

# The Spartan Scroll



Vol. 2



MARCH 2012

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Paratroopers with 4th Platoon, Delaware Company, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 501st Infantry Regiment, Task Force Blue Geronimo stand on a ridgeline after a fire-fight outside of COP Sabari in Khost province Jan. 26. (Photo by Spc. Phillip McTaggart)



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The Spartan Scroll is published in the interest of the service members of Task Force Spartan. The Spartan Scroll is an Army-funded newsletter authorized for members of the U.S. Army, under the provision of AR 360-1. Contents of the Spartan Scroll do not necessarily reflect the official views of the U.S. Government, Department of Defense, or Department of the Army.



## Commander's Memorandum

By Col Morris Goins  
Task Force Spartan

units have rotated through what is now AO Spartan, and have served our nation proudly. But I firmly believe that there is something very unique about Task Force Spartan.

The fighting season will come very soon. But I have watched the members of this great team come together and force the enemy on the defensive before they had the chance to take the first shot. You have made yourselves known in the villages surrounding your FOBs and COPs. You have pulled enemy fighters off the battlefield be-

fore they had the chance to act. Those who would do harm to the people of Khost and Paktya are losing the home advantage.

You are giving relief to those who seek peace, while adding pressure to enemy networks. Though there will surely be hard days ahead, I have no doubt that you will continue to serve with honor and maneuver effectively. You are the pride of the nation, and have the utmost respect from this command.

Spartans, you know your profession! It is an honor to serve with you.

Spartans, what is your profession? It's a question I asked before we deployed. Over the course of the past two months, you have demonstrated that you truly appreciate your profession as Spartan Warriors.

We have now been in the fight for over two months. Many



## CSM's Report

By Command Sgt. Maj. Terry Gardner  
Task Force Spartan

An organization that is fully supplied and fully funded cannot get the job done without people who are well-trained and well-led. However, an organization whose people are motivated and feel a part of the team can overcome any obstacle and get the job done even without the best tools in hand. Nothing can compare to the creative ability of the motivated, well-led American Paratrooper. We have a long mission ahead. There will be challenges ahead.

It's up to our leaders to take care of our Paratroopers. Individuals don't win wars. Teams do. Take the time to build your teams. Let them know that you're proud of them. Make sure they get the recognition they deserve. There is nothing a Soldier won't do for his or her leadership if they know that their superiors truly have their back.

The best thing about the U.S. Army is our people. As leaders we must never forget that.

There are a lot of things that factor into a successful mission. To get the job done, you need people, supplies, direction and training. Different leadership styles place heavier emphasis on some of these needs, and less on others.

# Chaplain's Message

By CH(Maj.) Ken Bolin  
Task Force Spartan



## Strength Training

The profession of the Soldier demands great strength. As members of the Airborne community, we also remember that the Ranger Creed, in the 3rd stanza, exhorts us with the following: "I will always keep myself mentally alert, physically strong, and morally straight..."

Strength is about much more than a bench press number, cumulative pull-ups, or a 2 or 4-mile run time. Strength comes from inside each and every one of us, and our daily decisions determine our strength. When we train our bodies, we regularly shock our systems out of old, stagnant patterns of movement in order to force neurological change, to grow muscle and make ourselves stronger and faster. The principles of physical fitness can be applied to all of our lives, though, not just to the gym or to PT-time.

This time of the year is known as Lent in the history of the Christian faith. It's

a 40-day window that is dedicated to spiritual growth, self-restraint, and making choices to give up certain things in order to choose things that are better, or even those things that are best for us.

Many years ago when I was an Infantry Platoon Leader, I had a chaplain who looked at it this way: "Good, better, best, never let it rest, until your good is better, and your better is the best." There are some areas of life in which good is sufficient.

When it comes to who we are – our spiritual life, our moral life – good is simply not good enough, especially engaged in the profession of the Soldier. Above any other secular profession, Soldiering requires a higher standard, because it is impossible to wage war honorably without being a Lady or Gentleman in the classic sense of the words. This time of Lent can be a time of renewal, growth, and strengthening, if you

will allow it to be.

