.

"I think we are handing off a good way forward to the incoming unit," he said, "and I think [coalition forces] can move forward with the provincial police over the next month or two, assisting them and at some point, let go and let them run it."



Upper Right: Brig. Gen. Sardar Mohammed Zazi, Khowst Province Provincial Police Chief, pictured here during his opening monologue, was the senior representative representing the Afghan National Security Forces in Khowst Province during the Matun Elders Security Shura held on Nov. 20 at Forward Operating Base Salerno.

Lower Right: Capt. Luke Hudspeth, Platoon leader in Btry B, 1st Bn, 6th Field Artillery Regt., TF Centaur, helped coordinate the security and logistics for the Matun Elders security shura held Nov. 20 on Forward Operating Base Salerno, Afghanistan.



Water specialists work behind the scenes at FOB Andar

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. John Zumer, TF Duke, PAO

According to the U.S. Army, water pollution from raw sewage is the most significant environmental contamination problem in Afghanistan and is one of the most significant health threats to deployed personnel.

A U.S. study of bacterial contamination in water sources found that 65 percent of protected, closed wells and 90 percent of open wells were contaminated with coliform bacteria.

U.S. Army Spc. Jeremy Seamon, a water treatment specialist with 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Task Force Duke, said the daily routine of purification, monitoring and testing associated with ensuring water safety at Forward Operating Base Andar, in eastern Afghanistan, isn't something most people usually think about.

"It's our job to make sure people can take it for granted that the water will be there when they need it," said Seamon, from Hillsboro, Ill.

Drawing water from an on-base well, Seamon and co-worker, U.S. Army Spc. Charles Duenas of Guam, oversee a facility capable of treating 30,000-40,000 gallons daily. Andar is the only coalition installation in the TF Duke battle-space with its own treatment facility.

Although the treated water remains non-potable, but can be used for high-volume uses like showers, flushing toilets, washing clothes and cleaning kitchen utensils.

While Seamon's team may operate out of sight and out of mind of most, their efforts haven't gone unnoticed by those responsible for making FOB Andar function effectively during the deployment.

"We never have the fear of losing water capacity here like a lot of other places," said U.S. Army Command Sgt. Maj. Walter Tagalicud, of Orlando, Fla., 3rd BCT, 1st Infantry Division, TF Duke.

Tagalicud, said the unsung heroes make daily living not only possible, but more comfortable than it would otherwise be.

"[The water capacity] gives the soldiers the benefit of a longer shower, and not just a combat shower," he said.

Before Seamon and Duenas can begin the treatment process, a preventive medicine team checks for contaminants, such as fecal or e-coli bacteria. If contaminants are present and left untreated, outbreaks of dysentery or diarrhea could result.

Once the preventive medicine team signs-off on the well, Seamon and Duenas then test for any nuclear, biological or chemical contaminants. If the testing proves negative, water purification can begin.

Fortunately, according to Seamon, the process is made significantly easier by the initial quality of the product.

"The well water here is pretty good to begin with," said Seamon.

The team treats tanks, containing thousands of gallons of well water pumped from underground, with calcium hypochloride tab-



Opposite: Spc. Jeremy Seamon, a water treatment specialist with Company A, 201st Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Task Force Duke, and a native of Hillsboro, Ill., watches the flow of non-potable water treated at Forward Operating Base Andar, Nov. 1.

Above: Spc. Jeremy Seamon, uses a chlorimeter to measure the chlorine in the water to test a water sample at Forward Operating Base Andar, Nov. 1. Chlorine is used to kill or neutralize harmful bacteria, and there are specified levels that must be maintained in the non-potable water at FOB Andar to ensure no personnel are endangered.

lets, to effectively kill or neutralize any remaining contaminants. Water samples are then evaluated for turbidity, pH, and chlorine levels using what Seamon refers to as a "wasp" kit.

Turbidity refers to an acceptable level of dissolved solids in the water, while pH measures whether a liquid is an acid or a base. Pure water, for example, is said to be neutral with a desired pH level of seven.

Upon being treated, the non-potable water is safe to be used across the installation for the many high-volume uses, with the laundry and showers being the biggest users.

As far as Tagalicud is concerned, Seamon and Duenas make FOB Andar work by eliminating those water-borne scares that have the potential to not only compromise mission effectiveness but harm lives.

"We know where our water is coming from and that it's safe," he said. ■

Reenlistment: By Master Sgt. David Burgoon Retention NCOIC

Congratulations, you've reenlisted while downrange. You're looking forward to your new assignment, training in a new MOS or just some stabilization back at Fort Knox. You have made a big commitment to your nation and taken a great step in your career.

