

ON POINT!



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COVER

Soldiers of the 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division await take off of a U.S. Air Force C-17 Globemaster cargo plane at Manas Air Force Base, Kyrgyzstan Dec. 15, 2011. The flight is the last leg of their journey into Afghanistan. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Christopher McCullough, illustration by Spc. Mark Neace)

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Lacey Proclaims Support for the Arrowhead Brigade

Story and photo by
Heidi Behrends Cerniwey
City of Lacey, Public Affairs Department

On behalf of the City of Lacey, Washington, then Mayor Tom Nelson proclaimed Lacey’s support and gratitude to the 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division (3-2 SBCT), Lacey’s official adopted unit—bidding soldiers a successful mission and a safe return from deployment to Afghanistan. The proclamation, presented to Col. Chuck Webster, commander 3-2 SBCT, and Command Sgt. Maj. Samuel Murphy, Command Sgt. Maj. 3-2 SBCT, at the AUSA Lacey Subchapter-sponsored deployment celebration on November 16, 2011, and to Lt. Col. Wayne Brewster, deputy commander 3-2 SBCT, at the Lacey City Council meeting on November 17, 2011, read:

WHEREAS, the City of Lacey has strong ties to Joint Base Lewis-McChord and, in particular, to the 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team of the 2nd Infantry Division as part of Joint Base Lewis-McChord Community Connector Program; and

WHEREAS, the City of Lacey acknowledges that a large number of men and women in the Armed Forces who live in our community call both Joint Base Lewis-McChord and the City of Lacey their home; and

WHEREAS, the 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team of the 2nd Infantry Division will be deploying for combat operations in Afghanistan this coming December, to protect and defend our country; and

WHEREAS, the City of Lacey wishes to express its appreciation for the sacrifices made by our Armed Forces and to their families who also share the burden of sacrifice. We are forever grateful for their service to our country so that we may live under a democracy characterized by fundamental freedoms and civility of law.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Tom Nelson, Mayor of the City of Lacey, on behalf of the Lacey City Council, proclaim our community’s support and gratitude to our men and women of the 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team of the 2nd Infantry Division for their many sacrifices in defense of the United States of America.

AND, FURTHER, may your mission be successful, may your service be honored, and may you return home safe to the Lacey community.

—Mayor Tom Nelson



Mayor Nelson extends appreciation to Lt. Col. Wayne Brewster, deputy commander, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, Nov. 17.

Arrowhead Brigade sets foot in Afghanistan

Story by
Staff Sgt. Joshua S. Brandenburg
Combined Team Zabul Public Affairs

It was dark with a crisp winter wind as the Soldiers of the Arrowhead Brigade gathered inside Sheridan Gym waiting for their names to be called off the manifest. They had already said goodbye to their loved ones, whom they would not see for the next year. One by one they filed out the back door, yelling “here” as they exited, and loaded onto buses that would eventually deliver them to McChord Airfield.

Upon reaching McChord Airfield Arrowhead Soldiers dropped their bags and grabbed a bite to eat before loading the plane that would take them to the other side of the world.

The word was given to load up and Soldiers scramble to their feet bags and gear being slung on shoulders and over backs. Once onboard they settled in for a long flight, many just wanting to sleep the entire way.

The seatbelt light illuminated and the captain announced that the flight is starting its final decent into Bangor, Maine. With a jolt the plane touched



Soldiers from 3-2 Stryker Brigade Combat Team – to include B/5-20 Infantry Battalion, 18th Engineers, and Brigade Headquarters & Headquarters Company, await takeoff aboard an Air Force C-17 Globemaster December 15, 2011. The “Arrowhead” Brigade is deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Chris McCullough, Combined Team Zabul Public Affairs)

down and taxied to the terminal. The layover was long enough to get a coffee, call home and walk around before the announcement called all passengers back onboard.

Next stop was Leipzig, Germany where, for many, was the first time outside the borders of their own country.

Once loaded back on the plane they were all glad that the next stop would be the last for the a few days. Twenty-three hours after taking off from Joint Base Lewis McChord they touched down at Manas, Kyrgyzstan. At Manas the Soldiers of 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, went through rollover and rules of engagement training.

After a few days the men and women loaded an Air Force C-17 Globemaster ready for the flight into Kandahar, Afghanistan, where they would meet the members of the flights that came before them. This was the first main wave of Arrowhead Soldiers to reach Kandahar Airfield. The brigade had deployed 3 times before but this was its first time it would have its boots on Afghan ground.

Soldiers trained on how to spot improvised explosive devices as well as zeroing their individual weapons for the next two days.

“I thought the counter IED lane was very informative,” said Sgt. Richard Wallace, chaplain assistant, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd SBCT, 2nd ID. “I thought it was good instruction for the Soldiers to have.”