For those of us who use CrossFit as a platform for our physical fitness, one phrase that we typically keep in mind is "Unknown and unknowable". Life is always going to throw new things our way that have the tendency to unnerve us. Only through being strong inside can we find the fullest capability to deal with the hardships of this life that we have chosen.

So, arm and prepare yourself for the "unknown and unknowable" by engaging not only in PT, but also in Spiritual Fitness Training. You could be the strongest person in the world physically, but without that inner strength of spirit, you will crumble and fall when life hits you square between the eyes.

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## **FAMILY READINESS GROUP**

*WITH CHRISTIE A. APLAND*

---

January was a busy month as many families started to settle into their routines after seeing their soldiers off.

Many of the Battalions have begun holding Company and Battalion FRG meetings where activities have included movies, crafts, bunco, and an opportunity to get to know one another.

The JBER community also had a Deployment Information Fair where families were able to gather information on resources available

to them and meet their Battalion Family Readiness Support Assistants (FRSA).

February has been just as busy with Valentine's Day themed meetings where many families did white board messages to their soldiers.

Many of the messages were posted to the Battalion Facebook pages. If you are not already a fan of your Battalion's Facebook page please make sure to like it; as the FRsAs are excellent at putting community events on these pages.

Please remember to keep your information up to date throughout the deployment with your FRG so you continue to receive emails on all the events within your FRG and the JBER community.

If you are unsure which FRG you belong to you may contact the 4-25 Brigade FRSA at [christie.apland@us.army.mil](mailto:christie.apland@us.army.mil) and we will make sure you are linked up with the correct group.

# THE MAYOR OF COP ZORMAT

Story and pictures by Staff Sgt. Jason Epperson

The mayor of a city is the chief executive officer, responsible for the general welfare of the city. Being a mayor of a town can be challenging with all the duties and responsibilities you inherit when elected.

The same concept still applies to American combat outposts throughout Afghanistan; though, the mayor's duties are more complex, and require precise planning. The town or camp's chief executive has to make daily decisions that affect infrastructure, living conditions, and operations.

U.S. Army Sgt. David Lewis, assigned to Dog Company, 3rd Battalion (Airborne), 509th Infantry Regiment, Task Force Gold Geronimo, didn't get voted into the mayor's office. He was picked by his company's command.

"I walked onto COP Zormat and they said, 'Congratulations, you're the COP mayor.'" said Lewis, a Moss Point, Miss., native.

Given Lewis' background, he was a perfect fit for the job, which requires more of a hands-on management style than would be expected from a typical 'mayor'.

"My duties consist of handling all the contracts with the local nationals, working with the Regional Contracting Center to get new contracts made, handling all the laborers that come onto the COP, billeting, and working with FLUOR contractors getting stuff built," Lewis said.

"I also keep up with the maintenance on post, keeping such as the buildings, heaters, generators, and if something breaks, I put the work order in to fix it," Lewis said.

He credits past business experience with preparing him for this unique challenge. "I've somewhat dealt with this type of work before. I owned a drywall company before I joined the Army, so I'm used to dealing with a lot of subcontractors and contracts."

Lewis has a diverse background. He worked at an advertisement agency for a year, built ships for the Navy another year, and then started a drywall business with his childhood friend after Hurricane Katrina devastated Louisiana.

With a healthy demanded business taking off in a shaky economy, Lewis went to his business partner's house one night to eat dinner. There he saw something on television that changed the direction of his life.

"Gen. Petraeus was speaking at a press conference and the question was asked, 'Why are improvised explosive devices and suicide bombers in Afghanistan and Iraq increasing?'"



Sgt. David Lewis, The mayor of COP Zormat

"Gen. Petraeus said that women and children were being used in vehicle born IEDs to get them past check-points," Lewis said solemnly. "I sold my shares to my business partner and the next morning was in the recruiter's office."

After joining the Army in 2007, and deploying with the 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, Task Force Spartan in 2009, Lewis was already experienced with combat operations in Afghanistan as an airborne infantryman. Now as a mayor, he shifted his battle focus to improving the quality of life for paratroopers on the combat outpost.