Just remember that once you go back, you still have obligations and you still have the support of your Career Counselor. Here's just a few of the things to remember:

If you reenlisted for assignment or training, you need to stay linked in with your Career Counselor to let them know of any life changes that might affect your availability to move out. Issues like medical conditions, promotions, administrative actions or other major changes can affect your assignment. The sooner you let your Career Counselor know, the sooner they can help you continue on the right track.

You need to stay qualified for your assignments. Meeting physical fitness standards is a must. If you don't meet the standards, levy isn't going to be able to push you out on your assignment. If your assignment gets cancelled because you were flagged when it was time to go, there is nothing anyone


can do.

If you reenlisted for the Commander's College Incentive, you need to have a copy of the agreement signed by yourself and the Commander in your possession. This is your "Golden Ticket". Also, it's up to you to get down to the education center, get a class schedule and send it up to your Commander for approval.

Along the same lines, if you reenlisted for stabilization and requested the Order of Merit list preference for a military school, it is your requirement to complete any required packet. You should have a copy of the DA 4187 that was submitted at the time of reenlistment. Contact your Career Counselor, 1st Sergeant and training NCO to get into the school. Again, you have to be fully qualified for the school, not flagged and ready to go.

In closing, keep in touch with your retention team once you get back, your Career Counselor is there to support you.

Thank you for your continued service to our great Nation. Whether you received an option, a school, a bonus or just reenlisted "Needs of the Army" to make it on orders or retirement; you are keeping America strong and supporting the ones to your left and your right.

Thanks. 

FRG Events By Ally Reese FRG Leader

With the arrival of our first torch flight, every Duke Family is eagerly awaiting the return of their Soldier. There are several ways we will inform you of your Soldiers return including E-Army messaging, Virtual FRG webpage updates, email, and phone calls scripts from your Family Readiness Group (FRG).


A few tips to stay updated:

1. Make sure your FRG has your most up-to-date information with contact phone and email address.
2. Register with your unit and Brigade Virtual Family Readiness Group Webpage at www.armyfrg.org. (for assistance in registering, please contact your FRSA)
3. Ensure your Soldier has given you his flight name as no manifests/information about specific flight details will be posted.



Breakfast with Santa will be held at the HCROE Cafe on Saturday, Dec. 19 from 8 a.m. until noon.

If you need assistance with flight arrival information, please contact your BN FRSA or Rear Detachment.


Happy Holidays to you and your Family! 

Active bystander By Sgt. 1st Class Andrew Kretz Equal Opportunity NCO

Everyone is a bystander, whether it's an active or passive one. Ideally we're all prepared and willing to become active bystanders should the situation warrant. Becoming an active bystander, however, doesn't just involve the prevention of sexual harassment and assault in the military. It also includes any aspect of our military or civilian lives when a need for caring individuals to respond becomes apparent. For example, what would you do in a situation where one of your peers or superiors was loudly reprimanding a subordinate in public? What if the verbal exchange you were witnessing included the humiliation of the junior Soldier in front of others? The Soldier being humiliated might be in need of your support and encouragement because of the incident.

Conversely, a teachable moment could also present itself by

speaking with the person lashing out. Remember the old saying about it being easier to catch flies with honey than vinegar? The same approach holds true by counseling Soldiers with professionalism and constructive criticism, rather than going off on a power trip just because you can pull rank on somebody. Regardless of what the situation may be, the active bystander must always be tactful and approach both parties in a professional manner with dignity and respect.

As a bystander a Soldier will often face or witness difficult situations. However, it will not just be personally beneficial for stepping in and resolving the situation. You could possibly save someone's career or save them from a lifetime of regret. From the slightest to the most drastic incident, there will always be a cause and effect. So step up to the plate, become the active bystander, and prevent future issues by being tactful, professional and respectful. 


Barrackslawyer

By Staff Sgt. Marvin Kauger,
Paralegal NCOIC

After almost every deployment, large numbers of Soldiers typically get in trouble. Two of the main points of concern for the command typically involve domestic violence and driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs. All of us have or will be receiving a Chaplain's brief to ensure we understand the need to ease into home life and not to rush it. Another portion of the Chaplain's brief discusses how couples experiencing marital strife before deployment aren't going to be magically cured of those issues by the deployment.