From Kandahar Arrowhead Soldiers loaded CH-47 Chinooks and were transported to various forward operating bases throughout the Zabul Province. There, the Arrowhead Brigade will take command of Combined Team Zabul, which currently has two Romanian mechanized battalions and 1st Battalion 24th Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division to name a few.

“We have it pretty good here, we have good food, we have a gym next door,” said Spc. Mark Neace, Fusion Cell, HHC, 3rd SBCT, 2nd ID. “It could be a lot worse.”

Upon reaching their respective FOBs the Soldiers of 3-2 SBCT had little down time and instead started



Moving half way (or more) around the globe, Soldiers from 3-2 Stryker Brigade Combat Team have a lot of gear to move with them. On December 16, 2011, these Soldiers learn that trying to fit it all onboard an Army CH-47 Chinook, at Kandahar Airfield, can be tricky. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Chris McCullough)



Soldiers of HHC 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, offload a CH-47 Chinook Helicopter as they arrive at FOB Lagman, Afghanistan Dec. 17, 2011. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Joshua S. Brandenburg, Combined Team Zabul Public Affairs)

learning as much about the area as they could from the 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Virginia National Guard, whom they replaced after just a short couple of weeks.

“This area (Zabul Province) is already well established, it’s been an economy of force mission,” said Lt. Col. Robert D. Halvorson, executive officer 3rd SBCT, 2nd ID. “The efforts that the units before us have put into place whether it be 3rd ACR (Armored Cavalry Regiment) or whether it be 116th IBCT have set this place up for success, so really we’re building on that.”

Even before the 116th IBCT transferred its authority of the Zabul Province to 3-2 SBCT, Dec. 27, 2011, Arrowhead Soldiers have been “On Point” and showing what their capable of. No matter what their role or position, the Solders of the Arrowhead Brigade have shown and will continue to show that they have what it take to accomplish the mission, here in the Zabul Province.

“I think the attitude is, just a willingness and readiness to succeed,” added Wallace.



Soldiers from 3-2 Stryker Brigade Combat Team arrive in Kandahar, Afghanistan December 15, 2011. The “Arrowhead” Brigade is deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Chris McCullough, Combined Team Zabul Public Affairs)

Zabul Provincial Governor says goodbye and hello

Story and photo by
Staff Sgt. Joshua S. Brandenburg
Combined Team Zabul Public Affairs

The Provincial Governor of Zabul, Asraf Mohammad Naseri, hosted a dinner for key military personnel of Combined Team Zabul at the Governors compound Dec. 23, 2011.

The dinner was his way of saying goodbye to Col. Blake Ortner, commander, 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Virginia National Guard as well as hello to Col. Chuck Webster, commander, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division.

The governor and both commanders sat and discussed the progress of the province before sitting down to eat. Others attending the dinner included key personnel from both brigades and the local area to include civil affairs , the Zabul Provincial Reconstruction Teams, the Zabul Agri-business Development Team, the Afghan National Army General Sadik and Afghan National Police General Shizard.

In the short time that General Shizard has been here in the Zabul Province I have seen such radical changes in the police’s professionalism and their ability to work with the people of the province, said

Ortner.

The group snacked on assorted nuts and chai, then moved to the dining room to enjoy a large banquet of traditional Afghan cuisine.

Once the dinner was finished Ortner presented Certificates of Appreciation to the governor, deputy governor, the general of the Afghan National Army and the commander of the Afghan National Police.

“I don’t think I could have asked for a better partner (then Naseri),” said Ortner. “Just to have as a friend and a colleague to work with in Zabul.”

Following Ortner, the governor expressed his thanks to the commander and the Soldiers of the Stonewall Brigade. He also welcomed Webster and the Soldiers of the Arrowhead Brigade and said he is looking forward to working with

I am sad that the 116th is leaving but glad that they are going back to their homes, said Naseri. I would like to welcome my dear colleague Webster, I’m sure my team and his will have a strong commitment and work together for the security, stability and prosperity of Afghanistan.

Provincial Governor Asraf Mohammad Naseri expresses his gratitude to the Soldiers of the 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Virginia National Guard, as well as looking forward to working with the Soldiers of the 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division Dec. 23, 2011 at the Provincial Government Compound Zabul, Afghanistan.



116th IBCT transfers authority of Zabul to 3rd SBCT

Story and photo by
Staff Sgt. Joshua S. Brandenburg
Combined Team Zabul Public Affairs

The 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Virginia National Guard, transferred its authority of Combined Team Zabul and the Zabul Province to 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, during a ceremony at Forward Operating Base Eagle Dec. 27.