One of the first duties he performed as mayor was having fellow paratroopers write down what they wanted the most on the combat outpost to improve mo



rale. Internet was the most requested desire.

"We recently had wireless Internet in stalled, so seeing the guys come back from a long mission and be able to Skype with their families makes my job rewarding."

Other requests were for better gym equipment and a place the paratroopers could hang out.

"Some of the immediate improvements we have started were upgrading the [Morale, Welfare & Recreation Center]. We are fixing broken equipment and holding MWR events daily. We have several more projects in mind; we are just waiting for the materials or approval."

Every day presents itself with a new set of obstacles.

"It's challenging because every day is different," Lewis said. "Equipment breaks down. Interpreters want to take leave, and you still have to continue mission."

Lewis is not only responsible for the morale, safety and welfare of younger paratroopers, but multiple civilians as well.

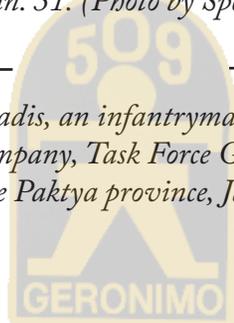
"I have about 14 local contractors and 12 interpreters that I'm responsible for. I assign them to their platoons, make sure they have their equipment. I do their time sheets, leave and deal with their Red Cross messages. I try to keep everything rolling smooth."



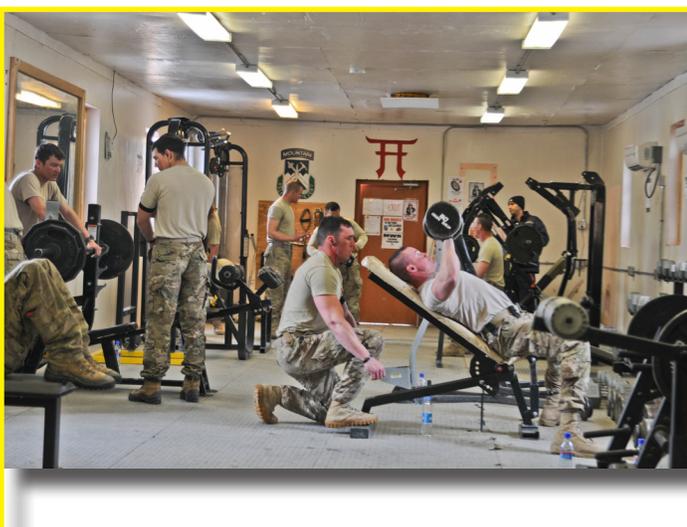
*(Top) A Paratrooper serving with 1st Platoon, Dog Company, 3rd Battalion, 509th Infantry Regiment, Task Force Gold Geronimo, provides security while on a patrol in Paktia Province, Afghanistan Jan. 31. (Photo by Spc. Amber Leach)*



*(Right) Pfc. Nick Badis, an infantryman from Highland, Calif., assigned to Dog Company, Task Force Gold Geronimo conducts a security patrol in the Paktya province, Jan. 30.*



*(Below) Combat Outpost Zormat's gym Jan. 30.*



# Blue Geronimo medics prepare counterpart for future

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Jason Epperson

As time winds down to the eventual departure of American troops from Afghanistan, some Afghan soldiers eagerly seek training when given the opportunity.

Afghan Sgt. Ziormal Armoni, a medic with the Afghan National Security Forces, jumped on the opportunity when two medical Paratroopers from the 1st Battalion, 501st Infantry (Airborne), Task Force Blue Geronimo, offered their battlefield experience and knowledge at Combat Outpost Narizah.

Armoni became a medic nearly a year ago and received basic level first aid training.

U.S. Army Sgt. David Riley, a senior medic for Headquarters Platoon, Delaware Company, TF Blue Geronimo, was a line medic with an infantry platoon during a previous deployment to Afghanistan where he treated U.S. and Afghan casualties. He now looks to share his experience with Armoni.