Domestic violence is an issue in our society but it especially impacts Soldiers and their Families. There is a federal law called the Lautenberg Amendment which can severely impact a Soldier. It pertains to living in the United States (or under its laws) and being arrested and convicted of a domestic violence crime against either a current or former spouse, parent, child or someone you hold guardianship over, etc. The Lautenberg Amendment makes it a federal offense for you to possess or be issued a weapon. Obviously, we're in the business of national security where it's necessary to handle weapons, and if you lose that ability, your military value effectively disappears. So, if you find yourself in a rapidly deteriorating personal situation, please walk away and don't do something that will negatively impact anyone's life, including your own.

Unfortunately, sometimes people make poor decisions. One of those can be driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Although we are returning from a deployment and happy to be back with Families and friends, please plan ahead if you intend to drink. This includes ensuring either that you have taxi money or a designated driver. If you're the designated driver, don't drink. Before our unit deployed, Col. Toner enacted a policy that if you're arrested for driving under the influence, that your command is required to initiate an administrative separation action for your commission of a serious offense. By regulation, that administrative separation action is required to proceed through your chain of command to the separation authority, which will either be Col. Toner or the commanding general. Unless otherwise rescinded, that policy remains in effect. Our brigade has accomplished a lot out within our area of operations and everyone's contributions are certainly appreciated. However, if you're arrested and convicted of driving under the influence, the fact you deployed to Afghanistan may not be enough to convince your leadership that your further service benefits the Army.

Maintaining discipline will be vital to our unit's success upon redeployment. All of us, Soldiers and Leaders alike, are responsible for our actions and need to refrain from any actions which would tend to bring dishonor upon the Army, our unit or ourselves, especially within our local community. 

Safety Corner:

By Ken Campbell
Brigade Safety Officer

Our replacements are inbound and I want to thank everyone for putting your best foot

forward in ensuring that our battle space is clearly a better and safer place. While we pay a great deal of attention to redeployment preparations, returning from deployment can be just as stressful, sometimes more so. I would ask everyone to remember the outstanding job that you've each done for the past 11 months.

As we return home I need everyone to think about off-duty safety. It's a fact that many individuals make personal mistakes that lead to bad consequences after a year-long deployment. Here are some things to consider before making a life changing mistake:

- Before you decide to drive
- If your vehicle has been in storage, don't start your vehicle right away
- Conduct a POV inspection and reorient yourself with the vehicle
- Remember, no one is authorized to operate a motorcycle until motorcycle refresher training is completed or the basic riders course for all new riders

Drinking and Driving

- If you are going to drink, don't drive. Stay put, have a designated driver, call a cab or friend
- Make a plan before going out on the town
- Drinking too much can be deadly, no matter what you are doing

Staying Safe Off-Duty

- Ensure you wear your seatbelts at all times,
- Use the buddy system, keep an eye out for one another
- Speak up and take charge if you must intervene
- If you are a leader, set the example and make it clear that you expect everyone to return safely
- Do not text and use hand free devices while driving

Hobbies and Sports

- Know your limits.
- Wear protective gear
- For those that may visit warmer climates, always take a buddy along when participating in water sports and only swim in areas with lifeguards
- Don't drink alcohol when swimming or engaging in water sports

Lastly, please consider three essential elements in keeping Soldiers safe: discipline, enforcement of basic standards and communication down to the lowest level. We have to place the responsibility for high-risk behavior where it belongs — on Soldiers who willfully disregard the standards and Leaders who turn a blind eye to it. Whether on or off duty, the personal and professional consequences of risky behavior are high.

SAFETY FIRST! 

World News Highlights

Pakistan

Boosting air defense

Pakistan has installed anti-aircraft guns and radars to monitor air activity to bolster its border with Afghanistan, a senior Pakistani military official said. The move comes after a NATO airstrike last month that killed 24 Pakistani Soldiers. Since the attack, Pakistan has shut down NATO supply routes through the country and boycotted a conference on the future of Afghanistan



Russia

Protestors in Moscow

Russians gathered around Moscow, Dec. 10 to protest what they believe to be rigged parliamentary elections. There were between 20,000 and 25,000 protestors who took up the slogan "Putin out." They are demanding an annulment of the Dec. 4 election results and want a new vote.