The ceremony commemorated the hard work that the 116th IBCT has accomplished for the past 6 months in the Zabul Province, as well as the upcoming operations of the 3rd SBCT, 2nd ID’s yearlong deployment to the area.

“The area was tough but we went after it,” said Col. Blake Ortner, commander 116th IBCT. “We did a great job, we cleared a lot of IEDs (improvised explosive device) and had very few casualties, and I think that’s a testament to the success of both the Romanian units and the other Coalition Forces that we had. “

Provincial Governor of Zabul, Asraf Mohammad Naseri was just one of the local officials to join Maj. Gen. James Huggins, commander Regional Command South, Afghanistan, in attending the ceremony for both the “Stonewall” and “Arrowhead” Brigades.

As Ortner and Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Yancey rolled the 116th’s brigade flag, Col. Chuck Webster, commander 3rd SBCT, 2nd ID, and Command Sgt. Maj. Samuel Murphy unrolled their brigade

flag to symbolize the Arrowhead Brigade is ready to assume authority of the Zabul Province. “This area (Zabul Province) is already well established, it’s been an economy of force mission,” said Lt. Col. Robert D. Halvorson, executive officer 3rd SBCT, 2nd ID. “The efforts that the units before us have put into place whether it be 3rd ACR (Armored Cavalry Regiment) or whether it be 116th IBCT have set this place up for success, so really we’re building on

that.” Naseri expressed his gratitude to Ortner and the Soldiers of the Stonewall Brigade. He also welcomed Webster and the Soldiers of the Arrowhead Brigade and said he is looking forward to working with them.

“The Afghans and the people of Afghanistan are really stepping up and taking on the enemy,” said Ortner, “and their really making a difference.”



Command Sgt. Maj. Samuel Murphy (left) and Col. Chuck Webster, (right) commander, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, unroll the brigade’s colors during the Transfer of Authority ceremony from 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team to 3rd SBCT, 2nd ID, at Forward Operating Base Eagle, Zabul Province, Afghanistan Dec. 27.

Afghan Army Academy at FOB Eagle graduates 13th class of recruits

Story and photos by
Sgt. Chris McCullough
Combined Team Zabul Public Affairs

The Afghan National Army at Forward Operating Base Eagle, Zabul Province, graduated more than 20 Afghan recruits Thursday, December 22, 2011. It was the 13th class to graduate the ANA Academy at FOB Eagle since the instruction of recruits was turned over to Afghan non-commissioned officers January 2011.

“It was initially set up by 2-2 SCR when they were here,” said Sgt. 1st Class Shawn Mulcahy, a 1st Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment assistant to the academy. After a short period of time, however, “they’re now actually self-sufficient,” said Mulcahy.

Mulcahy also added that the only time U.S. Soldiers check on the Afghan instructors now is to make sure they are teaching off the program of instruction and that the only assistance they render the academy anymore is whenever the Afghan instructors have technical questions that need answering.

“Everything is run by themselves; we don’t have any say in it anymore,” said Mulcahy.

The Afghan Army Academy at FOB Eagle is one of many academies across Afghanistan that is designed to train the next generation of Afghan Soldiers in tactics, techniques and procedures that will help them maintain peace

and stability in Afghanistan once U.S. and coalition forces withdraw from the country in 2014.



Afghan Col. Mohammed Wazir addresses the graduating class at the 13th ANA Academy, Zabul province, graduation commencement ceremony December 22, 2011.



Graduates of the ANA Academy at FOB Eagle, Zabul, Afghanistan, listen as Afghan Col. Mohammed Wazir addresses them at their graduation commencement ceremony December 22, 2011.

Zabul women become journalists

Story by U.S. Air Force
1st Lt. Belena S. Marquez,
Provincial Reconstruction Team Zabul
Public Affairs

We meet in secret. We change the locations and times for every gathering. We do not tell anyone who does not have a “need to know” about the details until we are through. They do not use their real names, and they do not tell their families why we meet.

We always meet during daylight hours because it is too dangerous for them to go out alone at night. It is all very cloak and dagger.

I am working with two women, the only Afghan female journalists in all of Zabul province, Afghanistan. They shield themselves with the anonymity of their burkas, but use radio stations to wield their thoughts in public. The only real name you will learn today is mine, 1st Lt. Belena Marquez. I am the Public Affairs Officer for Provincial Reconstruction Team Zabul. Our mission is to build capacity and empower governance in Zabul province, Afghanistan. My job is to work with the media to highlight those efforts.

In Zabul, the journalists that I have been mentoring are slowly growing and flourishing. The journalists in the area produce radio broadcasts, write articles, and take photos of key events to keep the public informed. The investigative element of their work is still growing, so my job specifically has been to build up their skills and abilities.