“We’ve been training Ziormal for the two months we’ve been here,” said Riley, a native of Houghton, Mich. “Today we did a recap of some of the things we taught him. Trauma assessments controlled bleeding, treating sucking chest wounds, establishing the airway, treatment for shock and getting [intervenes] fluids going. We train him on a new topic ev-

eryday and then once a week we do a recap [of] everything we’ve done.”

Riley said it was challenging training Armoni, due to his limited prior training.

“When we started with him, his skill set was no more than teaching high-school first aid,” Riley said. “He could put a bandage on somebody. Now, I would take him outside the wire with U.S. troops and feel absolutely confident that he could save another soldier’s life.”

“I’m glad we’re at the point where we are training up [their] forces to be able to take over from a medical aspect. That’s an area that I’m passionate about. I don’t accept anything but getting it done the right way. I don’t want to leave here and leave our counterpart unsure of what he’s doing. If I can teach him to be [at the] same level as [an Army medic], then we did our job.”

U.S. Army Spc. Victorio Cornejo, a medic assigned to Headquarters Platoon, Delaware Company, TF Blue Geronimo, is currently on his second tour in Afghanistan and had previous experience as a medic during a humanitarian mission in Haiti. He works with Riley and is directly involved with the training as well.

Cornejo said their goal is to train Armoni to be a sufficient medic,



*Afghan Sgt. Ziormal Armoni (left), a medic with the Afghan National Security Forces practices tying a tourniquet as U.S. Army Sgt. David Riley, from Houghton, Mich., and U.S. Army Spc. Victorio Cornejo, a native of Palm Beach, Calif., monitor his technique at Combat Outpost Narizah, Feb. 9.*

so when other Afghan medics arrive, he can start training them.

Cornejo noticed that the more Armoni trained with them, the more his confidence grew.

“When he first came here he would keep his head down a lot,” Cornejo said. “Now that he’s gotten confidence, he’s keeping his head up and smiling a lot. You can just tell that his confidence level has boosted dramatically.”

Armoni thanked the paratroopers and said it [the training was] a great help.

“I want to serve my people and my country,” Armoni said.



*(Left) Paratroopers with 4th Platoon, Delaware Company, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 501st IN, provide medical aid to an ANA casualty during combat operations in Khost Province, Afghanistan. (Photo by U.S. Army 2lt. Michael Blanchard, TF Blue Geronimo UPAR)*



*(Right) Staff Sgt. Jonathan Price, a squad leader assigned to 3rd Platoon, Blackfoot Company conducts security checks near the village of Narizah, located in the Tani district, Feb 9. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jason E. Epperson)*

*Spc. Donal Waterbury, of 3rd Platoon, Blackfoot Company, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 501st Infantry Regiment, pulls security outside of the Tani District Center as U.S., ANA and AUP commanders discuss the future of the district. (Photo by 2nd Lt. Michael Blanchard)*



# Cavalry Paratroopers rack up productive days in Khowst

Story and picture by Spc. Ken Scar

Soldiers have different ways of marking away their deployment times. The paratroopers of 3rd Platoon, Troop A, 1st Squadron, 40th Cavalry Regiment, Task Force Spartan, who are stationed at Camp Clark, tick it off by one perilous mission at a time. Here, in the rocky eastern interior of the country not far from the Pakistan border, days outside the wire are more common than days safely inside.

The unassuming settlements in the hills and valleys surrounding the base are known insurgent staging areas for trafficking supplies and gathering manpower, so the TF Spartan soldiers and their Afghan National Army partners make it a point to show up uninvited and often.

“The farther away we get from our gate, the more dangerous it gets,” said Sgt. Dennis Geary, of Newton, Mass., 3rd Platoon, team leader.

Snow-capped mountains ring the valley and a smooth, newly-paved road carries travelers up into the high country, past bustling markets, gurgling streams and scenic canyons.

But, according to Task Force Denali soldiers, everything looks different through the small, thick windows of a Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle. The vehicles are monsters of armor and firepower, but they are also giant targets for improvised explosive devices.

“I wouldn’t say I get scared, but the adrenaline does get pumped,” said Pfc. Eric Barrale, from Arnold, Mo., a 3rd Platoon MRAP driver.