Purpleheart

Recipients: Nov. 15 - Dec. 15

Spc. Christopher Ahearn PRT Paktya	Lt. Col. Ronald Brown HHC, BSB	Spc. Preston Hodge HHC, I-279 Inf.	Spc. Christopher Mills C Co., I-279 Inf.	Staff Sgt. Anthony Roszko A Co., 2-2 Inf.
Spc. Timothy Atanasoff A Co., STB	Spc. Anthony Bullock C Co., I-279 Inf.	Sgt. Jay Homoki HHC, BSB	Spc. Joshua Norman A Co., STB	Spc. Gabrielle Shriner HHC, BSB
Sgt. Tomas Bishop C Co., I-279 Inf.	Spc. Britton Caldwell C Co., I-279 Inf.	Spc. Brendon Karlssontuttle B Co., I-26 Inf.	Sgt. Edward Novak A Co., STB	Spc. Christopher Stamper HHC, I-26 Inf.
Sgt. 1st Class Ken Bostick C Co., I-279 Inf.	Sgt. 1st Class Mitchell Chapman HHC., I-26 Inf.	Pfc. Matthew Kuxhaus C Co., BSB	Spc. Shaun Obrien C Co., BSB	Staff Sgt. Charles Taylor HHC, BSB
Spc. Joshua Boyce C Co., I-279 Inf.	Spc. Jason Davis A Co., BSB	Staff Sgt. Timothy Light D Co., 2-2 Inf.	Pfc. Joshua Parcell A Co., STB	Sgt. Derek Taylor HHC, I-26 Inf.
Cpl. Zachary Boyd B Co., I-26 Inf.	Cpl. Calvin Fritchie HHC, I-279 Inf.	Sgt. Xavier Luckey HHC, BSB	Pfc. Joshua Poteet C Co., 2-2 Inf.	CW2 Fernando Tomlinson HHC, BSB
Spc. Chase Brown B Co., I-26 Inf.	Staff Sgt. Jacob Gradick A Co., I-26 Inf.	Pfc. Eric Mankin B Co., I-26 Inf.	Pfc. Zachary Rand C Co., 2-2 Inf.	Spc. Matthew Wright HHC, I-26 Inf.
Spc. Gary Brown C Co., I-279 Inf.	Spc. James Gwillim D Co., 2-2 Inf.	1st Lt. Jill Medina HHC, BSB		

Reenlistments: Nov 15 - Dec. 15

Spc. Ryan Bailey	Spc. Cecilia Fravel	Staff Sgt. Joel Lewis	Spc. Christopher Stamper
Spc. Waitsel Bailey	Staff Sgt. Paul Hamilton	Spc. Kamron Lewis	Sgt. Daniel Stark
Spc. Geoffrey Bazemore	Sgt. Michael Harris	Spc. Nicholas Lopez	Spc. Shaniece Stokes
Spc. David Bishop	Spc. Brian Harrison	Spc. Richard McManus	Spc. Andrea Takeo
Spc. Sabrina Brooks	Spc. Nolan Hart	Sgt. Paul Molan	Spc. Joseph Thomas
Sgt. Ray Brown	Staff Sgt. David Hartwell	Spc. Benjamin Motyka	Spc. Richard Tindal
Sgt. Thomas Buchanan	Spc. Martin Hastings	Spc. Eliot Ness	Spc. Cristian Trujillo
Sgt. Bradford Buring	Spc. Rhys Hauge	Spc. Damian Olivera	Sgt. Marcus Tucker
Sgt. Wesley Cerecky	Sgt. 1st Class Tod Hook	Spc. Maxwell Patterson	Spc. Carlos Uriaga
Spc. James Conyers	Spc. Andrew Hosford	Spc. Miguel Perez	Spc. Jose Vallejo
Sgt. Juan Cortazar	Sgt. Andrew Hurwitz	Staff Sgt. Joseph Puharic	Staff Sgt. Francisco Vidana
Sgt. Jenn Cromwell	Sgt. Isaac Inay	Spc. Luis Rodriguez	Sgt. Martel Walker
Spc. Nick Davis	Sgt. David Jackson	Spc. Esteban Sanchez	Staff Sgt. Keith Watkins
Spc. Daniel Deberry	Spc. Doug Johnston	Spc. Steven Senesac	Sgt. Phillip Wells
Sgt. Brian Florescruz	Spc. Brandon Jones	Sgt. Timothy Slaughter	
Spc. Spencer Foster	Staff Sgt. Jason Koch	Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Smith	
	Sgt. Travis Kudela		

IN MEMORIAM



SPC Sean M. Walsh

August 8, 1990 - November 16, 2011

870th MP Company, 92nd MP Battalion

Task Force Duke

An Afghanistan National Army Soldier sits on a mountainside in Khowst province, outside of Camp Parsa, on Dec. 2, 2011. U.S. and Afghanistan national forces work together on patrols and searches as American forces prepare to leave security in the hands of Afghan locals. (Photo by U.S. Army Spc. Phillip McTaggart, Task Force Duke Public Affairs)



**Happy
Holidays**
from TF Duke in Afghanistan