For me, the best part has been encouraging women to become members of the media.

Fortunately, I do not have to do it alone. Members of the Forward Media Team here in Zabul have volunteered their time and energy to ensuring that these women become successful journalists. They work to make sure that the women improve their skills with each radio report they make.

Zabul is a very traditional province in Afghanistan. When I go out on foot patrols, I rarely see a woman not covered by a burka. In the streets of Zabul, the female journalists are quiet, but behind closed doors, they are loud, ambitious and excited. They know the risks they take if they are discovered, but they are daring. To them, the chance for women’s voices to be heard and broadcast across the province is more important than their lives. The two women I am working with know that they put

themselves and their families at risk with each broadcast they air. The Forward Media Team members and I taught them how to edit their voices to mask their identities. Even their voices must remain covered and hidden in public.

By Western standards, the women in Zabul province are oppressed, but that is slowly changing. All of the members of the Forward Media Team are men, and the majority of them are Zabul locals. We work together to teach journalism and broadcast skills to the two female journalists in the Province.

This group is diverse and independent, composed of a small handful of individuals that want to improve Zabul and empower women. They risk so much every time we get together. When we meet, the scene is covert...but the broadcasts are always public. It gives me hope.



U.S. Air Force 1st Lt. Belena Marquez, Provincial Reconstruction Team Zabul Public Affairs officer with her students after class in Qalat, Afghanistan, Dec. 30, 2011. (Courtesy photo)

Radio Literacy program instills a desire for education in Zabul

Story and photo by
Sgt. Chris McCullough
Combined Team Zabul Public Affairs

It's said that education is power and nowhere is that truer than in Zabul province, Afghanistan, where for a time the Taliban controlled the populace by means of intimidation which included preventing people there from working at, or having their children attend school. The end-result was an undereducated, illiterate people who were powerless to prevent their schools from being under-populated, underfunded and undermanned, which in-turn allowed the Taliban to control the dissemination of knowledge – and therefore power – in Zabul province.

Master Sgt. Joel E. Fix, 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, of Fort Belvoir, Va., who oversaw the Radio Literacy program during his deployment to Zabul, said that 80% of the population of Zabul

province is illiterate.

“Radio Literacy’s purpose is to instill in the local populace a desire for education; to push them to demand more education from their government and therefore lead to legitimacy in their government,” said Fix.

“Radio Literacy is not a replacement for schools and education. (It) is not meaning to teach people to be fluent speakers, writers and readers of Pashtu,” Fix said.

“Radio Literacy allows us to overcome the intimidation efforts, or other barriers, to education for women and children, especially girls,” said Fix. “The conceptual idea is that over the course of a period of time of the program, that people will say ‘I like this; I want to know more.’”

One of the program’s goals is to

establish places of learning that are equitable for women and men, boys and girls, with an emphasis on building schools and properly staffing those schools with trained and qualified educators.

“To be most effective we want to encourage more education; for people to think for themselves and deny the insurgency the ability to dominate and lie to the people and tell them what they want them to hear,” said Fix. “People can then figure it out for themselves because education is power.”

The Radio Literacy program in Zabul province was put initially into practice during 116 IBCT’s tour of duty in Zabul province. With the redeployment of 116th IBCT in December, the Radio Literacy program is now in the capable hands of 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, from Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash.

The program runs six days a week, twice-a-day, at various locations, during times that prayer is not being conducted. Initially it was run in the Zabul villages of Mizan and Shahjuy at 9 o’clock in the morning and 6 o’clock at night.

“That way we can get people that work in the daytimes – out in the fields maybe – at nighttime, or people that are working in the evening times, or doing other things, in the morning times,” said Fix. “Also, women are more likely

See literacy on page 18

U.S. Army Soldier runs for resiliency

Story by U.S. Air Force
1st Lt. Belena S. Marquez,
Provincial Reconstruction Team Zabul
Public Affairs

Stress is a part of life, but in a deployed environment, the ability to effectively cope with stress can be the difference between life and death.

U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Jaymz Touchstone, a soldier from the 432nd Reserve Civil Affairs Battalion in Wisconsin, is currently deployed to Afghanistan with Provincial Reconstruction Team Zabul. The mission of PRT Zabul is to extend the reach and legitimacy of the Afghan government, a mission that has forward deployed him and given him a lot of time in remote villages away from the relative safety of his base.

Though Sergeant Touchstone is in a stressful situation, he has created an outlet that enables him to deal with the rigors of deployment.

“I run for physical and mental well-being,” Sergeant Touchstone said. “When I run, it gives my brain a chance to relax and I can just think about other things besides pressing matters.”