“Even when you go to the places that are supposed to be main bases for the Haqqani network or the Taliban, the people act nice,” said Geary. “They act fine when we’re there, helping them out, but on our way back [from one of these places] last time we found two artillery shells hidden off to the side of the road that they had prepped

to hit us with on our return.”

Even with that kind of potential danger, paratroopers in Troop A make it a point to give every Afghan the benefit of the doubt.

“Every time you go [into one of the villages] you have to have an open mindset,” said 1st Lt. John Orendorff, from Bridgeport, Penn., Troop A, 3rd Platoon leader.

As the platoon leader, it is Orendorff’s duty to approach village elders, attempt to quell their misgivings and convince them to cooperate with coalition forces. In a war where one of the adversary’s main techniques is blending into the populace, reaching out to strangers can be daunting.

“Every time I go out, I feel like I could be shaking the hand of my enemy,” Orendorff said. “[But we] understand this is the kind of war we are in. It’s not all about the traditional conventional army, going out and looking for a fight. It’s more about seeing what the populace wants from us and what we can do for them.”

It’s an exhausting regimen in a rough and hostile land, but the soldiers of the 1st Sqdn., 40th Cav. Regt., take it in stride. This is, after all, exactly what they signed up for, and in the two months the unit has been in-country, they’ve thrown a lot of monkey wrenches into the enemy’s plans.

“We’ve stopped a lot of IED’s, found a lot of weapons caches and taken two detainees,” said McCracken. “Our biggest victory has been cutting off the [Haqqani network’s] supply flow.”

Another big success for the unit has been getting the ANA prepared to take over, said Orendorff.

“It’s always good to have the ANA out with us. I’ve been trying to push their leadership to take control of key leader engagements, where I can sit down and



U.S. Army Spc. John Keene, a native of Cairo, Ga., who is serving with 3rd Platoon, Troop A, 1st Squadron, 40th Cavalry Regiment, Task Force Spartan, drinks some traditional Afghan chai tea given to him by some locals in a small village outside Camp Clark, Feb. 7. The 3rd Platoon was on a joint mission with the Afghan National Army to conduct biometric testing in the area.

just have my interpreter whisper in my ear the whole time, and me not say a word. My goal is to get to where [the ANA] dominate the whole patrol from prepatrol brief to debrief,” he said. “We’re getting there.”

“We’re putting the ANA in the lead,” said Geary. “It’s what’s got to happen; they have to take that step and take over.”

One mission, one tick of the deployment clock, one village, one step at a time, Troop A, 1st Sqdn., 40th Cav. Regt., is making it happen. Even though it’s dangerous and stressful, there is a certain satisfaction in doing a job that is so important.

“Even when it seems like we’re not doing much, it’s all the stuff that’s unseen that we’re doing that’s making a difference. Our presence still causes that ripple effect,” said Geary. “We’re helping them take their country back.”





*(Left) Sgt. Kyle Pratt, a native of Mechanicsburgh, Pa., who is the team leader, Team B, 3rd Platoon, Troop A, 1st Squadron, 40th Cavalry Regiment, Task Force Spartan, gives a local boy a high-five, during a mission with the Afghan National Army in a small village near Camp Clark, Feb. 7. (Photo by Spc. Ken Scar)*

*(Below) Spc. Joshua Barrios, from Long Beach, Calif., and Pfc. Aaron Wilson, from Moreno Valley, Calif., both with the Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1st Squadron (Airborne), 40th Cavalry Regiment, Task Force Spartan, set the aim of their 120 mm mortar system, Feb. 8, on Camp Clark. The HHT mortar teams were testing their systems to use new precision guided munitions. (Photo by Spc. Ken Scar)*



*(Below) George Piccardi, a civilian contractor from Diamond Bar, Calif., and Camp Clark dining facility head chef, explains the rules for the door prize raffle he arranged during the Super Bowl party at the DFAC, Feb. 6. Piccardi bought dozens of items, including many signed NFL jerseys and helmets, and even a signed photograph of Madonna, to give away as door prizes during each commercial break. (Photo by Spc. Ken Scar)*



# PEAR CALLS FOR FIRE



*(Right) 1st Lt. Dave Groseclose, from Clemens, N.C., 3rd Platoon leader for A Battery, 2nd Battalion, 377th Parachute Field Artillery Regiment, Task Force Spartan, surveys the route up to Observation Post 11 outside Forward Operating Base Salerno, Feb. 3. (Photo by Spc. Ken Scar)*



*(Below) Sgt. Aaron Sweeny, from San Diego, Calif., and Staff Sgt. Robert Novak, from Temple, Texas, both with 3rd Platoon, Battery A, 2nd Battalion, 377th Parachute Field Artillery Regiment, Task Force Spartan, watch explosions from a mountain top near Forward Operating Base Salerno during a call-for-fire exercise, Feb. 3. (Photo by Spc. Ken Scar)*





*Lt. Col Brad Hinson, commander of the 725th Brigade Support Battalion and Command Sgt. Major Brian Morrison of the 725th BSB speak with reporters from Anchorage, Alaska, via a teleconference on Forward Operating Base Salerno, Feb. 1. The 725th BSB, TF Centurion provides supply distribution by ground and air, medical and maintenance support to Task Force Spartan.*



*B Company Change of Command (Photos courtesy of Facebook)*



*(Right) SGT Kao in action! (Photo courtesy of Facebook)*  
*(Left) SPC Kozen taking a break from Army Chow and sampling some local cuisine! (Photo courtesy of Facebook)*



*SPC Paschke serving up some 'heat' in the volleyball pit. (Photo courtesy of Facebook)*



# Safety corner

with Kenny Loggins



After just two months in country, Task Force Spartan has already experienced ten “Negligent Weapon Discharges” (NWD). A negligent discharge (ND) is a discharge of a firearm involving culpable carelessness in which a round/rounds are fired from a Soldier’s weapon that they didn’t intend to fire. In judicial and military technical terms, a negligent discharge is a chargeable offense. A number of armed forces automatically consider any accidental discharge to be negligent discharge because very few are genuine accidents under the assumption that a trained soldier has control of his weapon at all times. This is the case notably in the United States Army.

I often hear talk about accidental discharges from the accused. When I hear the circumstances behind the so-called “ADs,” I question if they are not really negligent. I believe the term AD is inappropriately used. Bottom line: most “accidental discharges” are in reality negligent,



and they could be avoided. Today, in this era of adroit mechanical engineering, if a firearm is dropped on the ground, the likelihood of that weapon firing without the trigger being manipulated is slim. It’s not impossible though. One example that I can think of where a true accidental discharge could happen is if a weapon mechanically malfunctions and discharges without the finger on the trigger. But, most of these unintentional rounds are let loose because the Soldier broke one of the safety rules, so a review, of the Prime Directives of Weapon safety is in order.

1. Treat all weapons as if they are loaded at all times.
2. Keep the muzzle pointed in a safe direction at all times.
3. Keep your finger off the trigger and outside of the trigger guard till your sights are on the target. (This is the Golden Rule. Its violation is directly responsible for about 60 percent of national inadvertent discharges.) Walking around with your finger in the trigger guard is a negligent discharge waiting to happen. It does not matter what type of firearm it is, this is unsafe weapon handling. Always keep your finger out of the trigger guard until you intend to fire and are on target.
4. Identify your target, and what is behind it. (This is one of the primary rules of shooting; be sure of your

target and beyond; know the capabilities of your weapon and ammunition. When you shoot a weapon, where is that bullet going to land? Is it going to impact a Qalat, behind which a family with kids is living? You need to be keenly aware of what your weapon and ammunition are capable of doing.

Never shoot at anything that you have not positively identified, once the trigger has been squeezed, you cannot bring back the bullet.)

If you think about it, following these 4 simple rules makes negligent discharges impossible. Following these 4 simple rules also will prevent severely injuring or even killing a bystander in the rare event of a true accidental discharge caused by a malfunctioning firearm.