According to a study conducted by the Mayo Clinic in July 2010, “virtually any form of exercise, from aerobics to weightlifting, can act as a stress reliever.”

Taking part in physical activity also creates opportunities for

service members to interact with each other outside of the work environment. “I met more people,” Sergeant Touchstone said. “We bonded in a different way because they could see me doing something different than going on missions.”

The Mayo Clinic listed several other benefits of exercising as a stress-buster: an increase in endorphins, a release in the body’s tension through physical movement, increased confidence and body image, and improved sleep quality.

For service members the additional benefit of improved physical fitness contributes to mission readiness and performance.

“On a physical level (running) just keeps me in shape, because then I can keep up with whatever the missions throw at me,” said Sergeant Touchstone. “On the precautionary side, I always figure that if something does go wrong, and you’re injured, the better shape you’re in, the better your body can handle it.”

Sergeant Touchstone also shared his expertise with members of the Afghan National Army during a few of his runs at Forward Operating Base Sweeney.

“When I was at Sweeney, some of the ANA guys would run a couple of laps with me,” said Sergeant Touchstone. “It was just fun to see them wanting to learn how to run. They asked me questions on how to (run) to get into better shape because they were amazed that I was 43 years old, and I could hike up mountains with a pack faster than they could as young people. When they saw me running; they drew the connection.”

Whether preparing for another mission, improving body image, or working to release tension, running and other physical activity is one method that service members can use to combat stress.

“I think that the running definitely helps the deployment,” said Sergeant Touchstone. “There’s just something about running that flushes the system. It helps you get rid of the stress.”



U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Jaymz Touchstone runs at Forward Operating Base Sweeney in Shinkai, Afghanistan, Jan. 4, 2012. Sergeant Touchstone is a reservist deployed from the 432nd Army Reserve Civil Affairs Battalion in Wisconsin. (DoD photo by U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Grovert Fuentes-Contreras)



The Radio Literacy package includes one hand-crank radio and one handbook per family. This radio can receive AM, FM or shortwave radio frequencies and can be charged via hand-crank, solar panel, or operated off typical AAA batteries, said Master Sgt. Joel E. Fix, of Fort Belvoir, Va., 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, who oversaw the Radio Literacy program.

Female Engagement Teams make a difference

Story by Sgt. Chris McCullough
Combined Team Zabul Public Affairs

While on patrol in the southern province of Zabul, Soldiers from Combined Team Zabul – which is spearheaded by 3rd Stryker Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division, from Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington – repeatedly encounter women during their travels through numerous cities and villages. Women account for nearly half the population of Afghanistan and have considerable influence on Afghan society; however, engaging them in dialogue is problematic as Afghan culture prohibits males from looking at or talking to women. That’s where the members of the Female Engagement Teams – or FET – come into play.

FET is a program that’s been around for nearly a decade and is comprised of female members of appropriate rank, experience and maturity who strive to develop trust-based and enduring relationships with the Afghan women they encounter on patrols.

“Our main purpose is to interact with Afghan women and to be role models to them; to facilitate them; to help them progress forward,” said Sgt. 1st Class Laurie Eggleston, of Lauren, PA, the non-commissioned officer in charge of CTZ’s FET program.

FET members are provided

religious and cultural training, in addition to basic Pashto and Dari language instruction, and other lessons, all of which prepare these Soldiers to communicate with Afghan women without offending their lifestyle.

“I was real excited to see that they gave them (female Soldiers) a really nice background of what they were going to be dealing with,” said Eggleston. “They got it from both perspectives; from how we view (the Afghan women) to how they view us, and how the different views together can affect a situation.” Eggleston went on to say that, contrary to customary beliefs, the FET is not an extension of military information support operations.

“There’s a lot of misconception that FET is supposed to be an intelligence gathering asset and that’s not at all what it’s meant for,” Eggleston said. “Most of the females that do FET are not intel-related at all.”

The importance of the FETs cannot be overstated. Together with the backing of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, and the International Security Assistance Force, the FET program has the potential to influence Afghan women in a positive manner.

In turn, Afghan women are able to further persuade families and

their communities to reject the insurgency and support GIRoA. That’s because families and community members are more likely to back the government when the females in an area support it.

Currently, CTZ has over a dozen personnel serving on 3 FET teams in the province, though with time that may change.

“We’re still in the assessment phase of us being here; kind of trying to get an idea of how much has been accomplished since our predecessors have been here,” Eggleston said. “I know they’ve done projects with them (the Afghan women). A lot of it is to help the women stand on their own two feet.”

One of those ways involves reaching out to the local female populace through education. However, education – particularly education for females – is taboo.