Several factors can enter into the causation of a ND, but they almost invariably involve mishandling on the Soldier’s part.

Most Entry Control point (ECP) clearing areas will eventually witness a negligent discharge no matter how many control measures are in place. Most individual weapon NDs are usually caused by Soldiers trying to clear a loaded weapon with a finger still on the trigger. They will pull the charging handle back to eject the chambered round before removing the magazine, thereby charging a new round.

When they then point their M4 or M9 at the clearing barrel/ground and pull the trigger, it goes off to their utter amazement. Clearly, this is a violation of safety rule #3 and the solution is to constantly emphasize the need for a straight finger, except when on target.

I've heard the question asked at least once-- "If the weapon fires into the clearing barrel, why do we punish the soldier? He followed proper procedure, didn't he?" No one attempted to say "because the weapon wouldn't have gone off if he had followed proper procedure from the beginning."

Some units forego pulling the trigger at all, with commanders and NCO leaders at every level declaring they aren't going to put their troops at risk of being punished for doing the right thing.

This is perhaps the best mitigation to prevent NDs upon reentry while clearing weapons, "You just don't pull the trigger".

Over half of our NDs have been due to lack of familiarity of crew-served weapons mounted with electronic systems that we did not have in Alaska, such as the XM-153 Common Remotely Operated Weapon Station (CROWS).

CROWS allows Soldiers to operate successfully from within the safety of the ACV's armor, without being exposed to the threat of improvised explosive devices and small-arms fire.

It contains a sensor suite and fire control software that allows 98% accurate on-the-move direct target acquisition and first-burst target engagement. The gun itself is controlled by a joystick which gives the gunner 100-percent functionality, allowing the operator to control the weapon with just one hand. FSRs conduct comprehensive, hands-on training sessions with Soldiers, which run 40-60 hours.

To begin, Soldiers learn all the functions of the sensors and fire control system, including how to lase and engage targets.

Soldiers also learn how to mount four different weapons systems on the CROWS, including the M-2, Mk-19, M-240B, and M-249 machine guns. Soldiers conclude their training with a day and night operation, and fire live ammunition.

The current trend of these CROWS weapons clearing NDs seem to be gunners not FSR-trained and only familiarized by a trained Soldier or that gunners are not comfortable operating the CROWS system after only 60 hrs of training.

To enhance a unit's operational capabilities, It's recommended that every member of a unit receive training on the system, not just operators. This might perhaps reduce the number of future NDs.

If you remember only one thing from this article, it should be this. Learning proper and safe handling of firearms is the

single most important thing concerning weapons of any type.

The rules of weapon safety must be ingrained into your mind and must be followed at all times, with zero exceptions.

If these simple rules are always followed, a negligent discharge causing injury or even death will simply be an impossible event.

In conclusion, a freak accident of a weapon discharging after falling to the ground or a mishap not caused by the operators finger due to a major weapon malfunction are true accidental discharges where the Soldier should not be found negligently responsible.

True ADs are extremely rare, yet on the other hand, I could write a book about all of the negligent discharges I've heard of.

The bottom line is: come home safely at the end of the day. Property damage, fatalities and physical injuries due to so-called "accidents" can and must be avoided.

Until then, shoot straight, hit your intended targets and stay safe.

Kenny Loggins  
TF Spartan Safety Manager

# CAREER COUNSELOR



MASTER SERGEANT ARACELI NAVA  
SENIOR CAREER COUNSELOR

## Overstrength MOS's

By: MSG Araceli Nava, TF Spartan BDE Senior Career Counselor

The first week of February, HQDA announced a change to the retention process for those Soldiers serving in an over strength MOS. If you are currently serving in an over strength MOS, you will be offered the opportunity to Reclass or remain in your current MOS but with restricted term lengths and under a needs of the Army contract.

Normally when an MOS is over strength the only option is to reclass; this has been the first time in a few years that the Army has also offered needs of the Army to over strength MOS'.

A list of over strength MOS's are listed at the bottom; al-

though, in certain MOS', if you are airborne qualified, you are still entitled to all your options, including stabilization, stateside assignment, overseas assignment, etc..