So as much as the CTZ FET would like to get out to the small villages that dot the Zabul countryside, and get involved in ensuring Afghan women receive some kind of education, it’s not logistically feasible, said Eggleston. That is why FET works closely with GIRoA’s Radio Literacy program, an educational program whose purpose is to instill in the local populace a desire for education through radio.

One of the Radio Literacy program’s goals is to establish places of learning that are equitable for women and men, boys and girls. It also emphasizes building schools and properly staffing those schools with trained and qualified educators.

“We can’t get all the way out to a lot of these small villages. It’s pretty impossible,” said Eggleston. “But if that radio can get out there and talk to the women when their men aren’t around, I definitely think that can make a difference.”

Accordingly FET has been, and plans to continue, reaching out to villagers through the radio that’s provided to Radio Literacy participants. The radio is capable of receiving AM, FM or shortwave radio frequencies and can be charged via hand-crank, solar panel, or operated off typical AAA batteries.

The Radio Literacy program runs six days a week, twice-a-day, at various locations, during times that prayer is not being conducted. Some of that programming contains religion, news, public service announcements and entertainment. They even provide children’s programming and poetry.

Whenever possible, FET puts out messages – such as shuras being available to the women to discuss

female issues or other relevant information – via the radio in a box transmitters at times most likely to reach the female populace.

“The most popular program for the females out there is the poetry program. So if we could target the poetry program and put the FET’s (message) right before or right after, that would be our key times,” said Eggleston.

If the CTZ FET team is successful through their intervention on the ground and the Radio Literacy

program, the result could lead to the women in Afghanistan forging a new future for themselves and their country in the years ahead.

“I think it (Radio Literacy) is going to be our biggest push to reach our target audience,” said Sgt. 1st Class Elizabeth Wages, CTZ FET’s facilitator and one of the members of the team. “The children are our future, definitely. If we can reach those younger females now, in 3 years, 5 years, 10 years, we’re hopefully going to see a stronger generation of women.”



Female Soldiers with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division sit and listen to Afghan women from the Qalat area, Zabul Province Afghanistan. (Courtesy photo)

A Tale of Two Command Sergeants Major

Story by
Staff Sgt. Joshua S. Brandenburg
Combined Team Zabul Public Affairs

The people and places the military introduces servicemembers to can at times seem quite small. For every deployment to a remote Forward Operating Base, there are multiple occasions when Soldiers run into an old friend or colleague. Command Sgts. Maj. Samuel G. Murphy and John Wayne Troxell are no different; their career paths began to crisscross at Ft. Bragg, NC years before their recent meeting in southern Afghanistan. This meeting allowed the two senior non-commissioned officers the chance to look back on their friendship.

“When I was a sergeant I reenlisted to go to the 82nd

Airborne Division, and when I got there I was assigned to the 3rd Battalion Airborne 73rd Armor,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Samuel G. Murphy, Command Sergeant Major of the 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division. “The free world’s only airborne armor battalion.” Command Sgt. Maj. Murphy arrived at 3-73 Armor and was assigned to the mortar platoon in Alpha Company, where Command Sgt. Maj. Troxell was the first sergeant.

“I first ran into him one Saturday afternoon, when I was upstairs being a typical young sergeant with the Soldiers in the barracks,” Murphy said with a grin. “He came upstairs, ‘cause we were making a lot of noise, and corrected us.

I happened to be the highest ranking one there so I got the most correcting.”

“The boys would be half in the bag, playing hockey and things like that,” said Command Sgt. Maj. John Wayne Troxell, Command Sergeant Major of 1st Corps, Joint Base Lewis McChord. “I would have to put the thump on him and the other NCOs (Non-Commissioned Officers).”

This was more than 15 years ago, before either realized that their careers would mirror one another and a mentorship would evolve. Neither of them thought –at that time- that one would be a command sergeant major for a corps and the other a command sergeant major for a subordinate

brigade, but Troxell saw plenty of potential in his young sergeant.

“After he knew who I was, he made it a point to call me into his office on a daily basis,” said Murphy. “For some reason he saw potential in me back then, that I didn’t even see myself. He tried to push me to go above and beyond.”

“Murphy was a young, energetic sergeant that was full of energy,” added Troxell. “He was very impressive to me as a young NCO. He was one of the best NCOs in his platoon.”

Mentorships in the Army happen all the time and are not always welcomed in the beginning. However, they bring out the best in the individual being mentored and looking back they are thankful for the experience.

“The way he interacted with me at that time was exactly what I needed”, added Murphy.

When they departed the 82nd Airborne Division, they went their separate ways and would never serve directly with each other again, but were always close by. Murphy’s career always seemed to follow Troxell’s in some way.

“Our deployments have kind of been off cycle,” said Troxell.