Battalion Career Counselors are in the process of contacting all Soldiers in over strength MOS's to counsel and educate Soldiers about their options and how it can affect their goals and careers.

If you have not been contacted by your Career Counselor and currently serving in an over strength MOS, or just have questions pertaining to retention please contact your Battalion Career Counselor.

If you are in an over strength MOS or are considering reclassing into another MOS, the two most important things you can

do to better assist yourself and qualify for more jobs are:

1. Order you high school or college transcripts; certain MOS prereqs require proof of the highest English, Science, or Math successfully completed.
2. Retake the ASVAB test if you think you may not have tried your best the first time you took it or you have low scores. Not all jobs qualifications go off your GT score solely, some jobs depend on your line scores.

Please contact the education center to get a schedule of when the next FAST class is available.

### Overs Strength MOS's

- Please note they are broken down by skill level
- If they have an asterisk next to the MOS, over strength only pertains to non airborne personnel

12B1	12C1	12K1*	12R1*	12T1*	12V1	13M1	13P1	13T1*	13T4*
14S1*	15B1	15D1*	15F1*	15G1*	15H1*	15J1*	15P1	25B1*	25C1*
25Q1	25U1*	27D1	31B1	35G1*	35M1*	74D1*	88H1	88H3	88H4
88M1*	91J1*	92A1*	92F1	92G1*	92L1*	92L2*	92L3*	92L4*	92R1
92R2	92W1*	92Y1*	94A1	94D1	94E1	94E2	94E3	94F1	



# The Legal Beagle

## TASK FORCE SPARTAN LEGAL TEAM

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The Federal Income Tax was first introduced in 1861 as a way to help fund the very costly Civil War. The act was subsequently repealed due to a ruling that held that an apportioned tax on the income of citizens was unconstitutional. However, in 1913, the Sixteenth Amendment was ratified which gave the U.S. Congress the legal authority to tax all incomes regardless of the apportionment requirement. In 1955, the due date for income taxes to the Federal Government, or “tax day,” was set as April 15th. In the event that the 15th falls on a weekend or holiday, the deadline is extended to the following business day. Because April 15th, 2012 is a Sunday, the cut off for filing income taxes this year will be Monday, 16 April, 2012.

Being that April 16th is right around the corner, we should all formulate a plan on getting our taxes done correctly and on time. While a newspaper article is no substitute for the personalized legal advice available from an attorney, it is important that we are all familiar with our options so that we don't become a garnishee of the IRS and to ensure we receive a nice return this year.

One option is to simply put off filing your taxes. Being deployed to a combat zone such as Afghanistan automatically grants US Service members (and usually their spouse) a 180 day extension plus the number of days between when they entered the combat zone and April 15th (tax day, remember?) Sound confusing? It's really not too bad! For example, if you deployed on March 1, 2011 you would earn a 226-day tax extension (180 days for the automatic extension, plus the 46 days between March 1 and April 15).

This extension begins the day you redeploy, so if you redeployed on October 15th, 2012, you would need to file taxes within 226 days (29 May 2013.) Likewise, a service member who deployed on 9th December 2011 and returned 15 October 2012 would earn a 308 day tax extension and be required to file no later than 19 August 2013.

While not filing taxes may seem convenient, it is important to remember you will not receive any tax return monies until several months after you file. If you'd like to see your hard earned money sooner, you should consider filing your taxes while deployed.

There are many ways to file your taxes while deployed. For example, a married Soldier's spouse can file with a power of attorney.

Another method of filing is via the Internet. Many reputable online websites can handle simple tax returns and some offer free services to military members. A third method of filing taxes is through a military operated tax center.

Although Task Force Spartan does not operate a tax center, the Air Force legal assistance office at Bagram Airfield does and can be reached at DSN 318-431-3251.

Finally, if getting to BAF to file is out of the question, you could also hire a professional accountant back at home station to do your taxes for you. While this may be pricey, it is a sure way to get the maximum return!

Taking all of these options into account, we all have a choice to make on what to do this tax season. Good luck, happy hunting, and don't spend that return check in one place!



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