Troxell deployed with 3-2 SBCT to Iraq in 2003-04, with Murphy’s unit (the 172nd Stryker Brigade

Combat Team) replacing Troxell’s. The next deployment for Troxell was as the 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division Command Sergeant Major. He left just as Murphy became the 1st Battalion, 38th Infantry Regiment Command Sergeant Major in the 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division.

“We’ve never deployed together but we’ve seen each other throughout the 15 years that I have known him,” said Troxell.

According to Murphy, Command Sgt. Maj. Troxell is hard but fair with unyielding standards of discipline, which Murphy has adopted. While Command Sgt. Major Murphy would not say he molded himself after Troxell he has definitely picked up many of the same traits. He has no problem talking to Soldiers, and if they are out of line, he will put them back in line.

“After 10 years of combat, we as an Army have become a little bit too over compassionate and a little bit too undisciplined,” said Troxell. “Sam Murphy is the kind of command sergeant major that puts that back into balance, that good balance of discipline and compassion.”

Both believe that the other is exactly the type of command sergeant major the Army needs. “He genuinely cares about every one of them (his Soldiers), that’s

why he’s so hard on wearing your uniform right, wearing your personal protective equipment right,” added Troxell. “He’s exactly the kind of guy we need, because it’s those fundamentals, those basic disciplines that keep Soldiers alive on the battlefield.”

The welfare of Soldiers is one of the basic responsibilities of a Non-Commissioned Officer and both, Troxell and Murphy, believe that a good NCO will enforce the standards.

“I think he’s exactly what we need for a corps sergeant major,” said Murphy. “Someone who will continue to push the Corps in the right direction.”

“If a command sergeant major is passionate about making Soldiers do the right thing, and it comes with a butt chewing, that is motivation and an act of love,” said Troxell. “If the command sergeant major didn’t love that Soldier like he loved his own children, he would let the Soldier walk around with whatever standard that Soldier wants. It could come back to haunt that Soldier outside the wire if they’re not doing what they are supposed to be doing.” Troxell wanted the Soldiers of the Arrowhead Brigade to know and understand that they have a command sergeant major that genuinely loves and cares for every one of them and that’s why he’s going to stay in their backsides.



Command Sgt. Maj. Samuel G. Murphy (left), Command Sergeant Major of 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division and Command Sgt. Maj. John Wayne Troxell, Command Sergeant Major of 1st Corps, Joint Base Lewis McChord pose for a picture in Zabul Province, Afghanistan Jan. 12. (U.S. Army Photo taken by Staff Sgt Joshua White)



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Christopher McCullough



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Christopher McCullough



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Joshua S. Brandenburg



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Christopher McCullough



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U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Christopher McCullough



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Joshua S. Brandenburg

Chaplain's Corner

Bear Grylls, star of the TV show Man vs. Wild, is no stranger to danger. From the time he was a little boy, he always dreamed of climbing Mt. Everest-one of the world's most difficult and dangerous mountains. Bear's determination won out. At 23, he became the youngest Briton ever to reach the summit. On the mountain, extreme weather changes, lack of oxygen and risk of avalanche make death a distinct possibility for even the most experienced climber. Bear would have died himself if it were not for his skillful teammate, who literally held Bear's life in his hands as he dangled unconsciously from a single rope.

In the Army, we stress the importance of having a battle buddy or in the Air Force a wingman. In life, how well we navigate is also dependent on the quality and character of our friends. The friends we choose, our trusted inner circle, can make

or break us and we can make or break them.

In Proverbs 13:20 and 18:24 it says, "He who walks with the wise grows wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm...A Man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother." The proverb is saying that whom we spend our time with will either make us more skilled at living or lead us into trouble. "Bad company corrupts good character" (1 Corinthians 15:33).

Three principles to live by that will help you be wise and walk with the wise: 1. Be a good friend. If you want friends who do the right thing, then you have to do the right things. Treat others the way God wants you to treat them. 2. Spend time with friends who are wise. Ask yourself these three questions: do they do the right things even when it is hard; do they make other people around



them better; and do they stay close when times are tough? 3. Don't have too many friends. I know that sounds a bit odd, but if you have too many friends in your inner circle, it can devalue the most important friendships you have. Remember wise friends help us navigate life successfully and being a wise friend brings life to others. - Chaplain (Maj.) Edward I. Choi, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division

Shortwave radio, more commonly known as ham radio in the United States, is able to reach areas where AM and FM frequencies cannot.

"This radio is a hand-crank radio that has a diode in it so it can charge via hand-crank, a solar panel, or can operate off typical AAA batteries," Fix said.

In addition to the Radio Literacy handbook, participating villagers also receive 1 hand-crank radio per family which can receive AM and FM frequencies, as well as shortwave 1 and shortwave 2.

Literacy (continued)

to be alone or their husband's not around and therefore able to participate unobtrusively in the morning times."

Villagers that participate in the project receive one Radio Literacy handbook per family – sometimes two if theirs is a large family – which includes 15 weekly modules, and forty-some odd lessons, all of which are very rudimentary.

Arrowhead Thoughts



Spc. Jeffery Hinds,
Chelmsford, Massachusetts
HHC 3-2 SBCT

"My pace of work has been extremely fast but all of my senior leadership has been extremely helpful ensuring I accomplish my mission."

"The atmosphere here is a lot better then I thought it would be. We're able to have Internet, so we can communicate with our family and loved ones back home."



Staff Sgt. Maria Osario,
Puerto Rico
HHC 3-2 SBCT

"I'm glad that I'm supplying Soldiers with what they need to accomplish the mission and that I get to see all of them."

Staff Sgt. Anthony Mucciacciaro,
Santa Cruz, California
HHC 3-2 SBCT

I work for the Soldiers, enabling them to accomplish their mission.

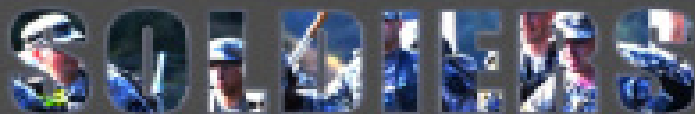


Congratulations to Spc. Fatima Rivera for being recognized as Regional Command South's Soldier of the quarter. Job well done from the Arrowhead family.





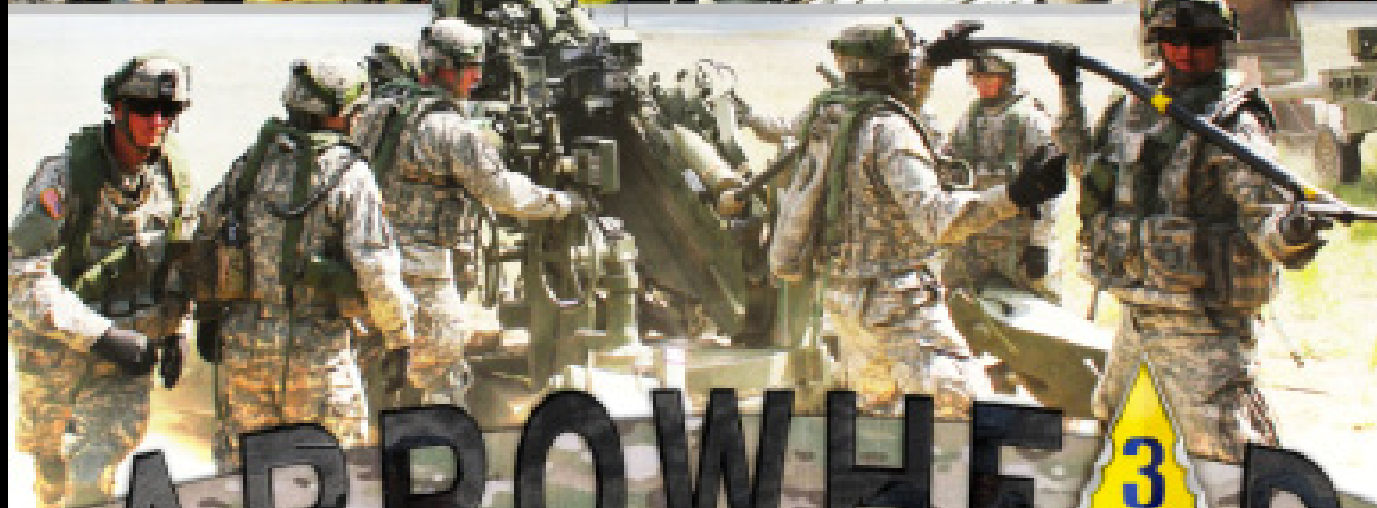
ARROWHEAD
ATTENTION



INTRODUCING THE NEW DEPLOYED UNIT SYMBOL

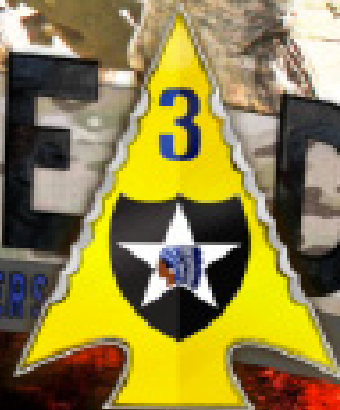
**WE HAVE
FORGED**

A NEW ARROWHEAD FROM THE OLD...



ARROWHEAD

FORGED IN FIRE SHARPENED BY ARROWHEAD SOLDIERS



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